

A Practical Guide for
Civil Society Organisations
in Lebanon on

ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT



Funded by the European Union
بتمويل من الاتحاد الأوروبي



Project implemented by ACTED
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LEBANON
SUPPORT

The Team

Lebanon Support Consultant/Main Author: Ahmad Mroueh

Research Assistant: Sarah ElMasry

Junior Researcher: Karen Rahme

Project Manager: Hovig Atamian

Civil Society Incubator Programme Manager: Rola Saleh

Deputy Director, Publications: Lea Yammine

Cover and Template Design: Nayla Yehia

Design Layout: Farah Rizk

Translation: Chadia Nohra

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Introduction

Members of society naturally come together, organise, set their priorities and take operational steps, without the need for intricate management and complicated work mechanisms. These individuals instinctively established the first form of a civil society organisation. With time, and with the development of the concept of civil society and its different forms of organisation, it became clear that achieving the desired priorities and objectives requires planning, as well as effective performance and management, to avoid squandering financial, and human resources. Accordingly, achieving this level of effectiveness necessitated putting several procedures and steps in place, and drafting accurate policies for members of these organisations to abide by.

This guidebook aims to build the capacities of civil society organisations' members, prepare them for using organisational management tools, and introduce them to good governance mechanisms. It also presents the key points of discussion that have emerged during the past few decades on whether focusing on effective management actually contributes to the achievement of goals and objectives of civil society organisations, or whether it has become a main obstacle to the development process. In fact, this has turned into a global debate within all civil society organisations. Whereas some believe that the primary purpose of management is to assist and support organisations and programmes, and that a transparent, organised managerial model helps to avert several risks in terms of squandering resources, prevents corruption, and enhances the accountability system, others believe that management simply consists of dull, time-intensive bureaucratic work that disrupts productivity.

The major challenge lies in choosing managerial models that suit the nature and scope of each organisation's work, and adapting to the fact that internal and external transparency and accountability have become principles rooted in the work of civil society organisations, and

require cooperation between all of the organisation's internal bodies to achieve the set goals and objectives.

The guidebook is divided into four main sections, with each section addressing topics related to CSO management and the different aspects thereof, as follows:

- Section 1: Civil Society in Lebanon
- Section 2: Good Governance and Leadership in CSOs
- Section 3: Resource and Programme Management
- Section 4: External Relations of CSOs

Back to basics: Civil society Concepts and Management

Non-Governmental Organisation

It is a non-profit organisation that is independent of the government and does not seek power. Civil society organisations unite people in order to promote common goals and interests. They vary depending on their objectives, which could include service provision, regulation, research, advocacy, etc. A non-governmental organisation is any non-profit, voluntary group of citizens at the local, national, regional, or international level, driven and led by people who share common interests. Non-governmental organisations provide different humanitarian services, and functions. Some are designed to deliver citizens' concerns to governments, while others advocate, and monitor policies, and encourage political participation by providing information. Certain organisations are built around specific issues, such as human rights, the environment, or health, provide analyses and expertise, and assist in monitoring, and implementing international conventions.

Accountability

Commitment to show that work was carried out in accordance with the agreed upon rules and standards, or to report performance outcomes in a fair and accurate way in terms of the agreed roles and/or plans.

Transparency

The extent to which people in charge (e.g. government officials, civil servants, corporate and organisation managers) carry out the required work in a clear, predictable, and comprehensible manner. It is worth noting that transparency does not only imply providing access to information and the different ways of interpreting it, as large amounts of primary information may lead to ambiguity rather than transparency. Transparency also aims to enhance participation and accountability mechanisms.

Good Governance

The process through which public institutions conduct public affairs, and manage public resources to promote human rights in a way that is free of misuse and corruption, while ensuring respect for the rule of law.

Legal Framework

Local and international legislations that govern the work of civil society organisations and explain the relationship between different authorities, as well as their role in regulating the work of civil society organisations.

Organisational Structure

This term focuses on the relationship between different functions within the organisation. The structure identifies the powers and responsibilities in various duties and activities, and establishes mechanisms for communication and interaction between the different roles and functions.

Participation

Individuals working side by side within society. Participation may be direct or through legitimate institutions representing the different stakeholders.

01

Civil Society in Lebanon

1. Definition

For the purposes of this guidebook, we will adopt a broad definition of civil society, as this section will attempt to clarify, and explain it more in depth. As such, civil society is defined as the realm of institutions, organisations and individuals existing in the space between the family, State and market, where individuals are voluntarily associated to promote common interests.

Our guidebook focuses on non-governmental organisations, or what is commonly referred to in the local context and the literature as “associations.” The European Council defined non-governmental organisations as “voluntary self-governing bodies or organisations established to pursue the essentially non-profit-making objectives of their founders or members.”¹¹

2. CSO values

Many may consider the institutional values of CSOs and social movements to be self-evident. However, it may be useful to highlight some of these values, in order to remind the workers of such organisations of the values that guide their work and give meaning to the existence of these entities. This section will focus on the basic values that are necessary for civil work, which may be developed in accordance with the culture and awareness of the organisation and its members. They include:

- Humanity;
- Cooperative spirit;
- Democratic organisation;
- Transparency;
- Non-violence;
- Diversity and respect for others;
- Volunteerism;
- Non-discrimination.

3. Forms of Civil Society Organisations

Civil society organisations vary considerably and are not limited to a particular form. They do not necessarily have to be institutionalised and registered with relevant legal departments. International charters protect the right to form CSOs, particularly the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, through its Article 20.

Social movements around the world have witnessed various forms of organisational frameworks, as they always seek the form that is most consistent with the nature and goals of the movement. Thus, we find that they do not adhere to the traditional forms imposed by the law or norms. Rather, what matters to them is that the group’s

form is consistent with their needs, and goals. As such, their organisation varies from horizontal to hierarchical structures. However, this difference does not negate the

effectiveness of traditional frameworks that have been tested over decades, and have proven to be useful in a number of experiences.

4. Legal Framework in Lebanon

There are several legal frameworks that govern CSOs in Lebanon. Further, CSOs are subject to a number of different official authorities, depending on their chosen nature, and legal form. The most prominent regulating legal frameworks include:

- **For associations:** The Lebanese Law of Associations, which is an Ottoman law issued on 3/8/1325-1909. Despite its longevity, this Law provides the largest margin of freedom for organisations and establishments, whereby it requires founding members to notify the concerned department of their decision to form a community organisation. Upon receiving the registration number in official departments, the association automatically becomes legal. This is known as the notification number.

To date, the formation of political parties in Lebanon is governed by the same Law.²

- **For trade unions and employers' organisations:** The Lebanese Labour Law issued in 1946³ governs the formation of unions in Lebanon, and the terms thereof. Article 83 of this Law gives employers, and wage-earners of all occupational categories, the right to form a union, which is a legal person that has the right to litigate.
- **For youth, sports and scouts associations:** Decree No. 8990 on Regulating the Sports, Youth and Scouts Movement,⁴ requires all applicants who wish to form such associations to submit a complete file in accordance with the specified terms, and to wait to obtain a permit.
- **For cooperatives:** Legislative Decree No. 17199 of 18/8/1964 issued under the authority of the Ministry of Agriculture, and based on which founders submit their required documents. Approval is given after proper consideration by the Directorate-General of Cooperatives.

- **For social companies (non-profit companies):** The Commercial Law in Lebanon allows for the establishment of social companies by judicial decision only. These organisations emerged in recent years and, according to the rules of their registration, follow the same procedures as commercial companies. However, they engage with CSOs to create social impact.
- **Youth groups:** They are formed spontaneously and do not seek to be registered as a civil society organisation.

Requirements for the establishment of CSOs:

Associations and Parties (Law No. 3/8/1325-1909)

- 3 copies of the Internal Regulations and the Articles of Association.
- An individual extract or a copy of the ID card, and a criminal record of all founding members.
- The announcement-notification statement signed by all founding members on all its pages, and submitted to the Ministry of Interior or Governorate centres.

Youth and Sports Associations (Decree No. 4481 on Regulating Sports, Youth and Scouts Movement):

- 3 copies of the General Regulations signed by all founding members on all pages.
- 3 copies of the tables of information on founding members, including full name, date of birth, occupation, address, phone number, fax numbers, postal address and email, and signed by all members of the constituent body.

- An individual extract, or a copy of the ID card, and a criminal record of all founding members.
- The minutes of the Constituent Body's meeting, signed by all members.
- 2 legal occupancy documents for the chosen headquarters, and the adopted facility or facilities, provided that they include the following options:
 - a. The lease agreement registered in the municipality under the name of the association's constituent body, the duration of which is no less than 3 years.
 - b. The acknowledgment of tolerance agreement between the owner and the association's constituent body, which is certified by the Notary Public, and has a duration of at least 3 years.
 - c. The headquarter that the public administration, public institution or municipality may place at the disposal of associations by a duly issued official letter.
 - d. A map of the headquarters signed and sealed by an architect or a civil engineer who is a member of the Order of Engineers and Architects.
- A map of the stadium, hall, field, pool, or facilities designated for the specified games or activities, signed by an architect or civil engineer who is a member of the order of Engineers and Architects.
- The real estate certificate of the stadium, hall, field, pool or facilities, or a statement of notice for unsurveyed areas.
- A commitment to provide the Ministry with a template of the associations' official seal after authorisation is granted within a period of one month at the most, sealed on the official paper template adopted by the association and signed by all founding members.

Cooperatives (Legislative Decree No. 17199 of 18/8/1964)

- A cooperative formation request (signed by at least 10 people).
- A copy of the ID cards or individual extracts of applicants.
- A social study of the town/village in which the cooperative is intended to be formed, or a statement from the local mayor (mukhtar), or any other official document that proves that the applicants who wish to join the organisation undertake work relevant to the cooperative within the geographic scope.

- An economic study of the project to be implemented by the cooperative.
- Applications are submitted to the regional departments of the Directorate-General of Cooperatives, except for cooperatives that are intended to be formed in Beirut, wherein applications are submitted to the Central Administration of the Directorate-General of Cooperatives.
- The Administration studies the application, and then refers it to the Director-General. If the application is approved, the cooperative is formed after the stakeholders deposit a sum in the bank equivalent to the capital that should be paid.

After the cooperative is formed, the Central Administration shall complete publication, and registration procedures.

Employee and employer unions (Lebanese Labour Law, Articles 87 and 88)

- 3 copies of the authorisation request.
- 3 copies of the Internal Regulations.
- The criminal records of every founding member.

Applications are submitted to the Ministry of Labour – Trade Union Department for decision-making.

Non-profit civil companies

Code of Obligations and Contracts – Chapter 2 – Contract Companies, Section 1 – General provisions, common between civil companies and commercial companies

- The company's Internal Regulations, or Articles of Association.
- Opening a bank account that confirms subscription with the company's capital.
- The minutes of the founding General Assembly's meeting.
- The minutes of the first Board of Directors' meeting.
- The commercial license – a copy of the title deed, lease agreement, or occupancy certificate for tolerance of the company's address.

5. Rights-based Principles for Establishing CSOs

Citizens' right to the freedom of assembly, and to the freedom of opinion and expression, are established in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 20 of the same Declaration stated that "everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association."⁵ This was underlined once again in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in Articles 19 and 21 thereof.⁶ Thus, the principle of assembly is a right, and does not require the approval of authorities.

The Lebanese Law of Associations is an Ottoman Law that was issued on 3/8/1325-1909, i.e. before the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Nevertheless, it respects the basic right to freedom of assembly, and the right of participation in peaceful associations, and includes, in addition to local associations, foreign associations, and parties. It is the only law in Lebanon which enshrines the right of establishment by notifying authorities, and not by obtaining authorisation.⁷

02

Good governance and leadership in CSOs

1. Good Governance

During the last two decades, the concepts of democracy and transparency have evolved significantly. This stage was accompanied by a new pattern in Civil Society Organisations, and UN Organisations, that have moved towards promoting concepts gaining increased relevance, such as: participatory planning based on needs assessment, democratic mechanisms for election, decision making, transfer of power, transparency and accountability, as well as good governance, which is an overarching concept that encompasses all of the above.

“Good governance” is a major term that has drawn the attention of several international actors, and organisations – especially those working in the field of development, as well in academic circles. This has led to the emergence of several definitions for the term. The concept of good governance consists of the interaction

of a set of factors and mechanisms, resulting in optimal management.

In order to simplify the concept of good governance, we can break it down and reformulate it as follows:

Good governance is a transparent decision-making process used to lead a non-profit organisation in an effective, and accountable manner. This type of governance consists of a system of oversight and guidance at the institutional level, that identifies responsibilities, rights, and relationships with all relevant groups, and clarifies necessary rules, and procedures for making good decisions related to the organisation’s work. It is a system that supports justice, democracy, transparency, and institutional accountability, and promotes trust, and credibility in the work environment.

2. Principles Underlying Good Governance

In order to establish a system of good governance, civil society organisations are required to review their internal regulations, and work on approving internal policies that clearly set necessary roles, and procedures, to ensure a transparent, and impartial process. The principles that need to be adopted to enhance CSOs, and make them more transparent and just have been identified as per this figure:



3. Leadership in CSOs

A. Internal Bodies

CSOs generally consist of three main parties:

- **The General Assembly:** In general, it is the highest authority in any organisation and is responsible for making major decisions, such as the general strategy, and directions of the organisation. It also chooses from its members, preferably through an election, the administrative body. It exercises accountability whenever the regulations allow for it.
- **The Administrative Body:** It is the executive authority directly responsible for the organisation's work. It ensures the implementation of strategies approved by the General Assembly, while respecting policies, and procedures. It supervises the work of employees, and workers within the organisation (if any). The size of the administrative body is determined in the internal regulations of the organisation, and usually ranges from 3 to 12 members.
- **The Executive Team:** It is the executive arm of the administrative body. It is usually paid for its work, and abides by the administrative body's decisions and instructions.

Several CSOs often consider target groups to be parties involved in the success or failure of the organisation's work. Many organisations involve target groups in decision-making processes, either through direct participation in the organisation's meetings, or through a participatory approach to set the organisation's strategy.

The basic duties of each CSO body:

General Assembly

- Highest authority within the organisation.
- Includes all associate members, and actors.
- Convenes at least once a year.
- Elects the administrative body.
- Certifies financial reports, and progress reports,

or refers them to the administrative body for accountability.

- Approves the strategic plan, and general budgets of the organisation (by a majority greater than 50%+1).
- Approves amendments to the internal regulations (by a majority greater than 50%+1).
- Members should meet the following conditions:
 - a. Adhere to the organisation's regulations, and values.
 - b. Have good conduct, and behaviour.
 - c. Commit to carry out their obligations towards the organisation.
 - d. Recommended by members of the association.
- After verifying that the individuals meet the required conditions, they become members. A specific period should pass before they are considered General Assembly members. General Assembly members are volunteers who annually pay a contribution, as specified in the internal regulations.

Administrative Body

- Elected by the General Assembly.
- Convenes regularly, at least once every two months.
- Ensures the implementation of the strategic plan.
- Mobilises necessary resources to achieve the organisation's mission and objectives.
- Sets general policies of executive nature.
- Represents the organisation before all governmental and non-governmental bodies.
- Keeps records, and correspondences.
- Approves executive budgets.

Executive Director/Director-General

- An employee generally chosen by the administrative body.
- Attends the administrative body's meetings as the person in charge of the executive team.

- Is the link between the administrative body, and the executive team.
- Is directly responsible for the working team.
- Submits progress reports to the administrative body.
- Reports the administrative body's decisions to the executive team, and ensures their implementation.
- Prepares action plans, executive plans, and programme budgets, with the executive team, and proposes them to the administrative body.
- Ensures proper distribution of duties among the executive team.
- Works with the administrative body to mobilise financial resources whenever possible.
- Represents the organisation, upon the administrative body's request.
- Attends the General Assembly's meeting without participating in the vote.

Executive Team Employees Workers

- The team is chosen by the executive director according to the requirements of the projects, and the organisation.
- Aims to implement strategic plans, and the administrative body's decisions, as effectively as possible.
- Regularly reports on progress to the executive director, and general-director in line with the hierarchy.
- Ensures respect for the organisation's values and culture during programme implementation, including human rights and governance values.
- May attend the General Assembly's meeting without participating in the discussion (unless asked to do so) or the vote.

Several organisations benefit from the capacities of their members, by involving them in permanent or temporary ad-hoc committees that work under the supervision of the Board of Directors, and can serve the association in several ways, in terms of funding, programming or management, depending on the internal requirements.

B. Duties of CSO Bodies

General Assembly: The Ministry of Interior generally provides a template for the Internal Regulations of non-governmental organisations, which describes the duties of the General Assembly, as follows:

The General Assembly is the highest authority in the Organisation, and its powers include:

- Electing the administrative body by secret ballot.
- Reviewing reports submitted by the administrative body, discussing completed works and projects to be implemented, and giving opinions thereon.
- Providing suggestions, and recommendations to the administrative body.
- Discussing the Organisation's budget, and approving the final account of the past year.
- Amending the Organisation's Regulations.

These duties also apply to unions, and youth and sports associations, albeit in different forms, depending on the size of the General Assembly and its regional, and organisational distribution. Founders may choose the duties they see fit, provided that they maintain the General Assembly's legitimate duties.

Board of Directors: There are a number of conditions that administrative body members should meet. These conditions fall within the category of self-evident norms, such as the member being active in the Organisation for a specific period of time, or being committed to devoting enough time to carry out the duties entrusted to them by the Board of Directors. Despite the gender quota not being rooted in the CSO culture yet, it is important to respect gender representation within Boards of Directors. With regard to duties, American researcher Richard Ingram⁸ suggests 10 duties for the Board of Directors of CSOs, and explains each of them in detail. These include:

- Identifying the Organisation's mission, and objectives.
- Choosing the Executive Director.
- Supporting, and assessing the Executive Director's work.
- Ensuring effective planning.
- Monitoring, and enhancing programmes and services.

- Ensuring adequate financial resources.
- Protecting assets, and providing financial control.
- Forming a specialised council.
- Ensuring legal and ethical soundness.
- Enhancing the Organisation's public position.

These ten duties may be adopted, or a similar version thereof may be used. Great importance lies in the clear and unambiguous separation of powers, , in addition to setting clear responsibilities.

It is worth noting that the number of Board of Directors' members differs from one organisation to another, but it should preferably consist of at least three members, as there are three basic functions that should not conflict with one another. These include:

- The Chairperson, who is also the official representative and speaker of the Organisation.

- The Secretary, who is responsible for all documents, and correspondences of the Organisation.
- The Treasurer, who has the primary responsibility of the Organisation's finances and is in charge of preparing periodic, as well as annual financial reports.

The Board of Directors is accountable to the General Assembly with regards to the financial and administrative performance, as well as the Organisation's achievements, and failures during its mandate. It may only be discharged after reviewing all financial and progress reports, and may be subject to legal action in case a criminal act was proven.

Executive Team: The executive Team is the executive arm of the Administrative Body, and it consists of experienced individuals specialised in their respective fields of work. They are subject to a contracting system that is meant to respect decent work standards. The team works within a specific organisational structure, and it reports directly to the Board of Directors.

4. Good Governance and Decision-Making Mechanisms

The Board of Directors is the sole party responsible for decision-making in CSOs. Even if employees make decisions, the Board of Directors remains the only authority in charge of decision-making, according to relevant authorities, and the General Assembly. Thus, these decision-making powers, and their various levels, should be agreed upon while drafting the Organisation's Internal Regulations. Their parameters should also be agreed upon to avoid overlapping, and conflicting powers.

It is important to give careful consideration when drafting the Organisation's Internal Regulations, as this stage is critical in determining all matters related to the Organisation's identity, the nature of its work, its internal organisation in terms of membership and member management, the powers of its internal bodies, such as the General Assembly and the Board of Directors, and the internal decision-making mechanism.

Decision-making is considered one of the basic functions of the Board of Directors at all administrative levels.

It is one of the most complex responsibilities for the senior management, and it becomes less complex as we move down the administrative hierarchy. As such, the middle-level management exercises decision-making using less complex methods as a result of the issued basic regulations, and instructions for decision-making. Similarly, decision-making becomes a routine process for the executive management as a result of the issued policies and procedures that set specific control mechanisms for executive decision-making.

The decisions to be made by the Board of Directors, and those to be made by the executive management, can be easily classified as all strategic and policy decisions are to be taken the Board of Directors, such as:

- Choosing the Executive Director.
- Determining the internal wage scale.
- Identifying the strategic programmes and plans.

- Identifying partnerships and donors.

Although it may be easy to describe, the reality of decision-making and consensus is complicated and influenced by several factors central to reach a decision

that serves the interests of the Organisation, and its beneficiaries, but also contributes to enhancing trust. Thus, these factors should be considered with every need for decision-making.

5. Decision-making

Importance of the decision	Respect for mechanisms and procedures	Trends and aspirations	Values and beliefs	Available information
External pressure	Psychological factors	Element of time	Sense of responsibility	Personal interest

Stages of decision-making:

In order to reach a particular decision, it is necessary to adopt a method that is in line with the Organisation's values, ensures respect for everyone's opinion without discrimination at all organisational levels, and considers the views of the majority. The democratic method relies on the sequence of the below stages to reach a deeper understanding, and make a decision that is more in line with the Organisation's interests:

1. Identify the problem
2. Study the problem
3. Collect information
4. Suggest alternatives
5. Analyse the consequences of all alternatives
6. Choose the best alternative
7. Make a decision (by consensus or by voting)
8. Follow up on the decision

Some may add to these eight steps the stage of consulting with specialist members, partners, and experts, which is known as the participatory approach to decision-making. Although not always self-evident, it is important that every decision is given sufficient time, relative to the issue at hand. Decisions should not be passed quickly and without careful consideration, especially with regard to issues such as increasing the wages of the executive team. Decisions should also not be delayed or avoided when there is sufficient information, as this will surely harm the Organisation's interests.

03

Resource and Programme Management

1. Introduction to Executive Management of CSOs

Management principles are universal, whether applied to a large company with stock listings, a small family-owned institution, a governmental department or a non-governmental organisation. Regardless of whether the organisation's main objective is to make profit (such as a commercial institution), to provide services (such as a governmental department) or to defend the rights of its members, and the community (such as CSOs), effective organisational management principles remain the same. Additionally, although non-governmental organisations are non-profit, and should not aim to make money, it is still necessary for them to adopt good management principles if they wish to ensure the continuity of their work, and to achieve their goals in a sustainable way, as well as to coordinate between the different resources within the organisation. Thus, the role of management depends on four main management functions:

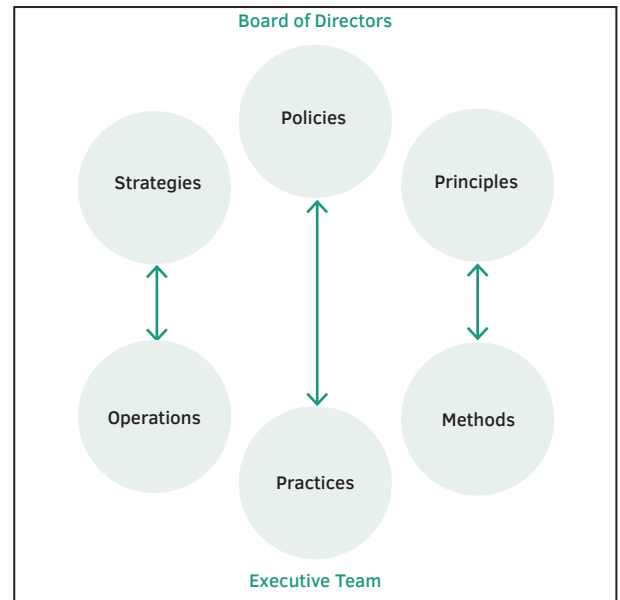
- Planning
- Organisation
- Leadership
- Follow-up

These basic functions are linked together based on a specific logical sequence of management. Directors cannot lead and control projects unless they know what needs to be done, and how to do it; in addition to setting programme priorities, interventions and steps to be taken in this regard, and the interconnections between different internal departments to achieve the desired objective.

Managing people properly is simpler than is commonly believed. This section provides guidance on how to develop a human resource management policy that includes the main elements of managing individuals within an organisation effectively. As is the case with the financial procedure policy document, it is preferable to provide one document on the human resource management policy that combines all policies of the organisation, and the management, and development of its members, and human resources, including policies on workers' rights and obligations and the policy on leaves, absences, and incentives, etc.

It is important to distinguish between the roles assigned to

the Board of Directors and those assigned to the Executive Team. The following model may simplify this aim:



The relationship between the Board of Directors and the Executive Team may take three different forms:

Hierarchical

The Board of Directors delegates its decisions to the Executive Team, and provides general guidelines in this regard. The disadvantages of this model is that it eliminates the sense of initiative and ownership of the Executive Team, as well as its legal personality.

Horizontal

This is certainly the best model for management, and should take into consideration the importance of respecting the separation of powers and their complementarity and the same time. It sets a good example to all participants, and workers within the organisation.

Participatory

The Board of Directors is fully engaged in the Organisation's everyday management. This model is preferred if good governance rules, as well as the roles and duties mentioned in the procedures guidebook, and

the organisational structure, are taken into account. Its main disadvantage is manifested when powers get mixed up between the Board of Directors, and the Executive Team members. Who becomes the decision maker in this

situation? In addition, most BoD members are volunteers, which means that time will be a critical element in executive plans.

2. Policies and Procedures Guidebook

The policies and procedures guidebook is an essential tool that ensures highly dynamic and transparent work, and sets roles, and responsibilities clearly in every resource mobilisation process. The organisational structure is an integral part of the policies and procedures guidebook, since it identifies the responsibilities of all workers within the Organisation.

The procedures guidebook is generally inclusive, and covers all administrative, financial, and logistical aspects. It tackles all procedures, without exception, in an objective, and transparent way, and sets controls that adhere to good governance rules. The aspects that may be included in the policies and procedures guidebook include:

Section One: Organisational Information

1. Vision and mission
2. Organisational history
3. Ethics policy
4. Organisational structure and responsibilities
5. Anti-corruption policy
6. Conflict of interest

Section Two: Organisational Roles and Accountability

1. Board of Directors' duties and responsibilities

2. Executive Director's duties and responsibilities
3. Workers' duties and responsibilities
4. Accountability system
5. Decision-making operations
6. Conflict of interest

Section Three: Financial Management

1. Internal control procedures
2. Paperwork
3. Expenses
4. Budget
5. Financial reports
6. Accounting
7. Bookkeeping

Section Four: Procurement

1. Procurement
2. Procurement committees
3. Bids
4. Bid opening
5. Choosing the adequate bid

6. Signing the contracts
7. Contract annulment

Section Five: Employment and Human Resource Management

1. Identifying functional needs, based on programme and management requirements
2. Drafting the appropriate job description
3. Announcing the job
4. Choosing the best candidates
5. Conducting interviews
6. Recruiting the employee
7. Ensuring the legal safety of the new employee
8. Providing equal opportunities
9. Continuity of equal opportunities
10. Continuous functional assessment
11. Employee's rights and obligations
12. Contract annulment

Section Six: Programming

1. Risk management
2. Sub-grants
3. Donations policy

These sections cannot be distinguished in terms of importance, and necessity. An active organisation requires clear rules to identify procedures, powers and responsibilities. Experiences suggest that, in many cases, important issues are taken for granted by many, and are thus disregarded, namely those related to the ethics policy, and anti-corruption policy. Civil society, its organisations and structures, strive to combat discriminatory, and unethical behaviour. Therefore, the organisation must ensure that its environment is free of any unethical behaviour, such as sexual harassment between male and female workers within the organisation. Similarly, combating corruption, and the misuse of public money is a major challenge, and the organisation is required to set procedures to prevent such acts. There are several procedures that could be adopted in this regard.

3. Organisational Structure

The organisational structure refers to the composition of administrative levels, specialised units, and functions within the organisation. It also indicates the official management and governance rules, including decision-making, communication, and accountability channels.

Despite the hierarchical sequence being very common in establishing the organisational structure, there is a crucial need for every organisation to create its own organisational model, while taking into consideration a number of steps, and standards that can be summarised as follows:

- Democratic organisation
- Specialisation
- Duties to be carried out by the organisation
- Effective organisation and communication channels between all parties
- Independent and integrated agencies
- Functional sequence that enhances accountability systems

- Productive capacity with the minimum time and cost

There are also a set of factors that affect the organisational structure, such as the number of members and their geographic distribution, the scope and diversity of programmes, and the availability of resources. This guidebook will shed light on the most common model, which is primarily based on the principle of hierarchy of authorities and their relationship with the top of the pyramid (the General Assembly), which sets the organisation's general vision, followed by power and control over direct decision-making (Board of Directors) at the strategy and policy level, and the daily direct management duties (Executive Director), where a link is established between the strategies and policies on the one hand, and the operations and tactics on the other. Implementation stages are then initiated with the rest of the Executive Team. The most important influencing factor here is the ability of the Executive Director, and middle-level directors, to preserve the team's morale, and maintain the sense of initiative to ensure the best possible outcome for the organisation and the community.

Many CSOs rely on hierarchical organisational structures. However, management theory and practice have both led to the development of less hierarchical, and more participatory models, but this does not mean that these models are suitable for all organisations. They include:

The horizontal structure (known as the functional structure)

This structure combines every functional specialisation in one department, resulting in one financial department, one programming department, one procurement department and one maintenance department. The disadvantages of this system include lack of flexibility, poor relations between the different specialisations, and the complexity of the functional pyramid, i.e. the large number of management levels. The advantage of this system is that it is economic, as everything is central. In addition, all employees benefit from the expertise of their peers within the same specialisation because they work in the same department or sector.

Network Structure

The network structure is based on preventing errors in large organisations, and protecting these organisations from any delay in production operations, and from poor work performance. This newly established structure relies on external relationships, because its purpose is to provide services to external parties at a minimum cost while ensuring the best quality. It relies on improving relationships with external parties through electronic means.

Circular Structure

This structure divides the organisation into several departments that reflect administrative functions, and consists of establishing other departments, depending on the number of projects being implemented. Each project is assigned to a Manager who is assisted by specialists from administrative units. These administrative unit specialists are managed by the project manager, and their respective manager within the organisation.

Advantages of this organisational structure:

- Quick response to contextual requirements
- Optimal utilisation of human resources
- Diversifying worker expertise
- Saving of time and cost
- Provision of timely technical expertise
- Effective in implementing complex projects
- Facilitates monitoring of performance and results.

Guidelines for Developing the Organisational Structure

Preparatory processes for developing the organisational structure require answering several questions related to the nature of required functions, the scope of the work, and the responsibilities of every function. The following steps may be used as reference:

- Identify the required duties and design functions to achieve them, including dividing the work and identifying responsibilities.
- Ensure that the administrative structure is compatible with the nature of the work environment.
- Ensure that people within the organisation fill the required positions of the administrative structure.
- Provide continuous training at all levels of the administrative structure.
- Enhance accountability and functional assessment to ensure good work quality.

Exercise

Is our structure sound?

This exercise helps assess the organisational structure and its robustness, as well as the members' understanding of it. It also helps identify any need to review internal communication mechanisms.

All members and administrative employees participate in this exercise by filling an anonymous form. Results are then gathered and presented in a general meeting. The questions in the form focus on the following:

What is the administrative model of my organisation? (members, management, employees)

Why was this model chosen?

Identify the forms of communication and the relationships between different levels?

Is there any follow-up on accountability with the organisation?

What are the major problems you are facing? Reasons?

Do we need to review the administrative model?

How do we address these problems?

The following steps are adopted:

- In an internal meeting, present the results of the initial examination, and have the attendees analyse them.
- The solutions are reviewed, in addition to determining how realistic they are and their strategies (all standards mentioned on page 20 of this guidebook should be taken into consideration).

04

External Relationships of CSOs

1. Opportunities and Necessity

Civil society organisations were established to interact with their surroundings, and defend their local, national, and sectoral choices. This cannot be achieved if CSOs do not interact with their external, local, national, and international surroundings to serve, and support their objectives. The external environment of CSOs generally consists of 5 categories:

- Governments
- Target groups and local communities
- Other local and international CSOs
- Private sector
- Donor community

In general, civil society organisations actively seek to open permanent communication channels with these parties to achieve their desired objectives. CSOs believe in the need to institutionalise this relationship by building real partnerships with these parties.

In addition, it is crucial to stress the importance of networking and cooperation between CSOs in order to address common issues. This requires a great deal of effort to set rules for these partnerships, which may come in different forms, such as partnerships to implement certain projects, or alliances to prepare pressure and advocacy campaigns, or networks that continuously work together.

With regard to the relationship of CSOs with the private sector, the experiences to date cannot be built upon to draw a clear image. Despite the existence of companies that have budgets and programmes which fall under the concept of “social responsibility,” the mechanism adopted by most of these companies seeks to improve their image within the “client” community or aims for publicity, without seeking to achieve the social impact of these activities per se. CSOs’ engagement in these partnerships should have specific objectives from the start.

CSOs work with several parties in an inclusive and participatory manner that results in shared ownership, and mutual accountability at the local level. The principle of partnership has been fundamental for the CSO

community over decades. CSOs also learned from their experiences on the ground that greater impact, sustainable results, local ownership and better interaction with the external environment only stem from multilateral, real, transparent and sustainable partnerships.

The concept of partnership between CSOs, and the rest of the parties, whether governmental or non-governmental, is based on a number of principles, which could be summarised as follows:

- **Peer-to-peer:** where all parties respect their partners, whether by respecting their representatives or their work methods, without intervening in their internal affairs.
- **Equality:** the principle of partnership is based on equality between parties in building a common future, and achieving common objectives. Thus, if one party dominates the other because of factors such as money, specialisation and numbers, this would harm the concept of partnership.
- **Non-conditionality:** where donor countries refrain from requiring beneficiary countries to apply any kind of policies. In other words, aid should be unconditional, and countries may benefit from the grants as soon as they arrive. This certainly differs from administrative, and organisational conditions.
- **Ownership:** joint ownership of all parties from the very beginning of partnership is important and would significantly advance any joint action.
- **Transparency:** transparency in goals and in the desire to build partnerships ensures respect from the rest of the parties, eliminates concerns, and enhances the partnership’s resilience.

Exercise:

Which partnerships are the most strategic?

In order to identify the organisation's strategy in choosing partners, and to consider the partnership approach in a practical light, without undermining the general rules, and standards for partnerships:

- Gather BoD members and managers within the organisation.
- Review the names of current partners.
- Review the names of partners you wish to build partnerships with.

In an integrated matrix, answer the following questions (for every current and potential partner):

What is the aim of this partnership?

What is the best form of partnership?

What are the expected results from this partnership?

Take into consideration all principles mentioned in this guidebook in your answers.

Indicate the most important partners and set the work strategy.

Conclusion

CSO workers' understanding of the definition of civil society, and its role in public life, is the main gateway to their transformation from amateurs into individuals who assume great responsibilities, and ensure professional performance. This is achieved by gaining a deep understanding of internal governance methods, in line with the standards of democracy, and transparency.

Every organisation seeks to develop its internal performance to be in line with civil society concepts and values. It may review all available documents and develop documents through an internal workshop, while ensuring respect for three main principles: democratic organisation, transparent procedures, and an accountability system that protects everyone's rights. These standards should not be taken lightly when building the internal system. Experiences suggest that any gap in the organisation's internal texts, internal regulations or policies and procedures guidebook may be abused or may cause internal conflicts.

More importantly, these documents should not remain words on paper. It is necessary to abide by them first, and require everyone to respect their contents, given their importance in promoting the institutional culture, and building trust between all parties within the organisation, and outside of it. These documents should also be regularly reviewed in accordance with the institutional needs of every stage, provided that they do not impede the achievement of the organisation's general objectives.

Endnotes

- 1 Council of Europe Committee of Ministers, Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)14 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the legal status of non-governmental organizations in Europe, available at: [https://wcd.Council of Europe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=1194609](https://wcd.CouncilofEurope.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=1194609)
- 2 For more on this, visit: <http://www.ghassanmoukheiber.com/showArticles.aspx?aid=16>
- 3 For more on this, visit: http://www.labor.gov.lb/_layouts/MOL_Application/Cur/%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%88%D9%86%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%84%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D8%A8%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A.pdf
- 4 For more on this, visit: <http://www.legallaw.ul.edu.lb/Law.aspx?lawId=268653>
- 5 For more on this, visit: <http://www.un.org/ar/universal-declaration-human-rights/>
- 6 For more on this, visit: <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/CoreTreatiesar.pdf>
- 7 For more information about the Lebanese Law of Associations of 1909 and the common mistakes in the performance of Lebanese administrations, see MP Ghassan Moukheiber's website, which includes a number of questions and answers on this topic: <http://www.ghassanmoukheiber.com/showArticles.aspx?aid=16>
- 8 Source: Richard T. Ingram. Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards. 2nd edition. Washington, DC: Board Source, 2009.

