

Development Reforms In Lebanon

**Between concepts of sustainable development
and the challenges of war and rehabilitation;
A civil society perspective**



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Prepared by the Arab NGO Network for Development

The Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND) is a regional network working on three main issues in the Arab region; development policies, democracy and socio-economic reforms, and globalization and trade. ANND members include seven national networks and twenty-seven non-governmental organizations from eleven Arab countries.

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Abbreviations

ANERA	American Near East Relief Agency
ANND	Arab NGO Network for Development
CDR	Council for Development and Reconstruction
CFSD	Canadian Fund for Social Development
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
ESFD	The Economic and Social Fund for Development
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
MDGs	Millennium Development goals
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoF	Ministry of finance
MoPH	Ministry of Public health
MoSA	Ministry of Social Affairs
NGOs	Non- governmental organisations
SDATL	Schéma Directeur d'Aménagement du Territoire Libanais
SSB	Southern Suburbs of Beirut
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children Emergency Fund
UNRWA	The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
WB	World Bank
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

Foreword

Dear reader,

Civil society organizations have long been recognized as service providers and agents for development; yet their role in developing policies and participating in decision-making is still being contested. However, new development theories stress the role of civil society as agents for democratic change, and new development paradigms consider participation as prerequisite. This means that civil society organizations play an active role in elaborating alternative policies and advocating for change. Nonetheless, civil society's effective and efficient participation necessitates enough awareness, capacities, and resources. Within this scope, the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND) adopted a mission focusing on empowering civil society towards more engagement and participation in the decision-making.

Poverty in Lebanon did not take forefront in the official policy-making scene until the year 1996. Then, a series of reports were issued by the United Nations agencies, in which absolute poverty indicators were calculated at 9% and the percentage of population under the national poverty line was calculated at 29%. Primarily, the government tried to deny this reality and asked the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) to conduct a survey on poverty in Lebanon. Effectively, the result of the survey on "the living conditions of households in Lebanon", which was issued by the MoSA and the UNDP in 1998, confirmed the same aforementioned results.

In the year 2000, Lebanon was among the 191 countries that adopted the Millennium Declaration and committed to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Consequently, Lebanon issued the first and the second progress reports on the MDGs during 2003 and 2008 respectively. The reports noted a minimal progress towards achieving the

goals. Reacting to that, the Lebanese Government nominated a Multi-Ministerial Committee in 2004, with the mandate of developing a national strategy for poverty eradication. The Committee did not involve any civil society representation.

Within this context, and in order to meet these efforts and to complement them, ANND launched a civil society parallel process. The Israeli war against Lebanon during the summer of 2006, resulting in huge losses of lives and mass destruction of the infrastructure and households, necessitated a change in the main objectives of the program towards a focus on enhancing the role of civil society organizations in post-war rehabilitation and development.

The process included five national conferences (three before the Israeli aggression and two in the post-war phase of the program) with the participation of an average of 300 persons in each, in addition to seven regional workshops in different districts with the participation of an average of 90 participants in each. It is worth noting that participants were mainly from civil society organizations and community-based organizations, as well as local authorities and public administrations. In addition, more than fifty experts, researchers, and resource persons participated in the process through involvement in developing needs assessments, situation analysis, concept papers, and conclusions.

As a result of this process, several recommendations that are core to the development process in Lebanon were proposed, including:

- (1) The necessity of adopting decentralization as a strategy for equal distribution of wealth and balanced developmental interventions and a prerequisite for the success and the sustainability of any development strategy
- (2) The importance of adopting a right-based approach in developmental strategies, particularly when dealing with access to water, education, health, protection of the

environment and even when it comes to reconciliation and social reintegration

(3) The added value of a master tripartite coordination plan among the public sector, private agencies, and civil society organizations, both national and international organizations.

(4) The significance of adopting participatory approaches during the implementation of development strategies, through engaging local actors such as community-based organisations, municipalities, as well as local private and public actors

(5) The importance of continuously addressing the lack of public funding, human resources, and technical expertise among the local actors, especially municipalities, and the need for capacity building strategies among civil society organizations, especially community based organizations.

Based on these outcomes, ANND launched in the year 2008 a pilot program focusing on two districts- Marjoun/Hasbaya and Baalbeck/Hermel, and focusing on supporting the establishment of local councils including civil society organizations and local authorities. The program includes implementation of pilot development projects coordinated by the local councils. Furthermore, ANND is working towards establishing a donors' consortium in each of the two regions, which can serve as a model for networking among donors and between donors and local councils.

The publication we put in your hands today is the outcome of the program implemented by ANND in close coordination with its partners; the Canadian Fund for Social Development/Oxfam Quebec, the United Nations Development Program, and the Lebanese NGO Network.

Ziad Abdel Samad
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I. Introduction

The program “**Development in Lebanon: Poverty Eradication, Gender Equity, and Youth Participation; the Role of NGOs, Civil Society and Other Actors**” was launched in March 2005 and ended in December 2007. The program was developed and implemented by the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), and supported by the Canadian Fund for Social Development (CFSD) / Oxfam Quebec. Several of the project’s activities were implemented in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). A steering committee composed of all the parties involved in the implementation of the program (ANND, Oxfam Quebec, CFSD, UNDP, the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), the Collective of NGOs in Lebanon, and the Lebanese Women Network) supervised the project and participated in implementing its activities.

This program aimed at contributing to the elaboration of a national strategy for poverty eradication, with emphasis on gender equity and youth participation. It also aimed at assisting in capacity building of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in that concern. For this, three national conferences were organized; the first focused on the characteristics of poverty in Lebanon and the role of various actors (including public and private sectors, civil society organizations (CSOs) and the United Nations agencies) in eradicating poverty. The second conference focused on the link between gender and poverty while the last tackled the role of youth in poverty eradication.

After the 2006 Israeli war on Lebanon, the government put all ongoing public plans for social development and poverty eradication on hold and only emergency plans were being operated to respond to the immediate relief needs of citizens and the reconstruction of damaged infrastructure and

areas. Moreover, most Lebanese civil society organizations concentrated their efforts on relief and rehabilitation activities at that time. Within this context, partners in the program also revised its objectives and plans in an attempt to respond to the newly emerging needs of Lebanese communities.

Accordingly, the project adjusted its initial plan and focused more on discussing rehabilitation and developmental needs in the regions most affected by the 2006 Israeli war. Seven workshops were conducted to assess rehabilitation needs in several development sectors in selected regions.¹ These workshops gathered stakeholders from CSOs, government institutions, donor agencies and international organizations. The revised program aimed at: reviewing the role of CSOs in responding to post-war relief needs; proposing effective cooperation between Lebanese CSOs and international organizations active in the rehabilitation process; linking regional needs and priorities to the national strategies and plans, and fostering the active participation of CSOs in the rehabilitation, recovery, and post-war development efforts within the framework of a long-term vision for the country's development needs.

This report constitutes the final publication of the outcomes of the program **“Development in Lebanon: Poverty Eradication, Gender Equity, and Youth Participation; the Role of NGOs, Civil Society and Other Actors”**. This report serves two main purposes: first it compares the views of the government versus those of CSOs concerning development processes and their roles in eradicating poverty. Both sides can utilize this report to elaborate on common grounds and create better collaboration opportunities. Second, it presents

¹ The following areas were selected according to the data provided by the Multipurpose survey (MoSA, CAS and UNDP) on living conditions: The targeted regions included: Baalbeck/Hermel, Akkar, Nabatieh, Tyre, Bint-Jbeil, Hasbaya/Marjeyoun and the Southern Suburbs of Beirut.

a practical tool for CSOs to share their understanding of the reasons of poverty and other developmental challenges in Lebanon, in addition to learning possible means of intervention from each others' experiences.

This report compiles all the workshop and conference outcomes and aims at synthesizing the current development concerns and recommendations raised by the civil society actors. This report is composed of two major parts: The first part presents a brief overview of eight developmental priorities that emerged in Lebanon after the Israeli 2006 aggression. They are: Basic community infrastructure, livelihoods and economic development, basic social services, livelihoods and agricultural development, urban planning, the environment, reintegration and reconciliation, and the emerging problem of cluster bombs. Recommendations from local stakeholders in deprived and/or war affected regions were also reviewed. A synthetic analysis of the main challenges and recommendations, voiced in the above mentioned workshops by Lebanese CSOs and NGOs², are presented for each priority. The second part discusses national development strategies. It elaborates on the efforts, views, roles and priorities of the government, CSOs, international donors and municipalities in development processes and discusses possible ways of collaboration among them.

This report shows that although the views of the government

² Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) refer to a wide range of organizations: community groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), labor unions, indigenous groups, charitable organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations, academia groups and centers, and foundations that compose the civil society. A non-governmental organization (NGO) is any non-profit, citizen group which is organized on a local, national or international level while operating separately from any national government. NGOs are also divided according to their areas of work: Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) work within a small regional area, while national NGOs work on a national basis, and international NGOs (INGOs) work globally to effect policy change at the international level.

and international donors coincide at some point; there still are fundamental divergences. Also, while CSOs and NGOs ask for refocusing on community-based development initiatives, that are free of corruption and nepotism and include decentralized and quick rehabilitation actions; the government and international donors, although recognizing this concern, place more urgency on fundamental reforms in various sectors and budget adjustments in order to curb down growing debt.

Poverty in Lebanon was also tackled. An appendix was added to this report summarizing the main findings, outcomes, and recommendations resulting from the three national conferences and focusing on poverty and its inter-relation with gender and youth. It also summarizes the latest 2006 Israeli aggression's general impact on poverty in Lebanon and suggests possible intervention activities to eradicate poverty.

Finally, it should be noted that the data in this report is based on 2004-2005 figures especially in selecting the least developed regions in Lebanon. The 2006 Israeli war had its negative aftermaths on Lebanon; it deteriorated the situation and delayed development and poverty alleviation interventions in most regions.

II. Developmental challenges and priorities ³

The Israeli war (2006) added to the underdevelopment of the Lebanese peripheral regions, by deeply destroying infrastructure and livelihoods. The cost of this war goes beyond monetary figures to impact every aspect of the lives of Lebanese men and women. Moreover, the most recent destruction might dramatically increase already acute economic and sectarian polarization.

Within this context, new challenges emerge on the various socio-economic fronts, especially in sectors related to basic services; including community infrastructure, water and sanitation services; and social services such as education and health. Moreover, the war limited the potentials for local economic development including agricultural development. It is worth noting that agricultural activity was the sector mostly affected by the 2006 Israeli war as the majority of the population of the South of Lebanon works in agricultural fields. Farmers either lost their lands, their crops or became unable to use the land because of cluster bombs. On a different note, the war also contributed profoundly to polarizing the society.

³ This section summarizes the main socio-economic challenges facing the country's different regions and the most important solutions as indicated by Civil Society Organizations across the main developmental sectors identified during the Conference on CSO Participation in Recovery and Development in Post-war Lebanon. The challenges identified for each sector is transposed to the regional level through regional case studies. A final section will expose the recommendations proposed by the regional consultants and civil society organizations in regards to the aforementioned challenges. The added value of such a division is to propose a local and civil society-oriented approach to the understanding and overcoming of the development challenges faced by Lebanon and the main areas of agreement and difference of each of these organizations' perspectives and the national development strategy. The proceedings report of the conference on Civil Society's Participation in Recovery and Development in Post-war Lebanon organized by the Arab NGO Network for development, The Canadian Fund for Social Development/Oxfam Quebec, and UNDP; Lebanon, 2007.

Also, the post war period created a necessity to look more closely into environmental matters, especially due to the oil spills and toxic hazards resulting from the military attacks. Urban planning was a priority on the post war agenda for development, given the scope of the destruction and the need for reconstruction efforts to undertake legal planning considerations. Within this context, the issues relating to post-war reintegration and reconciliation of local communities and the population at large become core to the rehabilitation and development process; especially that the 2006 Israeli war came at a time of high political polarization among the Lebanese .

Accordingly, the ongoing official public plans for social development and poverty eradication were paralyzed. Only emergency plans were in operation; plans through which the government was intending to meet the immediate needs of relief and reconstruction. It is worth mentioning that most CSOs in Lebanon had spent years of work and effort shifting from emergency and relief activities into developmental and advocacy activities after the end of the civil war in 1989. However, sixteen years later, most Lebanese CSOs were obliged to re-work in relief and rehabilitation activities, and only few CSOs kept pursuing work related to advocating human rights' protection, monitoring relief expenditure and efforts, monitoring the violation of the international humanitarian law, in addition to enhancing citizenship, non-violence, peace, and conflict resolution among Lebanese communities.

The Israeli war (2006) impacted different regions in Lebanon to a varying extent by the military attacks; accordingly, rehabilitation needs and development potentials vary among regions. It is worth mentioning that the most affected regions are those which are considered to be the poorest.

Many stakeholders (local, governmental and international) become available in post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation period. This creates fundraising and allocation risks. It might also create duplication of work and competition. At the same time the viability of funds might be influenced by the strategic interests of either donors or the government, and this creates or strengthens the cliental networks.

Below are developmental priorities that need to be addressed in Lebanon. An overview of each priority, together with challenges and recommendations, are based on background papers prepared by experts in their fields, in addition to the outcomes of the working group on that topic during the conference on CSO Participation in Recovery and Development in Post-war Lebanon that was held on the 16th and 17th of January 2007.

A) Basic Community Infrastructure, including water and sanitation

Brief overview of the situation ⁴

- ❖ Rehabilitation of the infrastructure in Lebanon, including water and sanitation networks, is directly related to the implementation of the MDGs,⁵ particularly goals 1, 4, 5, 6 and 7.
- ❖ Water resources are considered as being sufficient for industrial and domestic use, and to a certain extent for agricultural use. However, sound management techniques are implemented due to the increase of water demand in

⁴ This section is based on the background paper on Community Basic Infrastructure (Including Water and Sanitation), prepared by Dr. Fadi Hamdan, for the Arab NGO Network for Development.

⁵ Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, Goal 4: Reduce child mortality, Goal 5: Improve maternal health, Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability.

domestic and industrial uses.

- ❖ Municipal infrastructures (municipal roads, street lighting, storm water drainage, etc) in most Lebanese regions are old and weak and lack maintenance. In addition, there are remarkable disparities among districts where poorer ones in the North and South receive inadequate coverage.
- ❖ There were plans to rehabilitate drinking water supplies in all regions and to develop and expand water resources prior to the Israeli war (2006). However, the war intensified this need.

Challenges

- ❖ Lack of adequate infrastructure especially in water and sanitation networks.
- ❖ Poor water quality due to excessive use of ground water and the inability of the aquifers to replenish itself.
- ❖ Seeping of sea water to ground aquifers, especially in coastal areas.

Recommendations for future interventions

Based on the discussions held during the Conference on CSO Participation in Recovery and Development in Post-war Lebanon, the following recommendations were identified:

At the policy level:

- ❖ Establishing a water-management body to coordinate between water and waste management on one hand and the government on the other.
- ❖ Improving waste water networks in rural areas.
- ❖ Adopting a qualitative and quantitative water resource conservation strategy. In addition to adopting a strategy for water pricing to encourage conservation and generate a stable fund facilitating maintenance issues.
- ❖ Minimizing costs of construction, maintenance and

operation by building infrastructures according to the population density of the area.

- ❖ Creating a reliable statistical database on service use and distribution.

At the level of civil society:

- ❖ Supporting and enhancing the participation of the civil society in resource management.
- ❖ Enhancing the role of the civil society in raising awareness on health issues including water use.

Other recommendations:

- ❖ Reducing the cost of water and reliance on water pumping by developing alternative sources of water such as rivers, dams, artificial lakes, springs, artesian wells...etc. in addition to improving the water fees collection methods.
- ❖ Reusing treated water for irrigation and industrial purposes.
- ❖ Separating black and grey water when possible.⁶
- ❖ Enhancing the technical knowledge and capabilities of the maintenance and operation staff.

⁶ Grey water is wastewater generated from domestic processes such as dish washing, laundry and bathing. Black water results from sewage.

Box 1: Lack of public investment in network infrastructures in Akkar

Overview:

Akkar is rich in water resources (springs, underground water in High-Qeita', Jouma and High-Dreib). However, it still suffers from several problems, mainly;

- ❖ Lack of public water networks in many areas.
- ❖ The obsolete condition of water networks in many areas.
- ❖ Disparities in distribution of water among the regions.
- ❖ The chaotic distribution of permits to dig artesian wells in many regions.
- ❖ The absence of adequate sewage systems.

Suggested Interventions:

- ❖ Establishing new public networks has already started; however, most are not operational yet, and some are not compliant with the technical requirements. Some municipalities raised their objections to concerned administrations but to no avail.
- ❖ Ensuring the availability of minimum health specifications for sewage by residents and municipalities to minimize the pollution of underground water and rivers.
- ❖ Ensuring the availability of minimum health requirements in houses that use adjacent wastewater sanitary pools to minimize polluting the underground water.

Reference: This case study is based on the outcomes of the regional roundtable on CSO participation in recovery and Development in Akkar organized by ANND on the 13th of April 2007

Box 2: the emergency of coordination in Nabatieh

Overview:

- ❖ “The Council for the South” and residents of Nabatieh’s villages and towns have dug or equipped several artesian wells, but considerable shortage of potable water still exists especially in summer.
- ❖ The demand for potable water has increased especially with the population growth and the inability of old networks to meet the growing needs.
- ❖ During the war, Bombs hit deep grounds causing the breaking of water pumps and the contamination of underground water. The war also increased the historical contamination of potable water and of sewage networks contaminating ground water.
- ❖ Coordination among municipalities and related public administrations (CDR, Council for the South, the National Authority of Litani Water, Ministries, etc) in managing and maintaining water networks and sewage systems is either weak or absent.
- ❖ There are few qualified employees to follow up on the arising water problems.

Suggested Interventions:

In line of these challenges, civil society organizations and municipality members identified the following recommendations:

- ❖ Formulate a comprehensive infrastructure plan for the region.
- ❖ Set a strategy to manage water resources and cover all areas especially rural ones.
- ❖ Establish diversity in water resources.
- ❖ Create incentives for qualified human resources.
- ❖ Managing waste water pollution to protect public health, the environment, and water resources.

Reference: This section is based on the background paper on the development challenges in the Caza of Nabatieh, prepared by Mr. Abbas Abouzeid, for the Arab NGO Network for Development, and on the outcomes of the regional roundtable on CSO participation in recovery and Development in Nabatieh organized by ANND on the on the 1st of April 2007.

B) Livelihoods and economic development

Brief overview of the situation ⁷

- ❖ The Israeli war of 2006 resulted in substantial disruptions and losses in several sectors, mainly: agriculture, tourism and hotels, retail, financial and business services and industry.
- ❖ Several problems were caused by these losses such as; reduction in the number of workers or their shifts and lowering salaries.
- ❖ Recovery in these sectors will take time and depends on the return of investors' confidence and improved security in the country.

Challenges

- ❖ Adopting suitable recovery approaches and policies after the Israeli war (2006).
- ❖ Organizing the efforts of recovery among the various actors: government, civil society, private sector...etc.

Recommendations for future interventions

In order to fully address the challenges of the economic sector at the national level, development actors have defined the following recommendations:

At the policy level:

- ❖ Establishing a Local Development Agency (a council or a committee) at the level of the village, city, or cluster to improve the coordination of development projects among the different actors (Government, municipalities, private

⁷ This section is based on the background paper on Economic Development in Areas Affected by the 2006 War, prepared by Dr. Fares El Zein, for the Arab NGO Network for Development.

-
- institutions, NGOs and International donors).⁸
- ❖ Enhancing employment/unemployment policies. This could be done through several actions such as: Offering “Unemployment Compensation” during the first six months of unemployment coupling it with adequate vocational and business trainings, in addition to collaborating with the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) in managing the problem of unemployment.

At the level of the civil society:

- ❖ Strengthening the capabilities of municipalities and local NGOs to better plan local economic development projects.
- ❖ Creating partnerships between the civil society and the private sector in corporate social responsibilities.
- ❖ Engaging stakeholders in the planning and implementation of local development projects to promote private investments.

Other recommendations:

- ❖ Securing access to Micro-Finance/Micro-Credit for Small and Medium Enterprises in the regions that were affected by the war.
- ❖ Creating business incubators as a process to help ‘start-up’ and grow businesses.⁹

⁸ LDA take the form of an institutional structure created at the level of the beneficiary village, city or cluster to coordinate the economic development effort at the local level in order to guarantee cohesiveness in the planning effort and consensus around implementation. They also strengthen communication between donors and NGOs by helping the local NGOs to reach out to donors with their real needs and projects. Finally, creating LDA necessitates the establishment of decentralization that gives freedom to the cities and villages and enhances the dynamic of participation at the local level.

⁹ Incubators are usually managed premises comprising of small office or light industry work units with meeting rooms, parking and reception. Incubator tenants are provided with an informative and supportive environment. Peer group

- ❖ Focusing on the financial assets that support the macro interventions of the government.
- ❖ Adopting a participatory approach in planning and implementing programs for local economic development.

networking; business advice; business mentoring; technology support services and assistance in obtaining finance for growth are often found to help the incubated businesses. A business incubator could appeal to fresh university graduates who do not possess necessary income to rent an office or buy all necessary office equipment. They could also benefit those who are eligible for micro-credit as well as those who have not applied for such credit. Donors could help in creating incubators by paying for the rental expenses for at least a couple of years. Moreover, networking and exchange of information between different incubators will help guarantee coherence between the various projects.

Box 3: War-impacted economy in Bint Jbeil

Overview

The region of Bint Jbeil suffers from the following socio-economic challenges:

- ❖ Income-related indicators dropped due to the rise in unemployment on one hand and reduced purchasing power and economic stagnation on the other.
- ❖ More than half of the permanent residents of these villages work in tobacco-planting while many others work in tobacco-related activities (retail trade, teaching, micro-industry, smithery mechanics, etc). This crop is considered to be safe in terms of sales, as the government guarantees to buy it through Régie Libanaise des Tabacs et Tombacs. It should be noted that tobacco work is usually a family business in which women and children contribute as well.

Suggested interventions

The main recommendations concerning economic development in the region as suggested by local actors were as follows:

- ❖ Encouraging tourism in the region to create new jobs.
- ❖ Encouraging investments in the region through incentives such as tax exemptions.
- ❖ Adopting international specifications in agricultural production.
- ❖ Classifying lands to facilitate bank loans and organize agricultural properties.
- ❖ Empowering farmers to produce new competitive crops.
- ❖ Promoting South-made products.
- ❖ Establishing private companies specialized in sewage networks and solid wastes.

Reference: This section is based on the background paper “Bint Jbeil: Pillar of the Country”, prepared by Mr. Mohamed Al Bassam, for the Arab NGO Network for Development, and on the outcomes of the regional roundtable on CSO participation in recovery and Development in Bint Jbeil organized by ANND on the 11th of May 2007.

Box 4: the necessity of economic diversification in Baalbek

Overview

The region of Baalbek-Hermel is characterized by remarkable migration and unemployment rates. The population of Bekaa is mostly involved in agriculture or tourism related activities.

Civil society organizations and municipality members identified the main challenges facing the tourism sector, for instance, as follow:

- ❖ Limited tourism utilities and services.
- ❖ Lack of diversity in activities that encourage all-year-round tourism.
- ❖ Lack of advertisement campaigns to promote the region and encourage local investments.
- ❖ Weak protection and rehabilitation of culture, tourism heritage and archaeological sites.

Suggested interventions

In order to effectively address this situation, a variety of recommendations were suggested, namely:

- ❖ Promoting the excavation of archaeological sites and rehabilitating touristic sites from Qasr Nabba to Hermel.
- ❖ Encouraging private investments by temporarily exempting them from taxes.
- ❖ Developing a plan to rescue farmers and other workers who work in tourism activities and were highly affected by the war.
- ❖ Encouraging local handicrafts.

The case of Baalbeck is an opportunity to pinpoint some inconsistencies between the local development needs and the national strategy. In particular, the lack of coordination between the financial resources and the priority needs; and the lack of an effective communication network between the centre (government and donors) and the local parties. It is also worth mentioning that agriculture in the Bekaa is deteriorating especially that the

same crops are still being planted despite the losses and severe competition with neighbouring countries; and at the same time the government has failed to provide alternatives.

Reference: This section is based on the background paper “Baalbeck-Hermel Region: Situation and Developmental Horizons”, prepared by Dr. Batoul Yahfoufi, for the Arab NGO Network for Development, and on the outcomes of the regional roundtable on CSO participation in recovery and Development in Baalbeck-Hermel organized by ANND on the 17th of April 2007.

C) Basic Social Services – Education and Health

The health sector ¹⁰

Brief overview of the situation

- ❖ The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) is facing major difficulties in controlling and organizing the public health sector. This is due to several reasons, mainly; current forms of contracts with health care institutions, lack of transparency in financing and spending and high cost of medicines.
- ❖ Inappropriate distribution of expenditures on health services among the governorates and regions. Expenditures are not proportionate with the number of inhabitants in each region. For example, Beirut and Mount Lebanon receive most and better health services when compared with other regions in Lebanon.
- ❖ There are some financial constraints due to the financial system that depends on different sources of public funds.
- ❖ Hospitals suffer from weak management systems in addition to lack of new developed technologies and equipments.

Challenges

- ❖ Organizing the health sector, especially public services and ensuring transparency and equitable distribution of health services among all population groups and regions.
- ❖ Enhancing the capabilities of public health services and technical equipment in hospitals.

¹⁰ This section is based on the background paper "The Right to Health Coverage and the Aftermath of the July War", prepared by Dr. Ali El Zein, for the Arab NGO Network for Development.

Recommendations for future interventions

Civil society organizations and other development partners highlighted the following recommendations to improve the health sector in Lebanon:

At the policy level

1. Adopting a legislation promoting health prevention activities for all school students.
2. Ensuring basic health services for all citizens especially those with special needs.

At the level of the civil society

1. Engaging CSOs in raising public awareness on health issues in partnership with the concerned ministries whilst ensuring accessibility to awareness programs for all, including people with special needs.

Box 5: recommendations to improve the health system in Akkar

The region has been historically deprived of adequate health services and has a need to:

- ❖ Develop a network of health services to serve all areas of Akkar taking into consideration the population distribution, health needs and the availability of health providers.
- ❖ Organize a medium-term awareness campaign on reproductive health and family planning.
- ❖ Develop and spread childcare support through collaboration among the civil sector, municipalities, schools and ministries.
- ❖ Develop a project to establish a permanent health provider in every school or its surroundings.

Reference: This section is based on the background paper on the developmental needs in the Region of Akkar, prepared by Dr. Hisham Hashem, for the Arab NGO Network for Development

The education sector¹¹

Brief overview of the situation

- ❖ The Plan for Educational Advancement stressed on the importance of achieving the MDG of spreading education and making it compulsory and available to all children with no discrimination whether based on confession, gender, place of residence, or the financial capacity of the parents. The Lebanese law also established the right of every person with disability to education; however this law is still not implemented.
- ❖ There is a discrepancy in the quality of education between public and private schools.
- ❖ Regional disparities in educational indicators are observed in Lebanon, specifically in the regions of the North and the Bekaa.
- ❖ School dropouts represent a problem in Lebanon. Most dropouts are usually needy students who are obliged to work to help their parents financially.
- ❖ The 2006 Israeli war targeted areas that were already suffering from problems of enrollment and dropouts. The war increased the number of dropouts and the regional gaps in educational services.

Challenges

- ❖ Enforcing access to education for all children including those with special needs.
- ❖ Minimizing the gaps in educational indicators and in the distribution of services among the regions.
- ❖ Improving public education to minimize discrepancies between public and private schools.
- ❖ Addressing the problem of dropouts.

¹¹ This section is based on the background paper "The Right to Education: Facts and Challenges after the July War", prepared by Dr. Ali El Zein, for the Arab NGO Network for Development

Recommendations for future interventions

Civil society organizations have presented a set of recommendations to improve the education sector in Lebanon:

At the policy level

1. Adopting a more efficient government advocacy strategy to better apply educational policies such as laws of mandatory education for children. This should be accompanied with poverty reduction programs so that families do not have to send their children to work.
2. The Ministry of Education should form a strategic plan to ensure mainstreaming of all special-needs students within the educational system and equip all public schools with the needed facilities to accommodate them.

At the civil society level

1. Creating a local education council to strengthen the coordination between local communities and educational institutions.
2. Encouraging CSOs to coordinate and share their projects and programs. This could be facilitated through a website dedicated to information and expertise exchange.
3. Coordinating between the CSOs and the media to spread awareness programs.

Other recommendations

1. Improving the academic level of teaching by:
 - ⊙ Adopting interactive teaching methods including the introduction of new technologies.
 - ⊙ Conducting continuous training for teachers.

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- ⊙ Enhancing administrative performance and raising its productivity.
 - ⊙ Providing psychological support for employees at schools.
2. Providing students with:
- ⊙ Educational, psychological and social guidance.
 - ⊙ An adequate learning environment.
 - ⊙ Extra-curricular activities.
 - ⊙ Various awareness campaigns as needed.
3. Enhancing the role of parents in the educational system.
4. Creating a link between education and the labor market through:
- ⊙ Preparing an educational and technical guidance program for parents and students to help the students choose an adequate profession.
 - ⊙ Introducing new curricula that match the new labor market trends.
 - ⊙ Introducing new technical majors and vocational education.

Box 6: Educational coverage in Bint Jbeil

The number and distribution of schools in Bint Jbeil is considered to be sufficient for the Caza. The Council for the South established schools in all the Caza's villages during and after the Israeli occupation. Many school buildings underwent damages during the Israeli war in 2006, few were totally wiped out. Several aids allowed the academic year to commence without any noticeable delay. These included: The Qatari Mission for the construction of schools, grants from KSA and UAE allocated to printing and distributing school textbooks, in addition to help from other international organizations (such as OXFAM and MANONIT). In fact, the new equipment in some schools notably outstood its pre-war levels, especially laboratory, IT, and art supplies. The number of students in the three levels of education exceeded 17,000 (8,000 in elementary level; 5,400 in the intermediate level; and 3,800 in secondary level). Students are almost equally distributed between public and private schools.

Reference: This section is based on the background paper "Bint Jbeil: Pillar of the Country", prepared by Mr. Mohamed Al Bassam, for the Arab NGO Network for Development.

Box 7: Loses in Akkar

Landowners and farmers could not sell their products in other Lebanese regions during the war. Losses were estimated at US\$ 799,500 in fruit production in Jouma and High-Qeita' and US\$ 400,000 in Qeita' plain and the Plain.

(Based on the background paper on the developmental needs in the Region of Akkar, prepared by Mr. Hisham Hashem, for the Arab NGO Network for Development)

D) Livelihoods and Agricultural Development ¹²

Brief overview of the situation

- ❖ Around two thirds of the population in the south works in agriculture.
- ❖ The Israeli war (2006) highly affected the agriculture sector: figures from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) indicated that the sector suffered losses of around USD 280 million and has left many farmers in debt.
- ❖ The FAO expressed that it aims to collect US\$ 17 million to assist agricultural societies in the South of Lebanon, offering seeds, seedlings, fertilizers and small irrigation tools to resume agricultural activities.
- ❖ The European Union (EU) projects aimed at developing local frameworks for sustainable development, covering agricultural infrastructure, guidance and orientation, and supporting agricultural cooperatives.
- ❖ Four NGOs were involved in aiding this sector: YMCA, World Vision and Mercy Corps, all supported by USAID. These projects include reforms to preserve basic agricultural infrastructure, and support and guidance for farmers.

Challenges

- ❖ Providing farmers with adequate support to overcome the war losses, and, at the same time, planning for any future emergencies.
- ❖ Rehabilitating the agricultural infrastructure and fields that were destroyed during the 2006 Israeli war.

Recommendations for future interventions

¹² This section is based on the background paper "The Agricultural Sector in Lebanon: from impeded development to ...?", prepared by Dr. Shadi Hamadeh, for the Arab NGO Network for Development.

Development stakeholders have identified the following recommendations for donors and local CSOs to develop the sector of agriculture:

- ❖ Coordinating efforts among the intervening entities to tackle challenges facing development in agriculture. Also, encouraging cooperative initiatives as a model for merging efforts, investments and funds.
- ❖ Rehabilitating the damaged agriculture infrastructure and clearing cluster bombs in agricultural fields.
- ❖ Providing vulnerable farmers with adequate in kind support to restore the economic balance of the families. In addition to reactivating agricultural credit programs.
- ❖ Creating jobs for farmers and enhancing their skills in the rural areas with emphasis on women.
- ❖ Establishing a marketing framework for internal and external outlets of agricultural products.
- ❖ Improving the legislative framework for sustainable agriculture.
- ❖ Updating the agricultural surveys on a yearly basis.

Box 8: Losses in Tyre

Agricultural land represents 75% of this Caza's surface. As a result of the war, the citrus season was severely relapsed due to the inability of farmers to irrigate and apply pesticides to fruit carrying trees (direct costs are estimated at 17% and indirect ones at 35% of total agricultural land). The banana season underwent double-fold damage. Farmers have lost the 2006/2007 season due to the drop in the weight of banana bunches from 30kg to 15kg and the reduction in prices due to their deteriorated quality. The 2007/2008 season yielded immature seedlings due to mal-irrigation on one hand and unavailability of fertilisers on the other. This necessitated farmers to uproot old seedlings and, fully or partially, replant them. This process in itself has incurred additional losses, where seedlings that have not been replanted would not provide the same crop within adequate time and in adequate quantity (direct costs are estimated at 15% and indirect ones at 38% of the total agricultural area). In addition to citrus and banana trees, greenhouses too suffered from losses. These latter were impacted at the level of irrigation, as Israeli bombardment of the irrigation canals in Litani and Ras Al-Ain impeded the irrigation process (this also applies to the citrus and banana fields). Tobacco plantation was also impacted by the war (direct costs are estimated at 35% and indirect ones at 70%), although not to the same extent as in other regions where tobacco is more prevalent. Olive-tree fields underwent a similar effect (direct costs are estimated at 10% and indirect ones at 17%); many farmers were not able to harvest their produce due to the spread of UXOs in the South (about 1 million bombs or 864 locations covering about 35 million sq.m. in the governorates of the South and Nabatieh, out of which Tyre covers 276 locations. UXOs are expected to be removed by the end of the year). It should also be noted that losses have hit animal resources (chickens, cows, goats, sheep and bees), in addition to burnt agricultural land that is in need of re-forestation.

Reference: This section is based on the background paper on the developmental needs in the Region of Tyre, prepared by Mr. Ismael Sharafeddine, for the Arab NGO Network for Development.

Box 9: Supporting agricultural development in Marjeyoun-Hasbaya

Overview

- ❖ Agricultural land: 3,620 and 1,240 hectares in Marjeyoun and Hasbaya, equivalent respectively to 26.2% and 27.19% of the area of each Caza.
- ❖ Agricultural products: olive is the main product for Hasbaya and tobacco the main product for Marjeyoun.
- ❖ The number of workers in agriculture reaches 2,325 in the region. Those who rely on agricultural production as a source of income are estimated to be 18% of the region's residents.

Challenges

- ❖ Limited irrigated surfaces (about 5%): 94.7% in Marjeyoun and 95.2% in Hasbaya are not irrigated.
- ❖ Inadequate infrastructure to support agricultural production.
- ❖ Lack of agricultural plans and limited agricultural resources.
- ❖ Fragmentation of properties.
- ❖ Lack of complementary services and product marketing.
- ❖ Weak quality management, especially in the use of pesticides.
- ❖ Weak cooperative framework (which necessitates attending to the growth of agricultural production, product quality, price control, promotion and marketing, etc...)

Recommendations

- ❖ Establishing advanced cooperative centres equipped for agricultural services.
- ❖ Raising agricultural seedlings, through establishing nurseries to produce forest, fruit trees and others.
- ❖ Levelling and reclaiming of deteriorated land.
- ❖ Promoting the establishment of agricultural greenhouses.

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- ❖ Launching drip-irrigation systems.
 - ❖ Creating agricultural canals and ponds that store water near springs to ensure environmental balance.
 - ❖ Developing animal production.
 - ❖ Establishing factories for manufacturing and packing agricultural products such as milk products, olive and olive products, vegetables and fruits.

Reference: This section is based on the background paper on “Developmental Needs in Marjeyoun”, prepared by Mr. Hany Assaf, for the Arab NGO Network for Development.

E) Urban planning

Brief overview of the situation¹³

1. The urban crisis facing Lebanese cities had worsened with time as a result of the total destruction of the developmental structures caused by consecutive wars. Lebanese cities lost their characteristics and architectural styles, making the functionality of their buildings incongruent.
2. The spreading of reinforced concrete buildings in a random and disorganized manner in all Lebanese areas and in a recurrent and monotonous way took away the attributes of the different areas in the country and destroyed many archeological sites and green areas.
3. Although the plan of return of the displaced people due to the civil war was expensive but seeking the harmonization of the accommodations with the infrastructure and arrangements, the execution came in interrupted phases. The costs were very high and the funds were spent on compensating the displaced and the residents without completing the reconstruction of the buildings, the infrastructure, service institutions and others.
4. The same mistake was repeated during the reconstruction of the South after the liberation in the year 2000 when the Council for the South and the government institutions started implementing projects without any coordination process. This caused problems especially in environmental and sanitary issues. It also led to chaos and law violations that erased the identity of numerous beautiful villages and towns along the border.

¹³ This section is based on the background paper "Construction and Rebuilding; A Course of Development", prepared by Dr. Mohammad El Hajj, for the Arab NGO Network for Development.

Challenge

1. Addressing the effects of economic and social developments on urban planning.

Recommendations for future interventions¹⁴

In order to effectively address the challenges in the Urban Planning sector at the national level, civil society organizations have identified the following recommendations:

At the policy level:

- ❖ Establishing a national body to administer the process of reconstruction.
- ❖ Anchoring the notions of reconstruction in permanent development projects to better use allocated funds.

At the level of civil society:

- ❖ Developing a civil society networking plan to:
 - Promote urban planning in construction and reconstruction.
 - Initiate a public debate on urban planning and its implications.
 - Create a single public management structure for reconstruction.
 - Coordinate the efforts of different stakeholders.
 - Establish a management scheme to preserve property laws and offer social and environmental services to local communities.
 - Monitor the allocation and spending of funds.

¹⁴ This section is based on the outcomes of the working group on Urban Planning, during the Conference on CSO Participation in Recovery and Development in Post-war Lebanon held on the 16th and 17th of January 2007.

Other recommendations:

- ❖ Accommodating the inhabitants whose houses were destroyed during the 2006 Israeli war.
- ❖ Removal of debris with suitable economic and environmental solutions.
- ❖ Improving infrastructure, economic and social services.
- ❖ Making all urban reconstruction and construction efforts accessible for disabled people.

Box 10: An opportunity to rethink urban planning in the Southern Suburbs of Beirut

The case of the Southern Suburbs of Beirut is an example of the necessity to tackle urban challenges through participatory and comprehensive public urban policies. The Southern suburbs of Beirut, like other areas in Lebanon, need urban services and efficient connection with other suburbs and surrounding areas. The Southern suburbs, as other suburbs, do not follow a particular architectural pattern or hold a historical or archaeological centre.

Accordingly, issues of solid waste, public transportation, or the distribution of public jobs, services and leisure activities, cannot be addressed by mere consideration of the city needs or through partial solutions to these needs. The solution lies in approaching the situation and needs of the suburbs in a manner complementary to the city without variance in terms of construction patterns and occupational and social neighbourhood formation.

In this context, the destroyed part of Southern Suburbs is to be reconstructed in a manner that allows its reintegration in the city, so that it becomes homogeneous in terms of its occupations, spirit and symbolism. Thus, the Southern Suburbs, particularly the destroyed part, require a new vision in reconstruction that relies mainly on a clear and simple master plan, at least at the level of the ground and underground floors. This plan should consider achieving the following goals:

- ❖ Returning residents to their locations or nearby regions as soon as possible.
- ❖ Developing plans for vacant areas, taking into consideration some missing basic needs such as schools, green spaces and parking areas.
- ❖ Considering the general characteristics of the residents in terms of demographics, social and economic structure.

Reference: This section is based on the background paper on the Development of the Southern Suburbs of Beirut, prepared by Mr. Mohamed Baraki, for the Arab NGO Network for Development

F) Environment

Brief overview of the situation¹⁵

1. The environment in Lebanon was highly affected by the latest Israeli aggression. Air pollution was generated by burnt fuel and kerosene at the Jiyeh power plant and Beirut airport.
2. Resources of fresh water were also affected by the war. Surface water was polluted from the remnants of destroyed bridges while groundwater was polluted from polychlorinated byphenyl (PCB) leakage, and from gasoline and diesel from damaged petrol stations.
3. Over 150 kilometers of coastline were affected by the oil spills. The Ministry of Environment (MoE) cleaned-up the coasts with the financial support of international organizations.
4. Biodiversity was affected by the war. Protected areas and fragile ecosystems were damaged leading to the destruction of wildlife and habitat. Practices such as dumping of demolition waste at Ouzaii near the coastline posed serious threats to marine biodiversity and habitats, especially with the risk of collapse of part of the waste mound into the sea.
5. There have been several post war environmental initiatives. Specifically, three major environmental assessments were launched after the 2006 Israeli war:
 - ❖ The first assessment was launched by UNDP aiming at identifying the main environmental impacts, proposing mitigation measures and action plans, and identifying the opportunities to green the reconstruction and recovery phase.

15 This section is based on the background paper on the environmental sector post-war, prepared by Mr. Ricardo Khoury, for the Arab NGO Network for Development.

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- ❖ The second assessment was implemented by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) on post-conflict environmental impacts, and focused on five areas: surface and groundwater, solid and hazardous wastes, chemical contamination, marine and coastal contamination, and issues related to weapon use.
 - ❖ The third assessment was launched by the WB and aimed at estimating the cost of environmental degradation caused by the Israeli war (2006).
6. In parallel to those general assessments, concrete actions have been taking place on the ground. Those initiatives are related primarily to cleaning-up oil-contaminated coastal stretches and sensitive areas. They are implemented mainly by the MoE, a local NGO called “Bahr Loubnan”, and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
 7. Several countries and agencies provided assistance for Lebanon to deal with oil spills. Assistance included services, equipment and expertise. For example, Canada, Monaco and Switzerland provided funding to assess damages and to clean up sites. Cyprus and Kuwait donated equipment while Finland, France and other countries provided expertise, personnel and equipment.¹⁶

Challenges

- ❖ Addressing air pollution.
- ❖ Treating sea pollution and coastal oil spills.
- ❖ Managing dumping of demolition waste without affecting marine and environmental biodiversity.

¹⁶ Oil Spill Operation and Coordination Centre (OSOCC), the Ministry of Environment, Lebanon. Source: Khoury (2007).

Recommendations for future interventions

The Civil Society proposed the following recommendations in order to overcome the environmental crisis in Lebanon:

At the policy level:

- ❖ Development of a comprehensive legislation regulating the management of construction and rubble removal. In addition to implementing the drafted Integrated Solid Waste Management Law prepared by the MoE.
- ❖ Adoption of a formal plan to provide for natural resources in the reconstruction phase.
- ❖ Updating existing legislation to consider post-war conditions in the area of reforestation.
- ❖ Development of the necessary legal framework related to environmental response in emergency situations.
- ❖ Creating incentives for farmers to adopt sustainable agricultural practices in affected areas and imposing best-practices for construction site dust reduction on contractors.
- ❖ Adoption of the National Implementation Plan for Persistent Organic Pollutants prepared by the MoE.
- ❖ Reinforcing legislation protecting natural sea reserves and developing a fish resource management policy.
- ❖ Adoption of the thermal building standards and enforcement of environmental standards in reconstruction.

At the level of civil society:

- ❖ Advocating the creation of a single public management structure for reconstruction. This management will preserve property laws as well as cater the social and environmental needs of communities.
- ❖ Advocating for a sound waste management.

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- ❖ Initiating a public debate on waste and rubble issues and on coastal protection & management.
 - ❖ Monitoring the planning, implementation and allocation of recovery initiatives funds.

Other recommendations:

- ❖ Managing demolition wastes especially those disposed in the South and the Bekaa.
- ❖ Assessing the impact of the Israeli war (2006) and the condition of Al Ghadir River.
- ❖ Conducting a comprehensive survey to identify the critical surface water sites.
- ❖ Initiating a cleaning up campaign along the coastline.
- ❖ Conducting a full marine biodiversity assessment in preparation for a long-term monitoring strategy for the Lebanese coastal zone.
- ❖ Conducting a more detailed assessment to monitor ecosystems.
- ❖ Formulating an environmental hazard contingency plan.
- ❖ Introducing environmental criteria in zoning of neighborhoods.
- ❖ Transporting oil storages away from the sea and the sea shore.

Box 11: Health and environment in the Southern Suburbs of Beirut

Overview:

- ❖ About two-thirds of the Southern Suburbs' needs of potable and usable water are not being met. Water is alternatively obtained either through stationary and mobile tanks or artesian wells, most of which are polluted and thus represent a health hazard.
- ❖ Al-Ghadir River springs from Wadi Shahrour and passes through the Southern Suburbs. It is nourished by many large springs, along which various agricultural and industrial activities are established. High levels of lead, zinc, chrome, nickel, and cadmium (heavy minerals), in addition to ammonium, sodium and potassium are recorded. These chemicals are hard to remedy in case they flow into underground water. The United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) report on Post-Conflict Environment Assessment pointed out that Al-Ghadir river is highly polluted. The tests also showed a very high level of petrol pollution caused by the burning petrol of Beirut Airport and its leakage into the river during the Israeli aggression in July 2006.
- ❖ Beirut and its suburbs face many problems of interpenetration of sea water. After the 1960s and 1970s, they witnessed a continuous economic boom that required providing additional water for domestic use (mainly due to: population growth, post-war reconstruction; migration towards the capital, abusive exploitation of underground water sources; decrease in the average rainfall in addition to the torrential rain that flows into the sea before being used). This depleted the underground water reserves and the basic sources no longer satisfied the population needs. The absence of proper water management definitely aggravated the problem.

Reference: This section is based on the background paper on the Development of the Southern Suburbs of Beirut, prepared by Mr. Mohammad Baraki, for the Arab NGO Network for Development.

Recommendations:

- ❖ Establishing an Environmental and Developmental Observatory for the Southern Suburbs. This observatory will facilitate access to information to provide a clearer understanding of the environmental and developmental situation in the SSB. Furthermore, it will monitor the environmental, social and economic changes based on environment and development indicators.
- ❖ Developing the monitoring process into a national reference in partnership with various public institutions, the academic sector, research centers, civil society and the private sector.

This case study shows a serious environmental and health problem in the Southern suburbs of Beirut whose impact has not been taken into account by public authorities. It demonstrates the importance of a civil society and regional consultations to attain a comprehensive approach to development challenges at the national level.¹⁷

¹⁷ Regional Roundtable on CSO Participation in Recovery and Development in Beirut's Southern Suburbs, ANND, 2007.

Box 12: War and environment in Bint Jbeil

- ❖ The water resource in South Lebanon is estimated at half of Lebanon's stock. However, the Caza of Bint Jbeil, despite its close location to a huge underground reservoir and rivers such as Litani, Hasbani, and Wazzani, does not have a permanent waterway.
- ❖ The major environmental damage in this Caza was caused by unexploded ordnances that cover around 34 million square meters of land. They were estimated at more than 1.2 million, equivalent to 6 times the number of the residents of south Litani regions. Noting that these regions are the most polluted. Moreover, trees were subject to various toxic gases.
- ❖ Villages will suffer for years from the effects of rubble and dust arising from the destruction and reconstruction; quarries and crushers are under pressure to generate stones necessary for reconstruction, and the presence of chemical and nuclear pollutants remains a controversial issue.
- ❖ One of the main recommendations formulated during the roundtable was to apply architectural, urban and environmental criteria during the course of reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Reference: This section is based on the background paper "Bint Jbeil: Pillar of the Country", prepared by Mr. Mohamed Al Bassam, for the Arab NGO Network for Development

Box 13: Recommendations for a better environment in Akkar:

- ❖ Cooperating with local municipalities and concerned parties to forbid game hunting for longer periods.
- ❖ Encouraging local municipalities to separate and recycle litter, using fermentation processes and other available and possible methods, in accordance with the capabilities of individual municipalities or union of municipalities
- ❖ Cleaning the coast of Akkar from waste and transforming it into a recreational coast.
- ❖ Collaborating with municipalities and health departments in the Caza to impose technical requirements on sanitary pools and force municipalities to laying down sewage networks that discharge in recycling plants, in order to reuse that water in irrigation.
- ❖ Encouraging ecotourism, establishing and preserving natural reserves.
- ❖ Preserving the environment and controlling the pollution of rivers and springs.
- ❖ Supporting municipalities and guiding them to play a role in planning buildings and housing units, stopping recurring illegal construction, and re-beautifying the Lebanese countryside.

Reference: This section is based on the background paper on the developmental needs in the Region of Akkar, prepared by Mr. Hisham Hashem, for the Arab NGO Network for Development.

G) Reintegration and reconciliation

Brief overview of the situation¹⁸

Reconciliation is a multi-dimensional process of healing, changing and building relationships after conflicts and thus is a long-term process and requires deep changes in beliefs and aspirations. It also requires changing attitudes, stereotypes and negative images of the “Other”. Reconciliation in Lebanon has been an elusive concept ever since the civil war ended in 1990.

The levels of violence witnessed during the fifteen-year war (1975-1990) are almost forgotten with the need to draw useful lessons from that experience. Moreover, the Returnees Reconciliation Program, that consisted of monetary compensation with no attempts of reconciling past hurt, seeking forgiveness or apology, demanding justice or memorializing what had happened during the war, imposed an uneasy civil situation.

The Israeli war (2006) has proven that reconciliation and cross-communal dialogue are as essential as monetary compensations and repatriation of the displaced. The war revealed deep schisms in society while state institutions turned their attention towards compensating victims. No real efforts have been made to start dialogue on the national level or address thoughts and feelings of victimization.

Equitable development also plays a major role in enhancing reconciliation and peace-building, however, apart from the major city of Beirut; Lebanon’s communities remain voluntarily segregated with insignificant inter-communal relations in the peripheral regions.

¹⁸ This section is based on the background paper “Reconciliation in Lebanon: An Uncharted Journey”, prepared by Mr. Oussama Safa, for the Arab NGO Network for Development.

Moreover, Lebanon's divided communities have left several groups feeling vulnerable or marginalized in the process of post-war decision making. Recently displaced people after the Israeli aggression in 2006 became vulnerable groups that needed the government's attention; in addition to the Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon, the civil war's Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and former militia members. Those groups must be integrated into an overall peace building framework and be part of a future vision of the country.

Finally, the marginalization of the former militia members could cause the war memory to disappear and hence lose an important part of the reconciliation process.

Challenges

- ❖ Providing adequate development across Lebanon while minimizing gaps among regions.
- ❖ Addressing the problem of displaced people, especially Palestinians.

Recommendations for future interventions

In regards to the challenges faced in the reconciliation process and mine action, civil society organizations and other development partners highlighted the following recommendations:

- ❖ Pursuing the truth about the fates of missing persons during the wars in Lebanon is an encouraging start for a reconciliation strategy.
- ❖ Conducting electoral reforms as a key entry point to rearranging relationships between communities and rethinking the political foundations of the system as a prelude to the full implementation of the Taif Agreement¹⁹. The new

¹⁹ The Taif Agreement, also known as the «National Reconciliation Accord.»

law would also have to adopt fairness of representation as its main backbone and appease the fears and insecurities of the various sects of the Lebanese society.

- ❖ Elaborating a plan that encourages non-confessional practices to divert people's thinking and attitudes away from sectarian calculations into more political dealings. This can be achieved through a new decentralization law and a medium-term plan to phase out confessionalism in the political and administrative system and through concrete provisions to reduce poverty and eliminate inequalities.
- ❖ Banning all forms of incitement in the media and encouraging them to join calls for peace-building and sustainable reconciliation.
- ❖ Adoption of a multi-dimensional approach of advocacy to facilitate interventions by CSOs. Civil society organizations will also be required to oversee the work of ministries on reconciliation and to monitor the media as well as take part in the implementation of the Taif Agreement.
- ❖ Cancellation of the discriminatory Property Law – decree no. 296 which deprives Palestinians from owning property in Lebanon.
- ❖ Excluding the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon from the Lebanese Labor law – decree no. 17561.
- ❖ Adopting the national dialogue as a formula for conflict resolution.

H) The Emerging Problem of Cluster Bombs

Brief overview of the situation

or «Document of National Accord», was an agreement reached by the Lebanese political factions. It provides the basis for the ending of the civil war and the return to political normalcy in Lebanon. The agreement was signed on October 22, 1989 and ratified on November 4, 1989.

Cluster bombs were part of an enormous quantity of ordnance fired by Israel into southern Lebanon in July 2006²⁰. During the first weeks of the Israeli air and land assault, Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) delivered up to 3,000 bombs, rockets and artillery rounds daily, climbing to 6,000 per day towards the war's end. An estimated 10% failed to explode and now litters the Lebanese countryside.

Challenges

- ❖ Clearing out any unexploded cluster bombs.
- ❖ Supporting displaced people and those who lost their income sources to rebuild their houses and compensate their losses.

Recommendations for future interventions

Civil society organizations proposed several recommendations for today's landmine action in Lebanon:

- ❖ Lobbying at the international level to get a complete list of bombed areas from Israel and to ban manufacturing, selling, buying and using cluster bombs.
- ❖ Providing assistance to landmine or unexploded ordnance victims. For instance providing them with needed medical services and helping them engage in income generating activities.
- ❖ Raising awareness on the risks of landmines and cluster bombs to make people adopt safety behaviors, especially that cluster bombs are blocking agricultural lands, pastures, and other extremely needed lands. Also, raising the awareness of landmine victims on their rights.

Box 14: Landmines and Development in Bint Jbeil

Unexploded Ordnances (UXOs) negatively affect agricultural land and have been identified as a severe risk for development in the region. UXOs cover about 34 million sq.m of land. They were estimated at more than 1.2 million, equivalent to six times the number of the residents of south Litani regions. The human damages could be also very high: 434 casualties, of different degrees, were registered in the region. This figure is bound to rise with the presence of UXOs. Currently, organizations such as the Lebanese army, UNIFIL, NGOs and UNMACC are disposing of explosive ordnance. Donors have supported the establishment of clearance capacity, and early indications are that sufficient funding should be available to sustain operations until December 2007. Approximately 140 personnel from the UK NGO Mines Advisory Group (MAG), BACTEC (a commercial company) and the Swedish Rescue Services Agency (SRSA) are working under the coordination of UNMACC, and are conducting survey and clearance operations in the south. UNIFIL has also been among the first to commence clearance operations.

I) General Conclusions and Recommendations

As mentioned earlier, development and rehabilitation processes need governance, state planning and implementation. Transparency and good practices should be reinforced in Lebanon. For example, proper procurement procedures should be respected; international agencies, local organizations and different official institutions should report their activities and the interested public should have the right to be informed of the different projects that are under way.

Within the scope of addressing the outlined challenges and related recommendations, the following cross-sector considerations would represent an added value within a comprehensive long-term development strategy:

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1. Preparing a master tripartite coordination plan among civil society organizations (national and international), the public sector, and the private sector. Such a plan requires a regional mapping of the active actors in the field, as well as an exhaustive listing of the ongoing and planned projects. The main objective of this plan is to guarantee the efficiency and effectiveness of the efforts towards sustainable development by avoiding duplication and overlapping
 2. Adopting decentralization as a strategy for equal distribution of wealth and balanced developmental interventions. Local actors, especially municipalities, suffer from the lack of public funding and the lack of human resources and technical expertise. They also suffer from some legislative constraints that affect their political and financial independence.
 3. Adopting a rights-based approach in developmental strategies, particularly when dealing with access to water, education, health, protection of the environment and even when it comes to reconciliation and social reintegration.
 4. Adopting participatory approaches during the implementation of the projects by integrating local actors such as Community Based Organizations (CBOs), municipalities, local private and public actors in the process of development.
 5. Reactivating and enhancing the role of the Lebanese Economic and Social Council as a permanent space for dialogue and information sharing between civil society organizations, public authorities, municipalities, and the private sector.
 6. Developing special recovery plans for the poorest Lebanese regions in order to overcome the inequality and development disparities among regions.
 7. Integrating humanitarian, emergency and relief

interventions within a comprehensive developmental vision; this should be based on a rights-based approach (rights in development, health, education, employment, social and economic rights...etc). Therefore, in case the state is not fulfilling its responsibilities towards the communities, the response should be by launching advocacy campaigns claiming these rights) instead of merely creating infrastructures. This is highly affecting national unity, weakening the central state and increasing tension.

II. National Development strategies²¹

A) Background on the Lebanese reconstruction and development context²²

Since the end of the civil war in 1990, Lebanon has been seeking political stability, social cohesion and security, and sustainable economic growth. Lebanon is one of the few countries in the Arab region with a history of relative democratic practices and political plurality. However, fifteen years of internal strife, followed by an unstable post-war period, have led to deterioration in these practices. This period included the presence of foreign armies in Lebanon, continuous aggression by Israelis starting in 1969, followed

21 Most of this section was taken from the paper: "Partnership of Civil Society Organizations for Development, the Case of Lebanon", which was prepared by the Arab NGO Network for Development for the Annual Report of the SHABAKA (November 2005). Many parts were referenced without rephrasing since the paper was written by ANND as this current paper is. However, it should be noted that this reference was initially prepared for the Annual Report of the SHABAKA (November 2005).

22 "Partnership of Civil Society Organizations for Development, the Case of Lebanon", prepared by the Arab NGO Network for Development for the Annual Report of the SHABAKA (November 2005).

by an occupation that extended between 1978 and 2000²³, and heavy interference by Syrian intelligence forces in all aspects of political life.

Lebanon has faced several political, social, and economic challenges since the end of the civil war in 1990 and after the end of the Israeli occupation in 2000. The geographically balanced development has been a major challenge in Lebanon. Both political and socio-economic reforms are highly needed to set the country back on the track of a balanced and sustained growth. Many promised reforms have yet to see the light, including decentralization and the strengthening of municipalities, secularization of the political system, the creation of a Senate, the cancellation of the confessional system within the public administration and the institutionalization of a voluntary secular family code²⁴. One of the main decisions was to create the economic and social council (ECOSOC) in 1999; although its establishment took into consideration confessional partition, it played a role in launching the debate among various players. Unfortunately, the ECOSOC expired in 2002 and it was never extended.

The political system embodies some discriminatory practices; it is set to represent confessional groups rather than manifest citizenship. Also, electoral laws tend to favor certain political factions over others.²⁵ On a different note, the judicial system has been weakened by excessive political interference. Accordingly, reforms are needed to enhance the effectiveness and fairness of several laws and policies.

23 A piece of land is still occupied by Israel known as "Shiba'a Farms"

24 This should be a step towards the total annulment of the confessional system.

25 It is worth noting that in December 2005, the Lebanese government nominated an independent commission to draft a law. In June 2006, the commission came out with a draft law including many important reform principles; in mid 2008, the parliamentary committee started working on a draft law based on the proposal of the commission. Despite the main reform principles related to districting, it was hijacked by the Doha agreement, but many other principles are adopted by the committee for now.

A substantial national debate took place on the socio-economic front between two main different visions and approaches. The first one was represented by the Lebanese government which directed its efforts towards setting successful reconstruction plans mainly focusing on infrastructure, in addition to policies aimed at enhancing economic growth and sustaining financial and monetary stability. While the second one focused on building capable public institutions and providing equal basic services to the regions: the main challenges on the Lebanese agenda throughout the nineties. Moreover, the government approach proposed that addressing the social challenges will be a natural result of economic growth²⁶. In this context, Lebanon accumulated a large amount of debt, which is around USD 44 billion, and thus puts the Lebanese under a huge burden. Privatization has been a hot topic in the last few years, and was presented as a solution for limiting government spending and debt expansion.²⁷

The Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR)

Lebanon has witnessed repeated episodes of war and reconstruction. The Lebanese civil war lasted around 15 years (1975-1990). Many initiatives to rebuild the country were launched before 1992, especially in 1977 and in 1983. After 1992, the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR)²⁸ was revived with a wider mandate. CDR presented a new plan for the reconstruction of Lebanon called “Horizon 2000”; a 13-year plan (1995 to 2007) with a budget of \$11 billion for public and social infrastructure.

26 The Social and Economic Conditions in Lebanon; Reality and Prospects (2004), publication by the United Nations Development Program, Ministry of Social Affairs, FAFO, page 3.

27 The summit of donor countries held in Paris in November 2003, called Paris II, decided to help Lebanon if the latter will promote reforms asking the IMF to monitor the whole process.

28 For more information on CDR, visit <http://www.cdr.gov.lb>.

In May 2004, CDR presented a National Development Strategy (Schéma Directeur d'Aménagement du Territoire Libanais – SDATL). It is the only official development strategy within the CDR to date. Notably, SDATL overlaps with the views of CSOs on issues related to development in Lebanon. Yet, efforts are still needed to elaborate further collaborations between SDATL, the civil society, and municipalities. SDATL focuses its work on eight essential points as follows: structuring the territory around powerful urban poles, including all regions in national economic development, providing an adequate transportation system, unifying the territory by a powerful grid system, ensuring quality urban development respectful of the characteristics of each area, emphasizing the natural wealth of the country, exploiting the water resources from a durable point of view in addition to effectively solving the problems of carriers, sanitation and solid waste.²⁹

The Economic and Social Development Fund (ESFD)

The Economic and Social Development Fund³⁰ developed a strategy for social development. The strategy highlights the need to address the chaos in the interventions being implemented in the field of poverty eradication in Lebanon (i.e. duplication of interventions, neglect of some sectors

29 Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR). 2004. "Schéma Directeur d'Aménagement du Territoire Libanais (SDATL) - Rapport Final. (May 2004).

30 The ESFD is an autonomous department directly attached to the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR). It was created in November 2000 with the signature of a financing agreement between the European Commission and the Lebanese Government and started its activities in June 2002. ESFD's work is based on tripartite partnership between the private sector, civil society organizations and public institutions by focusing our activities and efforts on two main areas: (1) Job Creation: aiming at creating job opportunities through the provision of small and micro-credits to SMEs through commercial banks; and (2) Community Development: aimed at improving access, distribution and quality of social services to deprived communities. For more information, visit the ESFD website: www.esfd.cdr.gov.lb

or segments that receive no interventions at all, the competitiveness of the funding agencies themselves, etc...).

This necessitates a collective effort to determine the responsibility of each sector through new legislation and administrative reforms. The Fund's strategy is based on the MDGs and on a comparative study with neighboring countries. The strategy also contains a poverty mapping that relies on two approaches; qualitative and quantitative. The map is annexed by a Geographic Information system (GIS) mapping, which would facilitate its use by the different public agencies and ministries.

Paris conferences³¹

During the Paris I meeting in February 2001, the Government of Lebanon presented its strategy for addressing the situation with fiscal adjustment to reduce the rate of accumulation of debt, privatization to reduce the stock of debt, and structural and institutional reforms to lay the basis for growth. It requested support from the international community to complement the Government's efforts and bring about a virtuous cycle of lower fiscal deficits, declining debt ratios, and lower interest rates that can unleash the hidden potentials of Lebanon's private sector.

In November 2002, the Paris II conference was organized. It was considered an unprecedented and unique event in terms of the number of participating delegations and their wide representation, the financial outcome, and the input of the local financial community that complemented it. The objective of the Paris II conference was to seek the support of the international community in helping Lebanon overcome its endeavor to alleviate the burden of the public debt and to reverse the macroeconomic and fiscal imbalances of the

31 The influence of international institutions' agenda on socio-economic rights in Lebanon, The case of «The Paris III conference» and the Lebanese reform agenda, Cynthia Abi Rached

Lebanese economy. The economic program that was presented to the Paris II participants defined a strategy that would, over the medium term, lead to a gradual decline in the high level of the public debt, a convergence in the budgetary situation and the achievement of better growth prospects.

In order for the Lebanese government to be able to reach its objectives, the international community was asked to help in tackling the debt problem, by extending long-term financing at interest rates significantly lower than the rates at which the government was borrowing in the domestic and international capital markets. Coupled with expected proceeds from privatization/securitization, reduction in expenses, and increase in revenues, the new financing at concessional terms would be the driving factor that would lead to a virtuous cycle of lower fiscal deficits, declining debt ratios, and lower interest rates.

Since the summer of 2004, Lebanon witnessed serious political instabilities that were mainly related to the forced extended mandate of the Lebanese president as well as the assassination of Prime Minister Rafic Hariri in February 2005. Two years later, the 2006 Israeli war, aggravated the already unstable and frail situation on the political and socio-economic levels and resulted in a large scale destruction of the Lebanese infrastructure. In this respect, the Lebanese government presented a program of early recovery priorities and sought the support of the international community which convened in Stockholm³² (Sweden) at an international

³² The Stockholm Conference for Lebanon's Early Recovery is a donors' conference organized by the Swedish government in close cooperation between the Lebanese government and the United Nations Development Programme and took place on August 31, 2006 in Stockholm. The conference was attended by 38 international donors and was dedicated to the early recovery and humanitarian needs in Lebanon resulting from the July 2006 hostilities and resulted in around US\$ 900 million of assistance. For more information, please visit the following site: <http://www.rebuildlebanon.gov.lb/english/f/Page.asp?PageID=1000011>

donors' conference. This conference was successful in ensuring international commitment to the early recovery efforts. Indeed, pledges were made to provide the Lebanese government with "1billion\$ in aid to which 1.2billion\$ were going to be added by some Arab governments to cover the rebuilding of destroyed houses."³³

Five months following the Stockholm meeting, an international conference took place in Paris – also known as "Paris III"³⁴. The conference's main objectives were (1) to provide direct support for the post-war reconstruction plan; (2) to secure cash for the due debt services; and (3) to cover the budgetary deficit. Surely, the Israeli war (2006) pushed the Lebanese government to reassess its reform priorities and plans which it had adopted in 2002. However, one should note that prior to the Israeli war (2006), the government had already embarked on elaborating a plan for social reform that was included in the "Lebanon's Economic Program" that the government presented officially to the Paris III conference.³⁵ It is also worth mentioning that the "Paris III" document is the only government-adopted document which includes the framework for a socio-economic reform agenda. Moreover, the framework included targeted social interventions, but it also included plans to introduce structural reforms to the ministries of public health, education, social affairs and the National Social Security Fund.

33 Abou Chacra, Sanaa. "Reform Initiatives in Lebanon", p.15. This paper will be published in the framework of ANND's regional project entitled "Democratic reforms in the Arab region: A focus on socio-economic reforms" in partnership with the UN Democracy Fund.

34 The Paris 3 conference was held on January 25 and was hosted by President Jacques Chirac in Paris.

The aim of the conference was to assist Lebanon garner the international community's support for implementing the reform program and for reconstruction, while alleviating the country's debt burden. Thirty six countries and seven regional and international institutions participated in the conference and approximately \$7.6 billion were pledged.

35 Abou Chacra, Sanaa, op.cit., p.16.

Lebanon's Economic Program (post 2006 Israeli war)

As mentioned above, the Lebanese government presented a reform plan to the “Paris III Conference” which aimed at stimulating growth, creating employment, reducing poverty, and maintaining social and economic stability. This reform plan underlined the aim of the Lebanese government to deal with the impacts of the Israeli war (2006). Among the objectives set within the plan was to “increase the role of Lebanon in the free trade system, and speed up the negotiations regarding Lebanon’s accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO)³⁶”, especially that the successive governments worked on accelerating the integration of Lebanon in the global economy, mainly through joining the trade liberalization agreements (WTO, Euro- Mediterranean partnership, Greater Arab Free Trade Area, free trade agreements of various kinds...) in addition to the heavy reliance on foreign aids and international financial institutions, which adds to the challenges caused by the global impact on the national economic strategies and policies.

The government’s reform program rests on seven pillars: (1) Growth-enhancing structural reforms to increase productivity, reduce costs, and enhance the competitiveness of the Lebanese economy; (2) a social sector reform agenda to improve social indicators and develop social safety nets to protect the most vulnerable segments of the population; (3) pension reform; (4) a strong phased fiscal adjustment that aims at increasing the primary budget surplus through streamlining expenditures and raising revenues in ways that minimize the negative impact on the poor; (5) a privatization program directed primarily at increasing investment, reducing the stock of public debt, and spurring economic growth; (6) a prudent monetary and

36 Ibid., p.17.

exchange rate policy aimed at maintaining price stability, facilitating credit to the private sector, and maintaining a sound banking system; and (7) an assistance package to help Lebanon finance the direct and indirect cost of the Israeli war (2006) as well as complement the domestic adjustment efforts, primarily by reducing interest payments on public debt and creating the kind of confidence that would encourage private sector investment and ease the pain of a domestic adjustment after the war.³⁷

The social action plan (post 2006 Israeli war program)

Following the Israeli war (2006) and the “Paris III conference”, the government prepared a Social Action Plan³⁸ which embodied its vision. This plan was included in the social chapter of the reform agenda submitted to the Paris III conference. The Social Action Plan called for a number of measures with the main objective of reducing poverty, those include:

- ❖ The establishment of safety net mechanisms to reduce poverty, including cash transfers to the poorest households.
- ❖ The elaboration of an integrated and comprehensive poverty reduction and social development strategy that reflect the government’s social vision.
- ❖ The implementation of reforms in the ministries of social affairs, education and public health in order to improve efficiency and cost effectiveness

37 For more details, read “Recovery, reconstruction, and reform: International conference for support to Lebanon”, 25 January 2007, Paris. Also available at <http://www.finance.gov.lb/NR/rdonlyres/89C37627-828E-4626-9F00-9A6498BB4082/0/ParisIIIEngVersion.pdf>

38 Republic of Lebanon, “The Social Action Plan: Toward Strengthening Social Safety Nets an Access to Basic Social Services”. The Social Chapter submitted to the Paris III Donors’ Conference in January 2007.

in the delivery of social services and the implementation of social programs.

- ❖ The establishment of an inter-ministerial committee for social issues. The committee shall be mainly in charge of monitoring and supervising the implementation of the Social Action Plan including putting in place a safety net mechanism that target the very poor, elaborating a national strategy for social development and promoting coordination among the government organizations in the delivery of social services.³⁹

The Ministry of Finance (MoF) noted the progress on reforms in the social, economic, infrastructure and privatization schemes in its 6th progress report on the Paris III plan that was presented on June 30, 2008. On the social level, the ministry noted the ongoing work on restructuring the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA); a comprehensive social strategy is formulated, in addition to the completion of establishing targeting mechanisms and expanding the coverage of proximity services provided to the disabled. Concerning the ministry of education and higher education, an education management system and an educational financing system were created. In addition to completing tasks related to strengthening school leadership, pedagogical capacity, assessment of academic achievements and equipping schools. As for the NSSF, progress has been noted in implementing the first phase of the administrative and IT master plan, and auditing of the accounts of 2001 was completed. Moreover, progress took place in tasks related to ensuring financial stability of the NSSF. On the infrastructure and privatization program, most scheduled steps are still ongoing or due at a later stage. On the economic and fiscal reform program, progress was noted in reforming budget

³⁹ A time-bound plan of action was devised for the proper implementation of the social action plan by the different ministries and stakeholders, and many components of the plan have been initiated and are running.

and financial management, reforming revenue management towards a function-based structure, strengthening debt management, and encouraging investments.⁴⁰

B) The role of civil society organizations within the national development process

The modern history of Lebanese civil society organizations and their role started with the Shehabist era⁴¹ in the 1960s and ended at the beginning of the Lebanese civil war—in 1975. During this period, the reformist agenda of this period stressed that civil society and governments should work together and witnessed the shift from the dominance of religious-based charity associations to the increase in secular organizations with development-based visions.

The war period had a major impact on the role of CSOs in Lebanon, whereby they gained an expanded role when they had to fill in for the absence of government institutions. Social welfare associations flourished during the war period, so did family and local community groups. In general, these and other civil society groups moved towards service provision and relief work in order to cover the needs of various constituencies in times of war. Lebanese groups have

40 For more details on the Ministry of Finance 6th Progress report please read "International conference for support to Lebanon-Paris III: 5th Progress Report." Available at <http://www.finance.gov.lb/NR/rdonlyres/C310CC18-5A84-47A0-86A7-884CFA72C5E3/0/ParisIIISixthProgressReportFinal.pdf>

41 The Shehabist era is a period during which Lebanon witnessed a large scale modernization process initiated by the Lebanese president Fouad Shehab. President Shehab installed a social security system, and initiated development projects in the underprivileged rural areas. The reforms also aimed at strengthening the general infrastructure, such as roads, the port of Beirut and telecommunications; and at strengthening the army and security apparatus. The policies of the Shehabist regime enjoyed widespread popular support from all the communities. The Shehabist policies were continued when Charles Helou became President in 1964, and lasted until the opposition came into power in 1970 with the election of Elias Sarkis.

maintained an effective role in that period and they built a good experience in various areas of service provision. They were able to attract a high number of volunteers, especially in areas of relief and emergency work, in addition to health and education services, literacy programs, as well as rural development. They succeeded in alleviating the burdens of several social services in various communities. They also demonstrated a significant level of partnership with the government, the United Nations, many foreign donor agencies and non-governmental organizations. These experiences proved the importance of cooperation and the potential for coordination and networking between various sectors in Lebanon.⁴² Currently, civil society groups are returning to focus on sustainable socio-economic development. Concurrently, more attention is geared towards international summits and global development agendas. Moreover, civil society groups are receiving more international funding and support.

Yet, civil society groups are not fully included as development partners in policy formulation at the national and local levels; for cooperation with the public sector has remained limited and often was concentrated at the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA). Civil society groups have undertaken common contracts on service provision with the public sector; however their role at the policy-making level (including policy formulation and evaluation) has been very limited, not to say non-existent. Three-way partnership between the civil society, the public sector, and the private sector is core to sustainable development. Within this scope, the civil society should be a partner in the formulation of policies, strategies, mechanisms of implementation and distribution of roles. They can play a central role in terms of enhancing transparency and accountability.

⁴² Partnership of Civil Society Organizations for Development , The Case of Lebanon, prepared by the Arab NGO Network for Development For the Annual Report of the SHABAKA (November 2005).

Within this context, the role of civil society groups beyond service provision, including their capacity to undertake advocacy, lobbying, and monitoring of policies, is questionable. Overall, there is a need to enhance the capacities of civil society organizations (including CBOs) on advocacy skills and constructive engagement in policy-making processes. It is worth noting that Lebanese community based organizations, especially those working in rural areas, have common structural and methodological challenges and that their programs lack advocacy components. Moreover, national and local organizations face the problems related to funding and sustainability of funding cycles. International funds and/or aid should be neither conditional nor based on the priorities of the donor; the target groups should determine their own priorities. Such challenges are shared with employees of the local public administration, such as employees of municipalities and local representatives of ministries.

On a more global level, civil society groups should address the challenges of globalization of policy-making and dominance of liberal economic recipes. They have a role in refocusing the national development agenda on the priority of social development, based on the concepts of human rights and citizenship, and the importance of the role of the state in providing basic social services. Within this context, networking and partnerships among civil society groups is a necessity. Their interaction with media groups is of added value as well.

Lebanese civil society groups have been active in tackling various aspects of social, economic, and political challenges. Although they faced structural challenges after the war and although resources are limited, civil society groups have been active in organizing themselves and identifying effective mechanisms for addressing national challenges. According

to the recommendations resulting from the first national conference for civil society groups in Lebanon that was held in 1999, there are several priority social issues that need to be dealt with, including⁴³:

- ❖ The living standards of a large proportion of the poor, high unemployment among the youth and unavailability of job opportunities
- ❖ Socio-economic discrepancies among various regions in Lebanon.
- ❖ Lack of adequate coverage by health and social protection systems.
- ❖ Provision of adequate basic services such as health and education to all population groups.
- ❖ Lack of effective national policies regarding major social groups including women, people with disability, the elderly, youth and children.
- ❖ Lack of adequate and implementable mechanisms for the participation of civil society in decision-making and policy formulation.⁴⁴

43 Final report of the National Conference for Lebanese Civil Society Organizations in 1999, section on priorities of social policies.

44 Partnership of Civil Society Organizations for Development , The Case of Lebanon, prepared by the Arab NGO Network for Development for the Annual Report of the SHABAKA (November 2005).

Box 15: Various complementary roles for civil society organizations

It has been commonly agreed that civil society organizations play an important role in the development process through their focus on the following issues:

1. Advocating and lobbying for the adoption of decentralization by strategically focusing on strengthening local community councils with active participation of the elected local authorities, local public administrations, CSO and CBOs, in order to ensure equal distribution of wealth and balanced developmental interventions.
2. Lobbying for the transformation from small-scale unilateral projects to a global master plan that encompasses productive activities and reaches out to a larger number of targeted beneficiaries.
3. Finding lobby mechanisms that influence national and local policies and pressure donor countries to fund sustainable projects based on national and local developmental priorities and needs.

Establishing a coordination mechanism to facilitate the communication and networking process between Lebanese civil society organizations, through creating follow-up committees that could serve in **planning and coordinating** with the central authorities, contributing to **directing aid and international donor agencies** towards needed projects, and participating in **monitoring and evaluating** the projects' implementation.

C) The role of international donors in national development

Lebanon receives one of the highest shares of official development assistance (ODA) in the world, amounting to nearly 12,500 USD per capita; a figure much higher than other Mediterranean countries like Syria, Egypt, Morocco and Algeria⁴⁵. Historical figures show that Lebanon has received almost 2.5 billion USD in development assistance during the 1975-1990 civil war; and that flows increased during the post-war era. France and Arab countries like Saudi Arabia were historically the largest donors to Lebanon.

After the Israeli war (2006), the international community engaged in reconstruction and development support for Lebanon, during the Stockholm and the Paris III conferences. The majority of aid (68 %) was aimed at supporting Lebanon's reform efforts either budgetary support or project financing in the form of grants (23 % of government support) and loans (77 % of government support). The pledges under Paris III are expected to be realized over the years 2007-2011. Both international institutions and countries played an important role in the Paris III Conference.

Donors have expressed interest in financing projects in the power, security, water and waste water, social, and transportation sectors as well as administrative reforms and privatization (Figure 6). Sectoral financing could be used for projects to improve the sector or for ongoing reforms. Donors who have expressed interest in the power sector include the European Investment Bank EIB - with an estimated \$182

45 Chaaban, Jad. 2005. Freidrich Naumann Foundation's Regional Conference, Larnaca, Cyprus. Presentation: "An Economic Assessment of the Euro-Med Partnership".

million, the World Bank with an estimated \$100 million, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development - AFESD (on existing projects) and Egypt. Donors interested in security include the United States, Germany, and Denmark. The water and waste water sector is a focus of EIB (approximately \$60 million in new projects), IDB (estimated at \$90 million), and Germany.

Donors interested in the social sector include the World Bank - with current discussions estimating \$100 million to finance the government's social sector reform program, and IDB with an estimated \$30 million in loans for schools and hospitals. Other donors focusing on the social sector include Italy, Germany (vocational training), Turkey, and Canada. Donors interested in financing projects in the transportation sector include IDB and AFESD (existing projects).

Projects for administrative reform are expected to be financed with loans from AFESD (existing projects), grants from the European Commission in the framework of the EC cooperation with Lebanon for the period 2007-2010, and Canada. EIB indicated that they may allocate \$20 million for technical assistance of privatization.

Figure 1: donor spending interests

Power Sector	EIB (estimated \$182 million), World Bank (estimated \$100 million); AFESD (existing projects) and Egypt
Water / Wastewater Sector	EIB (approximately \$60 million in new projects), IDB (estimated at \$90 million), and Germany
Social Sector	World Bank (estimated at \$100 million), IDB (estimated \$30 million), Italy, Germany, Turkey, and Canada
Transportation	IDB and AFESD (existing projects)
Admin Reform & Privatization	AFESD (existing projects), EC, Canada and EIB
Security	United States, Germany, and Denmark

Source: Ministry of Finance

An aid of \$231 million is directed to nongovernmental institutions and international organizations particularly to UNIFIL, UN Agencies and NGOs. These include support from the US (aimed at UNIFIL and subject to Congressional approval), UK, Norway, Denmark and Finland. Some of the pledges included contributions discussed prior to the Paris III Conference particularly during the Stockholm Conference for Lebanon's Early Recovery. It is estimated that \$834 million pledged are for projects currently underway in their early stages. The Ministry of Finance (MoF) estimates that \$230 million were pledged in the Stockholm Conference. Donors in this category include EIB, AFESD, EC, Islamic Development Bank, Germany, UK and Spain, all partially.

Partners in Paris III were mainly financing reforms in the electricity, water and social sectors via project loans; in addition to direct budgetary support to the Ministry of Finance

(MoF) and the Banque du Liban to curb down short term debt financing needs. It seems therefore that the donors' perspective is largely driven by debt concerns, targeting both short-term and long term-debt through aids. Although it is important to tackle debt, policymakers often forget (or ignore) the fact that public debt in Lebanon is largely internal (held up to 80% by Lebanese banks), and that reducing debt is more so a matter of modifying an implicit economic and social contract between the haves and have-nots in the country, by breaking-up the "supply chain" of public corruption and the banks' avidity for lucrative and secure public interest margins.

D) Comparing the views, roles and priorities of the government, civil society and international donors.

CSO critics of the Paris III reform agenda underline that the latter agenda only focuses on the "increased public debt and debt services."⁴⁶ Moreover, the "quality of life index in Lebanon, Palestine or Iraq is deteriorating whenever governments surrender to the international conditions"⁴⁷ that claim to better their economies. The Lebanese government favored "increasing the gains of the financial sector and its ability to attract more foreign investments". This reality has only "impoverished the remaining middle class."⁴⁸ To sum up, the government has disregarded human rights considerations and centered its attention on living up to the process of integration in the global economy and satisfying the economic liberalization agenda. It was also noted that over the past

46 Zbeeb, Mohammad. "The first year of Paris III: Hiding once again behind the political crisis". Al- Akhbar Newspaper, February 4, 2007. Available at <http://www.al-akhbar.com/ar/node/62529>

47 Ibid.

48 Zbeeb, Mohammad. "The first year of Paris III: Lebanon forced to apply a program with the World Bank." Al- Akhbar Newspaper, February 5, 2007. Available at <http://www.al-akhbar.com/ar/node/62650>

few years “unemployment has gone up between 15-20%”⁴⁹, “a tremendous emigration is happening”, “poverty has risen dramatically in North and South Lebanon and the Bekaa”, and “state services from electricity to phones and water suffers.”⁵⁰ This reality has resulted not only because of political instabilities that have pushed for a faster deterioration, but also due to the “inadequate policies of the 1990s.”

A core idea regarding socio-economic reforms in Lebanon concerns privatization and its potential impact on the access to basic services. To be sure, privatization in Lebanon is proposed within a context where the government lacks effective institutions and a clear vision and fears the inability to control and regulate prices. However, even though telecommunications and electricity are two mismanaged sectors, selling the latter to private companies will not be the solution. In this respect, one can note how the inefficiency or weakness of the core institutions which could lead to reforms (such as the socio-economic council) has paved the way for the IMF and international companies such as Booz Allen Hamilton to lead the management and coordination process for the implementation of reforms.

In order to draw up a quick critical review of what has just been presented, it is important to point out a few key points:

1. International aid remained mainly limited to macro projects, particularly in infrastructure and networks.
2. This aid, although enormous, might not be able to ameliorate Lebanese people’s well-being.
3. Thirdly, civil society has been broadly absent from the

49 Christoff, Stefan. “Karim Makdissi discusses the Doha agreement and Lebanon’s economic crisis”, June 11, 2008. Interview available at <http://globalexchange.org/countries/mideast/lebanon/5738.html>.pf

Dr. Makdissi is a professor in the department of political studies and public administration at the American University of Beirut.

50 Ibid.

decision on the channeling and destination of this aid. As a counterweight, the next section will place Civil Society Organization at the core and demonstrate its contribution to development in Lebanon.

E) Role of municipalities within the local development process

Municipalities play a central role in coordination between the national and local development initiatives. Yet, in Lebanon, the decentralization of decision-making power to local councils is not matched by the corresponding financial autonomy.

There is substantial evidence of a large gap between actual and potential municipal revenues that could be generated under the current law. Considering the macroeconomic context and the high fiscal deficits, it becomes urgent to pursue the municipal finance reform agenda and accelerate the adoption of measures adequately tailored to increase local revenues while encouraging spending discipline. Through upgrading and rationalizing the current municipal tax bases and improving tax collection at the local level, there will be room to foster the fiscal and financial capacity of the lower tiers of government.

Moreover, the municipalities count on the intergovernmental transfers from the Independent Municipal Fund that are legally due to them as a lump grant for capital projects, but the transfer system suffers from three equally compelling weaknesses. First, the Ministry of Finance (MOF) collects the pool of funds earmarked to the Independent Municipal Fund essentially through customs levies that account for the bulk of the Central Government's revenues to be transferred. Second, the total pool of funds is distributed with a lag. Although there is disagreement between MOIM and MOF on the length of the collection-distribution lag, the long period between collection

and distribution greatly erodes the real value of the transfer. Third, because of its confessional system of government and the perception of favoritism, there has been little deviation from the standard entitlement formula of per capita resource distribution across local government units, regardless of performance and transaction costs associated with delivery of results. Under current arrangements, the bulk of the pool (75%) is never actually distributed to local governments as a block grant, but instead is helping to shore up the central government's finances. Overall, the biased incentive structure does not properly reward the local contributive efforts.

Moreover, the gravest obstacle facing the work of municipalities in Lebanon is the absence of administrative and developmental decentralization, according to which the municipality could set its vision and related cooperation with the various factions of the civil society. Over the recent past, modern municipal management systems have been gradually pioneered to strengthen decentralization (i.e., budget process, accounting system, computerization, etc.) and there are plans to gradually introduce predetermined services standards. However, a number of issues and policy reforms still need to be addressed, mainly: the municipal entitlement based on its registered population, biased incentives to collect own revenues, soft budget constraints, out-of-date organizational structure, freeze on local hiring resulting in low levels of staffing, salaries of municipal employees at the low end of the government salary scales, etc. The resolution of these outstanding issues over time would largely determine the efficiency of local governments and the sustainability of the municipal sector.

Another point to note is that the municipal elections are usually based on a combination of political competitions and traditional relations including confessional, family, and clan

relations. Accordingly, elected members do not necessarily have the required experience and knowledge which should highly influence the role of local authorities and their ability to lead the implementation of development programs. It was observed that elected municipalities in areas under strict political control might be more apt to propose plans and projects yet they lack active participation; while elected councils in more diversified environments do not have the capability to do so despite higher levels of participation, which can lead to more potential plans collectively elaborated.

It is essential that the municipality assumes and performs its role according to the law-enshrined mandate. This should start with increasing competent employment in municipalities. The second step would be enhancing coordination with public institutions. The law allows the municipality to work with these institutions on issues of health and educational curricula, but it has not defined the cooperation mechanisms in those areas. Therefore, there is a need to clarify these mechanisms to achieve consistent and constructive cooperation.

It is worth noting that due to the inability of the parliament to convene, Lebanon was not able to issue national budget laws for three consecutive years (2006, 2007, and 2008); this was the main argument why the government did not reimburse the due budgets to the municipalities.

On a gender-related note, municipalities can support any initiative aimed at equality and female empowerment. The municipality also has the responsibility to continuously monitor the conditions of women. Unfortunately, no municipality has a monitoring process to observe the progress of the situation of women at the national level.

Box 16: Municipalities in Lebanon: Different Needs, Common Challenges

Overall, several challenges appear to be common among municipalities in various regions in Lebanon. These highlight some specific needs and related recommendations that could serve towards improving and enhancing the participation of municipalities in the developmental reform process.

Challenges:

- The dependency of small municipalities on the central authorities to provide them with the needed resources and guidance.
- Municipalities' work and orientations are based on political interests and not local needs.
- The lack of competence among members of the municipal councils to manage local development projects.
- The increase in the level of poverty in Lebanon especially in the rural region, which has a negative impact on the municipalities' performance.
- Citizen's negative perception of the public sector; the perception that the public sector is always corrupt has negative impact on the strategizing and implementation process.

Needs:

- A clear and legal definition of the concept of human development to be integrated in the municipalities' law and status.
- Better and more efficient use of the local available resources and know-how.
- Encouragement for civil society's participation in the development process and partnership with municipalities.

Recommendations:

- Maintaining high levels of coordination among civil

society organizations and other local development actors.

- Prioritizing local projects according to the local needs.
- Encouraging vocational training aiming at raising the awareness of local actors.
- Encouraging local projects with the aim of facilitating the inclusion of individuals with special needs in the community.
- Building the capacities of municipality members.
- Involving local organizations during different project phases, and empowering them whenever needed by developing local frameworks and committees and/or supporting existing ones to represent and carry people's aspirations and enhance their sense of ownership regarding local development projects.

Promoting a more efficient and monitored relation with donor agencies, whereby donors are directed to interact with people through their organizations, municipalities, and social and syndicate frameworks; and to coordinate with the government's central apparatus in order to avoid duplication and overlapping of projects.

Reference: the outcomes of the working group on the role of municipalities in development and recovery, during the Conference on Lebanese and international Civil Society's Participation and Partnership in Development in Lebanon, held on the 3rd and 4th of July 2007.

F) How to join efforts⁵¹

Within the process of elaborating and implementing a sound and sustainable development plan, there is a need to prioritize the participatory approach. Accordingly, rehabilitation and development plans should function in space and time in order to engage all stakeholders, especially local entities.

In this regards, a master tripartite coordination plan among national and international civil society organizations, the public and the private sectors is a necessity. Such a plan requires a regional (at the caza level) mapping of the active actors on the field, an exhaustive listing of the ongoing and planned projects, as well as efforts to centralize the information available about development projects and funds available in the country.

Success of a sustainable and equitable development plan rests on the active participation and ownership of local development agents, including – but not limited to – municipalities and local civil society groups. Each of these actors take on special responsibilities, but networking, coordination, and partnership among them represents an added value to national development processes.

Common planning and channels of follow-up communication are essential mechanisms that are needed to enhance the work of these various actors. Moreover, proper and substantial planning needs to integrate an evaluation mechanism as well as a capacity building process for various actors, especially employees of municipalities and civil society organizations in rural areas.

⁵¹ Partnership of Civil Society Organizations for Development , The Case of Lebanon, prepared by the Arab NGO Network for Development for the Annual Report of the SHABAKA (November 2005).

i. Among civil societies⁵²

Networking and partnership among CSOs is a means to strengthen their independence, agendas, capacities, voice, impact, and overall role in society. It is a way towards strengthening their partnership with other sectors; for partnership is built on respect, exchange, balanced relations, and independence of involved parties. Moreover, networks could ease the burdens of dealing with fundraising procedures and make resources more available and sustainable for small NGOs. The flexibility of networks could help in limiting the expenses spent on administrative and structural procedures. It could make more funds available for projects and activities, and could lead to better resource management.⁵³

Networking between CSOs helps in exchanging information and setting common understanding of development approaches. It helps groups to build common visions and to limit duplication, and thus use resources more efficiently. It is also a means to move from service provision to advocacy and lobbying roles. Proper networking can be a means for capacity building and skills sharing. Accordingly, it is a way towards achieving a more coherent and stronger role for civil society groups, whereby competition between them will be limited, while the complementary role would flourish.⁵⁴

Through successful networks, CSOs could reach out to regional and international forums where global development policies are being formulated. They can also elaborate

52 Partnership of Civil Society Organizations for Development , The Case of Lebanon, prepared by the Arab NGO Network for Development for the Annual Report of the SHABAKA (November 2005).

53 Abdel Samad, Ziad (October 2003), Paper on "Exchange, Cooperation, and Networking among Non-governmental Organizations", prepared for the NGO Resource Unit at the Ministry of Social Affairs.

54 Abdel Samad, Ziad (October 2003), Paper on "Exchange, Cooperation, and Networking among Non-governmental Organizations", prepared for the NGO Resource Unit at the Ministry of Social Affairs.

practical and effective alternatives which they can advocate at the policy-making level, given that they will be backed up by the support of all their partner organizations. In Lebanon, strong civil society networks would have the primary role of strengthening citizenship and national dialogue as a means of facing the threat of confessional divisions.

There have been several CSO networking experiences in Lebanon. Among them were the General Confederation of Labor Unions, the Lebanese Women Council, the Lebanese NGO network, the Forum of Humanitarian organizations, the National Union of Organizations Contracted with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA)⁵⁵, the Lebanese collective and others. However, the expected role and sustainable impact of these bodies was weak. The culture of networking and partnership has a lot of potential among civil society groups in Lebanon. However, there is a need to review these experiences and invest in enhancing their mandates and clarifying their weak and strong points. The factor of competition between groups, which is increasing as a result of the limitations on available resources, is hindering the opportunities for successful networking⁵⁶. Also, the ownership of common projects needs to be addressed since it is one of the most significant determinants of successful partnerships.

ii. Civil society with international donors

The more the civil society is empowered, the more it can create equal and balanced relations with its donors. Thus, empowering CSOs is a prerequisite for building strong

55 This gathering is for the organizations that offer services to various social cases according to an agreement with the Ministry of Social Affairs. These cases are mainly among orphans, people with disability, and very poor children.

56 Based on an interview with Ms. Sabah Badereddine, Director of the Social Movement organization.

partnerships. CSOs in the Arab region and in Lebanon are dependent on donations. Partnerships between the civil society and governments are rare. However, most local donations are directed to welfare and charity, and they target social welfare, humanitarian and hardship cases covering various sectors including health services, education and people with special needs. Funding resources for social and community development and policy-making are often provided by foreign donors. These latter depend on the nature of their own donors; they can be governments, governmental, intergovernmental agencies and private donors. Foreign donors follow different standards, rules and regulations which make their management harder and complicated. In order to face this challenge, CSOs need to elaborate clear visions and strategies enabling them to negotiate with international donors for adequate objectives and targets and better conditions of implementation of the grants.

During the Israeli war (2006), a big number of foreign NGOs, agencies and donor institutions directly intervened in an attempt to channel aids to the population in need. Many of them did not have relevant knowledge of the local and national contexts. Their interventions were mainly emergency and relief; they lacked alignment with clear and sound developmental perspectives and with needs assessment. Moreover, they often relied on foreign consultants and they recruited qualified local staff with a very high salary scale, imposing new standards far beyond the capacities of the local actors to handle. Furthermore, the lack of coordination among these foreign actors, in addition to the lack of coordination with the main local actors created turmoil. This led to mismanagement, duplication in many cases and lack of transparency and accountability, this of course would not have happened had the local actors been empowered enough in order to avoid this situation.

In this context, the Paris declaration on aid effectiveness (2005) and the Accra Action Agenda (2008) aim at improving the quality of aid by highlighting the following five principles: national ownership, partnership, alignment, managing of the results and mutual accountability.

Box 17: Understanding international aid

Civil society organizations are always eager to receive donations and funds from international donors. However, CSOs should be careful and must take several issues/dilemmas into consideration.

International agencies have their aid agendas. CSOs should not overlook them while attempting to gain funds. CSOs should investigate to obtain a clear understanding of donors' agendas, their interests, priorities and source of aids or funds. CSOs should have their own criteria for accepting aid or have the necessary power to change these conditions when they conflict with their interest. Refusing some aids or funds should be considered when needed. Fakherddine also stressed on the necessity for CSOs to have a clear agenda, vision and budget for their work. Having a clear vision will prevent the international donors from forcing their own agendas and policies. CSOs should understand that they have the right to share power and decision-making with the aid donor.

A clear example is when an international donor gives money to build a school after Israeli bombings without attempting to oppose or argue against the actions of Israel. Another example is aid spent on education of Palestinians who end up being attracted to jobs outside Palestine and inside the countries that have given aid leaving the unemployed in Palestine.

In Lebanon, several examples on poor intervention of international donors were clear during and after the Israeli war in 2006. The

international community started working 15 days after the conflict commenced while Lebanese CSOs together with the displaced people were already able to collect the necessary aid. Several international NGOs did not collaborate with the Lebanese CSO relief networks. They ended up paying high costs for their staff and duplicating some work in the South.

Reference: Proceedings of the discussions held at the civil society preparatory consultations on aid effectiveness held in Bahrain, between the 23rd and 27th of May 2008.

iii. civil society organizations with the government⁵⁷

Lebanese civil society groups clarified, most notably in the declaration of the first national conference for CSOs in 1999⁵⁸, that partnership is a means to enhance the role of various sectors and not to limit the role of governments in return for an expansion of the civil society's role. Civil society cannot be an alternative for government in the provision of social services. The role of the government is essential in setting development policies; yet a strong role for government should not imply a restriction on the space available for civil society. A balanced partnership between government and civil society, including partnership in setting policies, planning, implementing, and evaluating programs, could be a means for more effective,

57 Partnership of Civil Society Organizations for Development , The Case of Lebanon, prepared by the Arab NGO Network for Development for the Annual Report of the SHABAKA (November 2005).

58 The first civil society national conference was held in Beirut in November 1999 and was organized by many national NGO networks such as the Collective of Voluntary Associations and NGOs in Lebanon, the Lebanese Forum of NGOs, the Lebanese Women Council, the National League for the Rights of the Child, the National Association for the Friends of the Disabled, the National Council for Social Welfare.

cost-adequate public services that equally reach various factions in society. It could also lead to more comprehensive and effective policies that reflect the needs and priorities of local communities in various regions of Lebanon.

In a partnership relationship with the government, CSOs should be independent in their structural management and decision-making. CSOs should be keen on selecting adequate representatives to sit on joint committees; personnel that can reflect the organization's objectives clearly and firmly, and be able to envision the added value from the partnership and consistent participation and consultation with other groups.

Yet at the same time, partnership between the government and CSOs should not be limited to technical and administrative relations and joint committees. It should develop to reflect the new notions of development where the civil society's role is essential in the process of building a basis for democracy and social equity and is not constrained to service provision.

A real partnership for development between government and CSOs would necessitate that the latter have the right to set their needs and elaborate their vision, objectives, policies, and mechanisms. The partnership would be the result of the common grounds that CSOs and government could identify in all those areas. Accordingly, this process necessitates⁵⁹:

1. Setting a legal framework which provides CSOs with enough freedom and independence to choose their structural organization, targets, and programs. In Lebanon, the association law is relatively supportive of a vibrant role for civil society, although it could still be used to hinder freedom of association.
2. Establishing consistent and institutionalized

59 Abdel Samad, Ziad (October 2003), Paper on: "Exchange, Cooperation, and Networking among Non-governmental Organizations", prepared for the NGO Resource Unit at the Ministry of Social Affairs.

mechanisms of consultation between institutions of the public sector and civil society which could allow enhancing partnerships and limit competition, incoherence, and overlapping efforts. Several joint committees have been established for dialogue and consultation between the government and the civil society in Lebanon. However, their limited role has shown the necessity to review their structure and mandate, as well as, the criteria and efficiency of their mechanisms.

3. Supporting and acknowledging the right of civil society groups to defend and protect the citizens' political, civic, economic, social, and cultural rights.
4. Acknowledging the alignment between the roles of civil society in providing services and the importance of their role in advocacy and policy formulation.

The legitimacy of civic activity and freedom of association is integral to the international conventions on human rights, including both civic and political rights as well as economic, social, and cultural rights, which most Arab countries, including Lebanon, have ratified. The independence of CSOs is directly related to an adequate legal framework which includes independence of vision, objectives, programs, and activities as well as independence of management, organizational procedures, and financial processes.

It is important to note that partnership between the civil society and government institutions cannot prosper without mutual respect of that relation. On one hand, the government should respect the independence of CSOs and set criteria for managing this relation, especially in cases of common programs and service provision activities. In addition, the government should support CSOs through tax exemption procedures as well as direct financial contributions. On the other hand,

CSOs should develop a clear vision and identify the mission and targets that reflect the real needs and priorities of their constituency and social sectors that they are serving. CSOs should work towards establishing networks and coordination forums which could strengthen their voice and role. They should also work towards enhancing their legitimacy through respecting measures of transparency, accountability, respect of internal laws and financial procedures, as well as rotation of power and democratic internal processes.

Box 18: The Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA); a pioneer in partnership with civil society groups

MoSA was re-established as an independent institution after the war in 1993, through resolution 212. Its main role was to provide needed social services and protection to the most vulnerable and needy social groups; thus following issues of hardship cases such as orphans, people with disability, various family matters, drug addiction, families of martyrs and detainees in Israeli prisons, victims of war, and others. In principle, the target groups of MoSA include children, the elderly, and men and women in vulnerable social conditions. Its mandate indicated that services will be provided directly or through non-governmental service provision groups. It also indicated that the Ministry should follow-up and monitor these groups and their service provision in various regions of Lebanon.

Before the war, the Ministry had strong relations and very successful partnerships with civil society groups through the Authority of Social Recovery (مصلحة الانعاش الاجتماعي). However, during the war, partnerships became weaker as the Ministry was unstable and civil society groups were involved in short-term emergency activities. After the war, the Ministry worked on re-enhancing partnership relations with civil society groups. Partnership projects are funded by the Ministry at a 70% rate, and the remaining 30% is covered by the partner group through the

services they provide and not through financial contributions. For each project, a joint committee is established with representation from both sides. They meet on periodical basis and follow various stages of the project. MoSA's collaboration with civil society groups was highly important for the success of the regional social service centers that the Ministry established in various regions of Lebanon. Civil society groups often served as the link between MoSA and the local communities. MoSA considered civil society groups and NGOs partners in providing increasingly needed social services and a support in equitable outreach to various regions. The ministry perceives that the relationship with civil society groups should be built through partnership in setting the goals of cooperation, in planning the project, in identifying the ways it will be executed, and in the evaluation and follow-up phases. The responsibilities in all those stages are common to both sides and partnership cannot succeed if any of the partners did not commit to their responsibilities. MoSA helped in disseminating the partnership approach to other ministries, such as the ministries of environment and health. However, several obstacles face this partnership and reflect upon the weaknesses of both the Ministry and the civil society groups. MoSA deals with various kinds of service providers and finds a need to organize the way it is dealing with various groups and building partnerships. The ministry tried to work on guidelines for organizing its relationship with civil society partners. However, it was faced with a lawsuit from the civil society groups that refused the proposal and considered it an attempt to control and restrict their roles. It is important to note that the guidelines set through a participatory process could mean support and protection to the rights and responsibilities of civil society groups and at the same time a commitment from their side to the partnership with MoSA. It could also present a means for dialogue between both parties and better understanding of the nature of concerns of each side. In 2004, MoSA passed guidelines for the identification of groups and constituencies that are benefiting from the social services provided through its partner civil society groups. These steps reflect the Ministry's concern regarding the capacities and

specialization of partner groups. It was noted by the former Director General of MoSA that often the Ministry deals with applications from groups that do not have enough skills and capacities to identify the goals they are working for and prepare proposals that represent their vision and objectives. Accordingly, identification of adequate guidelines could be a means for better resource management and clearer responsibilities from both parties.

Yet, civil society groups are also often concerned with the bureaucracy of the Ministry and the sustainability of its policy regarding partnerships with them. One of the major concerns is the inefficiency of the committee that follows all matters related to civil society groups in the Ministry. This reality makes the policies and approaches to partnership related to individuals and not institutionalized. It is worth noting that the relation between the civil society and MoSA is mainly limited to service provision. It does not extend to cover the debate and the need to develop a comprehensive vision and strategies to face various social challenges.

Reference: Partnership of Civil Society Organizations for Development , The Case of Lebanon, prepared by the Arab NGO Network for Development for the Annual Report of the SHABAKA (November 2005).

iv. Cooperation between municipalities and civil society organizations

Through more empowered local governments, people are able to influence policy, participate as active agents in their own development processes, and link policies to the reality of local needs, including those of marginalized groups. Moreover, by involving people in local decision-making, decentralization can help foster improved forms of democratic participation. It is well known today that the building and strengthening of local community organizations enlarges opportunities for consultation, and the formulation and co-administration of local participatory development programs. Such local participation helps improve the efficiency of transparent projects and increases opportunities for targeted sustainable local investment.

In this regards, municipalities and civil society organizations must advocate together for both greater accountability and better local participation, and the creation of new and more effective entry points for individuals and civil society to shape governance.

However, there are several challenges to nurturing local accountability and participation. There is a salient need to adopt decentralization as a strategy for equal distribution of wealth and balanced developmental interventions. Local actors, especially municipalities, suffer from the lack of public funding and the lack of human resources and technical expertise. They also suffer from some legislative constraints that affect their political and financial independence. But simply passing a decentralization law will not result in immediate and active local participation. Nor does a clear judicial and institutional decentralization framework

automatically lead to a successfully decentralized system or greater levels of local participation and human development. Results-oriented policy recommendations should focus more on strengthening cultures of participation and recognizing that participatory democracy cannot be imposed from the outside. Policy recommendations should focus more on the available capacities at the local level by highlighting the ability of local actors, organizations and local governments to participate in the development process and be active and efficient partners in the socio-economic reform process.

Box 19: Recommendations from Akkar towards fostering the role of local actors in development processes:

- ❖ Support local organizations, inform them of the methods of research and statistics, and organize their administrative structure.
- ❖ Create a coordination mechanism between parties active in the Caza of Akkar, especially at the local NGO level.
- ❖ Undertake priority projects such as developing self-capabilities of youth in order to help contain unemployment.
- ❖ Strengthen the role of the society in the development process through spreading aiding concepts and developing skills of active individuals and organizations active in the development field.

Reference: Proceedings report of the “Regional Roundtable on CSO Participation in Recovery and Development in the Region of Akkar” organized by the Arab NGO Network for development, The Canadian Fund for Social Development/Oxfam Quebec, and UNDP Lebanon.

Box 20: Recommendations from Marjeyoun-Hasbaya towards fostering the role of local actors in development processes:

- ❖ Unify the vision of the general regional program or the specific program of the organization.
- ❖ Establish coordination bodies between NGOs active in the region in collaboration with a coordination body at the municipal level that executes and follows up the execution of the program, in addition to developing sector frameworks and relying on specialized resources for execution.
- ❖ Use the services of independent assessment bodies to assess the execution of the projects and their developmental advantages.
- ❖ Hold annual conferences for the region's authorities to:
 - Present assessment reports and discuss them.
 - Develop programs and axes in relation with new facts.

Reference: Proceedings report of the “Regional Roundtable on CSO Participation in Recovery and Development in the Region of Marjayoun-Hasbayya” organized by the Arab NGO Network for Development, The Canadian Fund for Social Development/Oxfam Quebec, and UNDP Lebanon.

Box 21: Recommendations from Tyre towards fostering the role of local actors in development processes:

- ❖ Identify interventions and initiatives required for achieving construction, development, rehabilitation, social integration and capacity building.
- ❖ Coordinate among civil society entities, local entities and the national entity to be able to emerge and overcome the war's impacts through developmental projects and programs.
- ❖ Encourage partnerships for development among all local and international players (with UN agencies, as well as local and international NGOs).
- ❖ Speed up projects, where CSOs are to play a dynamic role in setting plans, monitoring implementation and launching dialogue in order to reach solutions.
- ❖ Exert pressures to develop or adjust laws that facilitate citizen issues.
- ❖ Promote transparency and combat corruption.
- ❖ Pay special attention to the region's immigrants, in terms of encouraging them to invest in their towns.
- ❖ Form a coordination committee that comprises civil organisations, NGOs and municipalities in order to follow-up the implementation of the proposed program at the Caza level; besides, hold regular meetings to examine what has been completed and what is still unfinished.

Reference: Proceedings report of the “Regional Roundtable on CSO Participation in Recovery and Development in the Region of Tyre” organized by the Arab NGO Network for Development, The Canadian Fund for Social Development/Oxfam Quebec, and UNDP Lebanon

Box 22: Recommendations on fostering the role of local actors in development processes in Bint Jbeil

- ❖ Endow public spaces with attention equal to that of private property.
- ❖ Develop local frameworks and committees and/or support existing ones to represent and carry people's aspirations.
- ❖ Civil society organizations should involve those concerned during different project phases, and empower them whenever needed.
- ❖ Civil society organizations should maintain high levels of coordination among them and with other intervening entities.
- ❖ Apply architectural, urban and environmental criteria during the course of reconstruction and rehabilitation.
- ❖ Launch projects of sewage networks and rainwater drainage ditches by the municipal councils in all villages and towns.
- ❖ Form teams to forest wastelands and attend to their future needs.
- ❖ Extend the focus of municipal councils to empower individuals and create jobs.
- ❖ Municipalities should "take risks" in investing in projects that generate jobs and encourage tourism.
- ❖ Establish for-profit firms specialized in sewage networks and solid wastes.
- ❖ The government should follow preferential social, economic and financial policies in border regions, through:
 - 1- Setting investment incentives and tax exemptions to encourage investment in the region.
 - 2- Prioritizing South-made products, through higher demand and facilitated marketing.
 - 3- Implementing the water-towing

project for irrigation, industrial and drinking purposes.

4- Taking security and defense measures to support citizen resoluteness.

- ❖ Donors must interact with people through their organizations, municipalities, and social and syndicate frameworks and coordinate with the government's central apparatus.
- ❖ Donor agencies should pressure local partners and beneficiaries to prioritize environmental and urban considerations.

Reference: Proceedings report of the “Regional Roundtable on CSO Participation in Recovery and Development in the Region of Bint Jbeil” organized by the Arab NGO Network for Development, The Canadian Fund for Social Development/Oxfam Quebec, and UNDP Lebanon.

v. The Way Forward⁶⁰

Lebanon came to represent “a model of the interlink between foreign aid, weak sovereignty and a failing reform agenda, which does not necessarily reflect the national priorities but is a strategy drawn according to the donors’ vision.”⁶¹ The unstable internal political situation coupled with the challenges related to national sovereignty, have negatively impacted the ability of the state to elaborate a national socio-economic reform agenda reflecting the local needs and priorities. However, the

60 The influence of international institutions> agenda on socio-economic rights in Lebanon, The case of «The Paris III conference» and the Lebanese reform agenda, Cynthia Abi Rached.

61 Abdel- Samad, Ziad. “Foreign Aid and the National Reform Agenda: The Case of Lebanon”, op.cit.,

direct influence of foreign interventions in national policy-making over decades, the sectarian-based Lebanese political system, and the irrelevant successive public policies, have all contributed to the deterioration of the socio-economic conditions in Lebanon.

Although the Lebanese government has considered the path of socio-economic reforms more seriously - especially after the Israeli war (2006) on Lebanon - the reform plan presented at the “Paris III Conference” has been, so far, serving the needs of the integration in the international economy rather than securing the basic socio-economic rights of the Lebanese. Indeed, a human rights approach to socio-economic development is lacking in the proposed reform plan. This was clearly reflected in the rising pessimism, complaints and protests among the various Lebanese social classes, who have been asking for a more equitable redistribution of wealth by reconsidering tax policy and the social service delivery system. They claim to be paying increasing taxes to the state and receive very little in return. In this respect, the frail socio-economic reality may lead in the near future to serious social instabilities and street protests if the new government fails to engage various stakeholders, including civil society, unions, and the private sector, in elaborating a more specific and comprehensive reform plan that focuses on empowering productive sectors. Such a plan needs to move beyond sectarianism and narrow economic interests, and take human rights and national demands and priorities as the core tools to better prepare Lebanon to face international challenges and yet benefit from the regional surplus of oil revenue and the emerging opportunities in the global economy.

vi. Conclusion

This program “**Development in Lebanon: Poverty Eradication, Gender Equity, and Youth Participation; the Role of NGOs, Civil Society and Other Actors**” gathered in its workshops and roundtable discussions around 250 representatives from various local and international CSOs and governmental entities to exchange their knowledge and experiences on developmental projects and strategies. In addition, the program tackled the plans and processes of recovery and rehabilitation for the regions that were affected by the Israeli war in 2006.

The program revealed several recommendations. The first was the necessity to prepare a comprehensive national plan that organizes the efforts and coordinates the work of the three parties: local and international civil society organizations, the public sector and the private sector. This plan will require mapping the current active actors and the developmental projects taking place in all Lebanese regions. The availability of such a plan would guarantee the efficiency of all efforts and the prevention of any duplication of work or losses of resources. It was also underlined, that this plan should be prepared and coordinated by the concerned government institutions, with an active and substantial contribution from the local partners, i.e. the civil society and the private sector. This plan should be comprehensive, responding to the immediate needs, and should have a long term vision and objectives. Moreover, this national plan should contain a clear implementation plan with a timetable and division of labor.

Another recommendation was related to improving the capacities of CSOs and CBOs in order to enable them to better participate and enhance their roles in the development process of their regions, especially in rural areas. It was also noted that the role of CSOs is not limited to service delivery,

outreach and implementing development programs, but its role and responsibility is also to advocate and lobby for adequate policy-making and monitoring their implementation. Building the capacities of CSOs and local societies includes their empowerment and capacity development, including development of needs assessment and setting strategies, and plan for intervention and fund raising. Good governance and management is crucial thus developing management skills and resource management should be included in the capacity building strategy.

Adopting decentralization as an approach was strongly recommended for a better implementation of community development and integrated social strategies. Civil participation is an important methodology for adopting relevant programs and plans built also for securing the efficient implementation and sustainability of programs and interventions.

Coordination and networking were perceived as prerequisites for success. The different roundtables and expert meetings organized during the process came out with the conclusion that efforts should be unified in order to avoid duplication and waste of resources. This can be met by creating local councils with the participation of CBOs, local authorities and different actors at the community level. Moreover, coordination among donors and foreign actors should also take place in order to regulate spending and enhance partnerships; a vertical relation between the two levels of coordination (local and community level, foreign donors and actors) should be considered and implemented in planning, implementation and monitoring. The participation of local authorities is crucial in this regard.

The above-mentioned recommendations were observed during the regional meeting on aid effectiveness organized by ANND in May 2008, in addition to recommendations from other countries in crisis, particularly in Palestine, Iraq and Sudan,

and the main conclusion was to enhance Democratic National Ownership. This means the need to consider the national plans as a main source and reference, but these national plans should be designed according to a participatory process.

This was also raised during Accra's high level forum on aid effectiveness where ANND participated with a delegation of 7 persons. In Accra participants stressed upon the role of CSOs and the need to create the enabling environment for them to be able to actively and independently participate. But also in Accra, officials in the developing countries (including Arab countries) committed themselves to creating transparent, accountable and relevant national systems of delivery. Donor countries committed themselves to respecting this national system.

Finally, the financing for development process which will end with a global summit in Doha next November, stresses the need to implement national strategies for local and national resource mobilization and create relevant mechanisms for the best use of these resources. This was also proposed in the process where most of the participants were focusing on the fair redistribution of wealth and the best mobilization and use of local and national resources.

Summary of the Main Recommendations per Region

	Basic Community Infrastructure (Including Water and Sanitation)	Livelihoods - Economic Development	Basic Social Services - Education and Health	Livelihoods - Agricultural Development	Urban Planning - Environment	Reintegration and Reconciliation, Vulnerable Groups, and Mine Action Assistance
Akkar	Rehabilitate old electricity networks, and reconsider establishing high-voltage ones	Conduct a census and follow-up on crafts available in the region	Reinstate the preliminary class that links kindergarten and the first cycle of education Activate the school support program, which plays an important role in reducing drop-outs and promoting educational orientation	Revive the agricultural calendar Exploit agricultural land and activate the Green Plan	Preserve natural resources Attend to environmental awareness	Support local organizations, inform them of the methods of research and statistics, and organize their administrative structure Create a coordination mechanism between parties active in the Caza of Akkar, especially at the local NGO level

	Rehabilitate internal road networks, as well as roads that connect to archaeological and tourism sites	Encourage traditional handicrafts pertinent to Akkar	Activate the public hospital and establish other ones in different regions	Build internal agricultural roads	Municipalities: support environmental projects, promote the works of environmental organisations and provide donors' financing	Undertake priority projects such as developing self-capabilities of youth in order to help contain unemployment
	Reconsider collection modes through better promotion and an effective local collection formula within a municipal framework	Undertake a study on archaeological sites in Akkar	Supervise health services in dispensaries, hospitals and medical centres, as well as monitor the health care bill and service quality	Establish offices for agricultural consultation and orientation	Awareness campaigns: lectures and seminars	

Activate the Qlayaat Airport and the Aabdeh-Bibneen Port	Place Akkar among the main tourism sites of Lebanon	Promote primary health care in all health institutions	Establish agricultural laboratories (soil, etc.)	Quarries and crushers (set laws – management – monitoring)			
Establish a committee to follow-up on the execution of these projects	Encourage joint tourism		Provide a special market for cooperatives, and activate and monitor their roles, after having rehabilitated them and built their capacities	Analyse the pollution indicator			
	Develop the port of Tripoli		Developing aquaculture projects	Launch an experimental wind energy project			
	Establish an industrial zone north of Tripoli and promote it for investors with a newly created decentralized branch of IDAL			Develop programs for solid waste management			

Baalbak		Launch a promotion campaign for the city, targeting investors and tourists				Reforestation campaign	
		Establish an industrial zone in the Ryak area				Develop programs for solid waste management	
Bint Jbeil							
Dahieh							
Marjayoun						Develop programs for solid waste management	
Tyre						Create a national park in the region extending from Tyre to Naqoura	

This table provides a comparative summary of the main recommendations raised through deliberations among participants from municipalities and the civil society in regional roundtable discussions in Akkar, Baalbak, Dahieh (SSB), Bint Jbeil, Marjayoun-Hasbaya and Tyre; and some main recommendations found in the National Development Strategy (SDATL) of the Lebanese Government, pertaining to these regions. Recommendations were also classified by main developmental sectors. The comparison between the two tables shows a striking contrast between the local and national development recommendations. Local recommendations are broader, richer and more diverse than the national ones; and are concerned with priorities closely linked to the empowerment of poor and vulnerable individuals. The national recommendations put a higher priority on energy and solid waste concerns, as well as industrial and commercial development of major 'city-hubs' in Lebanon's peripheral regions. It seems that the national strategy closely adheres to a market-driven ideology in its local development reforms, while regional stakeholders put a higher priority on infrastructure upgrading and educational and health development; emphasizing greater investments in human capital.

Appendix 1

Overview of Poverty in Lebanon⁶²

The concept of poverty has a wide spectrum of meanings. Human poverty is multi-dimensional; it is not limited to the lack of income, it encompasses social indicators and non-materialistic needs, including human rights such as participation and empowerment in public life. According to the human rights discourse, the poor are those who cannot fulfill their various needs. Another way to measure poverty is by measuring satisfaction of households and individuals in several basic needs such as housing, education, health, basic services and the economic conditions of the household. Poverty is not restricted to any group or sect; it is a national phenomenon that touches upon various communities and groups. Moreover, poverty is not gender specific; both men and women are affected by poverty, have the right to live in decent conditions and be protected against discrimination of all kinds. However, women are much more exposed to poverty and discrimination than men.

When measuring poverty based on household expenditures in 2004-2005, 28.5% of households are poor (equivalent to US\$ 4 per capita per day), of these around 8% are extremely poor and unable to get their basic needs of food and non-food items (equivalent to US\$ 2.4 per capita per day). Regional disparities are observed in the prevalence of poverty across Lebanon. Around 6% of households in Beirut are poor compared with around 19% in Nabatieh, 20% in Mount Lebanon, 29% in Bekaa, 42% in the South and 53% in the North.⁶³

62 Proceedings report of the conference of the National Conference on Poverty Eradication in Lebanon organized by the Arab NGO Network for Development and the Canadian Fund for Social Development/Oxfam Quebec, 2005.

63 Poverty, Growth & Inequality in Lebanon. Executive Summary, United Na-

As for measuring poverty using the unsatisfied basic needs approach, households living poor living conditions (low and very low levels of satisfaction in living conditions) were estimated by around 30% of all households of Lebanon in 2004. Regional disparities are also noticeable in the percentage of households with low and very low living conditions. Out of households living in each governorate, the following percentages of households were poor: 9% in Beirut, 22% in Mount Lebanon, 34% in Bekaa, 42% in the North, 45% in the South and 50% in Nabatieh.⁶⁴

Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger constitutes the first goals of the millennium development goals (MDGs) and has direct impact on the achievement of all the other goals, and thus it is linked to the achievement of sustainable development.⁶⁵ It is worth noting that commitment to the MDGs necessitates developing national initiatives supporting their achievement at both the national and global levels; thus using the goals and indicators to measure progress on the human development front. Accordingly, the state is responsible for developing national strategies and plans for development and poverty eradication. Civil society organizations play a paramount role in monitoring the government's policies, evaluating the accomplished progress, and advocating for change when necessary. Still, less than a third of the world's states have succeeded in establishing such national plans based on the MDGs. Interestingly, the World Bank released an estimation

tions Development Program and the Ministry of Social Affairs. October 2007.

64 Mapping of Living Conditions in 2004. (in publication). Ministry of Social Affairs and United Nations Development Programme. 2007. Beirut, Lebanon.

65 The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are eight goals to be achieved by 2015 that respond to the world's main development challenges. The MDGs are drawn from the actions and targets contained in the Millennium Declaration that was adopted by 189 nations and signed by 147 heads of state and governments during the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000. The Lebanese government has committed itself to the Millennium Declaration and, thus, has committed to integrate the MDGs in its national development strategies.

of 1.4 billion people in the developing world [1 out of four people] living on less than 1.25\$ a day in 2005.⁶⁶

BOX 23: Measuring Poverty

To measure poverty, several approaches are used today, mostly initiated by the WB and UNDP;

- ❖ The national poverty line established and used by national governments (UNDP) (Applied in Lebanon).
- ❖ The Unsatisfied Basic Needs approach (UBN) (applied in Lebanon).
- ❖ The “Human Poverty Indicator” (UNDP).
- ❖ The percentage of people living on less than \$1 a day (WB).
- ❖ The percentage of people living on less than 2\$ a day (WB).

Accordingly, when it comes to statistical data, the following should be taken into consideration:

- ❖ There is a variety of statistical sources, which are sometimes conflicting;
- ❖ A common questionnaire is needed for collecting statistics in all the countries of the Arab region;
- ❖ There is a need to unify the statistical curricula and the national statistical approaches;
- ❖ The evaluation of the social and economic implications requires unified standards.

66 <http://econ.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTDEC/EXTRESEARCH/0,contentMDK:21882162~pagePK:64165401~piPK:64165026~theSitePK:469382,00.html> [accessed September 2008].

Poverty and gender⁶⁷

Human development cannot be achieved without maintaining gender equality. Poverty seems to deeply affect women, especially older women, and female-headed households. Women face more challenges and hindrances when they are involved in economic or political activities that lead to improving their own and their families' living conditions.⁶⁸ Despite tangible improvements in some areas such as education, gender equality and women's empowerment are still undermined by several constraints:

- ❖ **Discrimination within the family:** The Lebanese law recognizes 19 confessions and grants power to religious courts. Therefore, the personal status law depends on these various religious laws and not on one unified civil law, the Lebanese government made reservations on article 16 (related to CEDAW) concerning personal status, marriage and family. The linkage of family laws to religion resulted in perceiving these laws as permanent and not subject to reform or change.
- ❖ **Persistence of the traditional roles at home:** some cultural traditions do not encourage women to enter the labor market and restrict their roles to housework. This contributes to marginalizing women and thus depriving them from their rights and to maintaining their dependence on men.
- ❖ **Domestic violence:** Violence against women is common among all social groups. It is perceived as a legitimate act of discipline within the family. The law considers these cases with leniency even in the cases of honor killing.

67 This section is based on the proceedings report of the conference on Poverty and Gender Equity in Lebanon held on the 11th and 12th of October 2005.

68 <http://www.undp.org/poverty/genpov.htm>

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- ❖ **Participation in decision-making:** Discrimination in decision-making is not limited to the political sphere. These restrictions start in the family and extend to the professional and economic realms. Regarding political decision-making, and in reference to voter turnouts, percentages are almost equal between men and women. Moreover, the numbers of women candidates to the parliament and parliamentarians are rising (The 2005 elections brought six women to the parliament in addition to nominating the first female candidate to the presidency in 2004).⁶⁹ As for the executive authority, two women were appointed ministers among a thirty-minister cabinet. Women's numbers are also increasing in high positions within public institutions. However female representation is still weak in political parties, economic forums and unions. On a different note, more women work in administrative jobs and in intermediate professions and salespersons than men⁷⁰, however more men tend to reach higher positions in these domains.
 - ❖ **Stereotypes of women:** a negative image of women within the public sphere prevails. Their image in school textbooks, media, advertisements, children's programs and literature focuses on traditional stereotypes. For that matter, further studies should address these gender stereotypes and connect them to the implications in the economic situation in Lebanon. Awareness programs and related trainings on gender

69 The reform suggested in the electoral law by a special commission nominated by the government in December 2005, reforms (proposed a quota of 30% females among the candidates of each list, the law recommended a relative system) were hijacked in the so-called "Doha Agreement" in May 2008, when the participants agreed on restricting the introduction of such moves and reforms into the law.

70 The Ministry of Social Affairs, the Central Administration for Statistics, United Nations Development Programme. Living Conditions of Households, The National Survey of Household Living Conditions (2004). Beirut, Lebanon.

issues should be conducted. Moreover, monitoring institutions, which are concerned with the adjustment of the female image in books and media coverage, should be established and promoted.

- ❖ **Legal conditions:** Lebanon has signed the CEDAW with reservations on certain articles. The Lebanese constitution ensures equality among citizens; yet other legal documents still hold articles that discriminate against women in matters related to nationality, adultery, alimony, personal status, custody and divorce. The criminal code is also discriminatory against women in matters related to crimes of honor, rape, abortion, prostitution and kidnapping. In addition, most employment and social security laws assume that women do not hold the responsibility of supporting the family, except in the cases of widowed women or cases of absence or incapacity of the husband.
- ❖ **Differences in educational attainment:** There is no significant gender gap in the education sector in Lebanon. The enrollment rates of boys and girls are comparable up until the age of 13. After that age, it begins to favor girls. However, discrimination occurs in the quality of education, where the percentage of females rises in public schools and decreases in private education. Moreover, the percentage of illiteracy among females is more than that among males in the absence of a clear strategy to address this problem.⁷¹
- ❖ **Discrimination at work:** women work mostly in jobs related to the health and education sectors. Yet, unemployment among females is greater than among males. Moreover, men are generally paid higher

71 The Ministry of Social Affairs, the Central Administration for Statistics, United Nations Development Programme. *Living Conditions of Households, The National Survey of Household Living Conditions (2004)*. Beirut, Lebanon.

wages than women even when working at the same ranks.

Based on the above, advocating for women's equity in Lebanon necessitates advocating for justice in several aspects including: Full participation of women in development including equal distribution of social benefits; Breaking the gap between sexes in the development indicators; Laws and legislations and Partnership in the decision making.

The third Millennium Development Goal, “promote gender equality and empower women”, came as the result of continuous efforts and campaigns by international, regional and local civil society organizations. This goal aims to ensure the right of girls and women to attain full access to educational services in an attempt to abolish illiteracy among females and to secure them the chance to retain a fair wage for their productive labor and have more influence in decision-making processes. In addition, the MDGs address the need to protect women from poverty and hunger and reduce their vulnerability to AIDS.

National MDG reports help in assessing the accomplishments on these fronts and in supporting gender equity campaigns. Despite all exerted efforts, no region in the world has been able to reach complete gender equity in political, economic, and social rights. Yet, some have made better progress while others still witness significant disparities in women's access to health and educational services.

Finally, gender equity pertains to the necessity of offering men and women the same opportunities to enable them to develop their potentials and participate as equal members in society. Development will not be sustainable except through the political commitment and effective roles of the various stakeholders in society towards enforcing gender

equity. Accordingly, the advocacy for women's rights should not remain limited to women groups; it should become an important part of any governmental and civil society agenda.

Within this context, participants in the Seminar on Poverty and Gender Equity in Lebanon recommended the following interventions:

1. Enabling women to fulfill all their rights as citizens.
2. Enabling women to work and mitigating the challenges of reaching high positions especially those related to judiciary or general security⁷².
3. Developing public budgets and financial policies that empower women and maintain equality among all citizens.
4. Changing the legal family codes and the penal code; including removing all reservations on CEDAW and issuing a civil personal status law.
5. Spreading awareness on gender equality through the media. There is a need to guide media institutions on how to prevent negative imagery or language about women, especially when covering issues related to women in advertisements, talk shows and news, school books, children's programs and literature. Civil society organizations should seek to drive top officials of media institutions to commit to women's issues and promote them through allocating air time to this essential topic.
6. Maintaining gender equality measures in municipalities, unions and private sector.

The involvement of civil society organizations has contributed to the progress of women's conditions and respect of their

⁷² A ministerial decree on judicial selection promoting many women judges was stopped by the government in 2003-2004. The government argued that it will be hard for women to handle a high position in the judiciary in a country suffering a crisis.

rights in Lebanon. There are mainly three Lebanese examples of civil society initiatives that work on promoting women's rights and gender equality: The National Coalition on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, The Lebanese Women's Council and the National Committee for the Follow-up of Women's Issues.

Box 24: The National Coalition on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women:

Overview:

- ❖ Established in March of 1999 and includes more than 60 committees, unions, and organizations.
- ❖ Focuses on three themes that complement one another:
 - 1- Elimination of discrimination against women.
 - 2- Changing widely spread stereotypes regarding women.
 - 3- Spreading awareness regarding women's rights.

Activities:

- ❖ Organize several meetings around the CEDAW agreement and women's rights.
- ❖ Encourage female participation in political decision-making through supporting female candidacy.
- ❖ Communicate with Members of Parliament on issues related to the elimination of discrimination against women, especially in labor law, criminal law, employment system, social security, family compensation, nationality law.

The Coalition's work also includes:

- ❖ Proposing an electoral law that guarantees women a

minimum of 30% quota in Parliament, decreases the voting age to 18, limits electoral expenses and holds violators accountable, and ensures equality in media coverage.

- ❖ Campaigning on a national level for the equality between men and women (ex: the amendment of the nationality law).
- ❖ Working on the fiduciary system to make it egalitarian.
- ❖ Addressing the situation in prisons especially the mistreatment of female prisoners.

Box 25: The Lebanese Women's Council

Overview:

- ❖ Includes 152 Lebanese non-governmental organizations of different programs (awareness, health, education, or social services)
- ❖ It focuses on:
 - 1- Preventing discrimination against women through the rule of law (through working on the amendment of discriminatory laws and raising the reservations Lebanon has placed on the articles relating to the family law and the nationality law in the CEDAW).
 - 2- Supporting women to reach political decision-making positions via lobbying for new legislations that guarantee their full participation (The Council has developed a quota project that ensures women a fair percentage in top level jobs, elected councils, and government positions).
 - 3- Enhancing female participation in the economic realm and the national developmental process (through professional and practical training for women who wish to enter the work force. The Council encourages and guides them towards founding small income-generating projects).

Box 26: Experiences of civil society groups working on gender issues in Lebanon

The National Committee for the Follow- up of Women's Issues

Overview:

- ❖ Established on the 19th of November 1993 in preparation for the Beijing 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women.
- ❖ The committee's goals are:
 - 1- Enhancing women's participation on all levels of social, economic, and political life.
 - 2- Eliminating all forms of discrimination against women.
 - 3- Enhancing the respect of human rights, including women's rights.
 - 4- Raising gender awareness and incorporating it in the planning of national policies.
 - 5- Facilitating women's participation in decision-making and in exercising their rights and performing their responsibilities.
 - 6- Enhancing communication among women on local, regional, and international levels.

Activities:

On Empowerment and gender awareness:

- ❖ Spreading awareness and education on gender and its inclusion in the process of development.
- ❖ Establishing a center specialized in gender issues (organizes seminars, workshops, and meetings to discuss awareness and means of incorporating it in development and strategic planning).
- ❖ Issuing a magazine entitled "Kadaya" (issues).

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- ❖ Advocating for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women through organizing awareness meetings and preparing shadow reports on the implementation of the CEDAW (reports were issued in 1999 and 2004).
 - ❖ Developing studies and research that serve as a knowledge resource and advocacy tool on the situation of women.
 - ❖ Supporting women's participation in political life through organizing national campaigns and capacity building seminars in support of this cause.
 - ❖ Organizing workshops to train women on elections as voters or candidates in addition to workshops on monitoring the elections from a gender perspective.
 - ❖ Establishing a cultural Forum, where a series of meeting were held on various topics and throughout the Lebanese regions.

Poverty and youth

The youth are major actors in the dynamics of any society. Accordingly, there is a major interest among various stakeholders in enhancing their participation and input in development. Globally, the youth have been actively involved in many UN Summits starting from the 1992 Earth Summit to the 1995 Copenhagen Social Summit, and currently in the Millennium Development Goals Campaign. In addition, they have taken a major part in the development of the World Social Forum.

The Lebanese youth, as their peers in the rest of the Arab region, are currently facing a set of challenges in building a productive future; these challenges are directly related to poverty. When defining poverty, the youth commonly agree that a poor person is one who is unable to ensure the basic requirements for a minimum standard of living; including food, shelter and clothing. Moreover, they refer to living, employment, and educational conditions as social indicators that are heavily correlated with poverty. They further explained their views concerning these indicators as follow:

Education: regional disparities in educational indicators and services in Lebanon prevail. These include dropout rates and the quality of education. The high fees of private education including universities and the average quality of public educational institutions are major obstacles facing the educational progress of Lebanese youth.

Employment: The lack of job opportunities, the few well-paying jobs on the market, and the aforementioned gap within the educational system, all lead to increasing unemployment. One of the reasons for this is that the educational system does not match the needs of the labor market in Lebanon. The rate of unemployment is estimated at over 7.9%. Unemployment

is particularly acute amongst Lebanese youth, aged 15-24 (48.4% of the unemployed), with more young women being adversely affected than young men.⁷³ This is adding to the pressures on the youth and thus causing an increase in the rate of immigration.

Governmental support programs: The youth lack the proper support needed from the government and feasible programs through which they can fulfill their needs, demands and objectives. They also lack the ability to undergo activities such as foreign exchange and volunteer programs, educational and extra-curricular activities, and awareness programs. A significant proportion of Lebanese youth are active in political parties and an increasing number are starting to be involved with civil society organizations. However, it is essential to provide them with forums in which they can speak out and identify their own needs and priorities, as well as provide them with the training and opportunities to make them more responsible and active citizens⁷⁴. One of the important challenges for the youth is their ability to participate in elections; while the constitution gives the right to vote to those who are 21 years old, they ask to lower this right to those who are 18 years of age⁷⁵.

Human rights violations: the youth face numerous human rights violations, especially when it comes to the right of association and the freedom of expression and demonstration, which they often are more enthusiastic to engage in compared to other groups in society. Human rights violations are also

73 Ministry of Social Affairs, Central Administration for Statistics, United Nations Development Programme. Living Conditions of Households, The National Survey of Household Living Conditions (2004). Beirut, Lebanon.

74 During the May 2008 events, the youth were highly involved and mobilized in the armed militias. Some CSOs estimated that more than 2000 children (less than 12 years old) were armed on the streets.

75 The electoral reforms suggested lowering the voting age to 18, but this requires constitutional reforms, which will be postponed until after 2009.

reflected in the confessional discrimination deriving from the application of the civil code in Lebanon.

Finally, the youth summarized the reasons behind poverty in Lebanon as follow⁷⁶: Unemployment; unorganized labor force and the weak implementation of the labor laws and absence of studies on the labor market; high living expenses compared with low wages; inadequate development among the regions of Lebanon; low involvement of the private sector in the development process; heavy government reliance on tourism and trade; Budget deficits; lack of achieving a plan for educational growth; absence of democracy, stable regulations, political and social stability.

Suggested interventions:

Within this context, several recommendations have been suggested by the participants in the National Conference on Poverty and Youth Participation in Lebanon. These are:

- 1- Enhancing the role of the Ministry of Youth and Sports in shaping concrete and effective youth-oriented policies.
- 2- Reforming the educational system and improving its quality to ensure a high level of education that goes along with the technological and information development, and prepare the Lebanese youth to face labor market competition.
- 3- Encouraging Lebanese youth to stay and work in their regions by providing equal distribution of resources and services among the Lebanese regions; thus mitigating the exodus to urban areas.
- 4- Enhancing youth participation in the public arena by

⁷⁶ Based on the proceedings of the National Conference on Poverty and Youth Participation in Lebanon (28th and 29th January 2006), organized by the Arab NGO Network for Development in partnership with Oxfam Quebec and the Canadian Fund for Social Development.

lowering the voting age and encouraging them to join trade and labor unions.

- 5- Raising their awareness on the necessity of avoiding participation in armed militias and helping them engage in alternative activities including civic and civil education.
- 6- Raising their awareness on their health rights and providing them with more accurate information about sexuality and reproductive health as part of a wider public policy that aims at providing reproductive health education in schools.

Box 27: Interventions by the government and United Nations agencies in support of the youth in Lebanon

The Ministry of Social Affairs

Amongst its various projects aiming at empowering the youth to play their roles as effective partners in the development process, the ministry organizes volunteer camps in different Lebanese towns. These camps bring the youth together to work on local projects that aim at enhancing the living conditions in the hosting towns, as well as facilitating dialogues and interactions between the youth from different backgrounds and communities.

Moreover, the Ministry works in cooperation with the United Nations Fund for Population Activities on awareness campaigns tackling sexual and reproductive health, which include instructive techniques, such as theatre and art work. Within this scope, the Ministry works towards initiating a “youth network” trained to campaign on reproductive health issues all over Lebanon.

Box 28: Efforts of United Nations Agencies

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP)

The United Nations Development Program works in close cooperation with governmental bodies at empowering the youth to participate in public life and engage in public institutions. This process aims at enhancing trust between the State and its citizens. The UNDP launched a program entitled “Youth in Governance: Shaping the Future” within the Lebanese Development Marketplace 2006 Project, in cooperation with UNICEF and the WB. This project aims at enhancing youth awareness, their participation in public life, and their awareness regarding “good governance”. Moreover, there is a partnership between the UN Youth Task Force and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, aiming at developing a National Youth Policy in cooperation with concerned ministries and youth organizations.

The United Nations Educational and Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

UNESCO’s main project focuses on creating general orientations for youth policies, targeting the development of a clear set of demands from a youth perspective.

Through its work, UNESCO addresses the following issues:

- ❖ Children and youth have the right to adequate and universal education.
- ❖ Basic good quality education should be compulsory and available without discrimination.
- ❖ A good educational system should include competent and qualified teachers, un-biased books and curricula, and access to technology and information education.
- ❖ The need for a law enactment to make basic education compulsory for everybody.
- ❖ The need for executive decrees and specific mechanisms to ensure free and high quality education especially for youth in deprived areas and those with special needs.

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- ❖ The necessity to reduce all obstacles delaying and preventing the youth from joining primary, secondary and tertiary education, such as establishing universities and institutes in the rural areas.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)

- ❖ The UNRWA focuses its efforts on improving the educational performance of Palestinian youth, especially those with special needs.
- ❖ UNRWA's schools are facing many difficulties, especially the crowding in classrooms that encompass approximately 50 students, a number that increases yearly by 3.5%.
- ❖ UNRWA is addressing those constraints by adopting a double-shift regulation and minimizing the duration of each educational session to 40 minutes. UNRWA also offers weekend classes in order to finish the curriculum and achieve accurate outcomes.
- ❖ In this context, the organization seeks to acquire additional funds to improve school conditions and works towards enhancing cooperation with social and government institutions to address issues pertaining to eradicating poverty among the youth in Lebanon.

Impact of Israeli war (2006) on poverty in Lebanon

The Israeli war in 2006 affected Lebanon in various areas. Aside from the killing of 12,000 people and another 4,000 wounded, many other damages were recorded. Direct damages were estimated by \$3.6 billion during the war. These damages included sectors of agriculture, transportation, tourism and industry. In addition there were tremendous material damages in infrastructure, buildings, schools, roads and other establishments. Although the war ended on the 14th of August, Israel imposed air, sea and land blockades on Lebanon hindering people from working in industry and agriculture until the 8th of September; thus increasing their losses further. Indirect effects were also observed due to the decline in economic activity, these included increase in unemployment, decrease in public revenues and increase in public expenditures. Many talented Lebanese youth had to immigrate searching for opportunities abroad. ⁷⁷

However, it should be noted that Lebanon was already facing challenges in developing many sectors and alleviating poverty before the Israeli war in 2006. However, the war deteriorated the situation and delayed development and poverty alleviation interventions especially that the regions most affected by the war were the already most underdeveloped in the country.

Possible Poverty interventions

Collaboration among different actors (the government, CSOs, private sector, donors, etc...) in order to avoid duplication of work and to utilize resources (human and financial) more efficiently is necessary to be taken into consideration when intervening to alleviate poverty and improve the living conditions of the poor in Lebanon.

⁷⁷ Economic Impact of the July 06 War and Steps towards Recovery. November 2006, INFPPRO, Center for Economic Information.

Short-term micro-level interventions usually have limited outcomes. They may alleviate the poverty crisis but do not solve the overall problem. For this, a comprehensive poverty-eradication plan would be an integral part of a national development plan (which is reflected in the social action plan).

Within this context, several recommendations were suggested by the participants in the National Conference on Poverty as indicated below:

1. Specialized programs for the geographical areas characterized by a high poverty density; these are mainly the governorates of the South, Nabatieh, the North and Bekaa.
2. Specialized programs targeting the most affected population groups among the poor; these include female heads of households, the elderly, working children, unemployed people, people with special needs and others.
3. Specialized interventions to achieve specific goals originating from the MDGs and the national specificities of the poor. These include programs related to improving or providing services and conditions of education, health, employment and others.

However, it should be noted that when looking at poverty levels, it is necessary to distinguish between levels of extreme poverty and overall poverty rates.

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