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# YEMEN: CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR ASSESSMENT

FINAL REPORT

DECEMBER 2007

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by ARD, Inc.





Report prepared for the United States Agency for International Development  
USAID Contract Number DFD-I-00-04-00229-00 (Order No. 24)  
Under the Global – Analytical Services II IQC

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## **DISCLAIMER**

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
AED	Academy for Educational Development
BMENA	Broader Middle East and North Africa
CBO	Community Based Organization
CDF	Yemeni Civic Democratic Initiative Support
CSSW	Charitable Society for Social Reform Foundation
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DANIDA	Denmark Agency for International Development
DFID	Department for International Cooperation (UK)
DRL	Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor
EU	European Union
GFWU	General Federation of the Workers Union
GOY	Government of Yemen
GPC	General Party Congress
HRITC	Human Rights Information and Training Center
ICNL	International Center for Not-for-Profit Law
ILO	International Labor Organization
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
ISO	Intermediary Service Organization
IT	Internet Technology
LDC	Local Development Committees
MEPI	Middle East Partnership Initiative
MSAL	Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NDI	National Democratic Institute

NED	National Endowment for Democracy
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
SAF	Sister's Arab Forum
SMS	Sent Message Service
SOUL	Society for the Development of Women and Children
TBD	To Be Determined
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
WJWC	Women Journalists Without Chains
YEMPAC	Yemen Parliamentarians Against Corruption
YR	Yemeni Riyals

Note: The term CSO and NGO are used interchangeably in the report. CSO (or NGO) indicates a national NGO, CSO, CBO and/or association. INGO refers to international NGOs.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The civil society sector in Yemen is diverse and active. It is a complex array of loose community-based organizations (CBOs), older established associations, newer donor-supported nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and faith-based charity organizations. The majority of active organizations are driven by a charismatic, single personality. Civil society organizations (CSOs) are generally free to operate but there are limitations in some sensitive political and cultural areas, and increasing indications of closing political and legal space. The media sector is relatively well-organized but faces similar constraints; in particular, restrictions on freedom of speech, access to information, and an inadequate legal framework. In addition, there are no independent broadcasters.

As indicated by the NGO Sustainability Index undertaken as part of the Assessment, the civil society sector is in mid-transition placing CSOs at a critical juncture. The sector needs assistance to consolidate its gains and to strengthen its organizational capacity, financial viability, and mechanisms for advocacy and networking. The Assessment Team recommends that USAID supports an integrated program of technical and financial assistance to strengthen the civil society and media sectors and to strengthen the frameworks within which CSOs and the media operate.

## BACKGROUND

USAID/Yemen commissioned this Assessment to refine its analysis of the main factors that affect the development of civil society and the media in Yemen. It is to inform USAID/Yemen on potential programmatic options for civil society strengthening, taking into consideration the lessons learned from existing CSO support programs and the evolving political situation.

The field work for the Assessment was undertaken in Yemen in October–November 2007. A team of seven international and national experts in development and civil society held interviews with a broad range of civil society organizations, media, government, donors, international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs), and others in Sana'a, Ibb, Taiz, Aden, Mukella, Seiyun and Dhamar. The Assessment Team also conducted the region's first NGO Sustainability Index, which ranked the NGO sector in Yemen using standard USAID methodology.

## FINDINGS

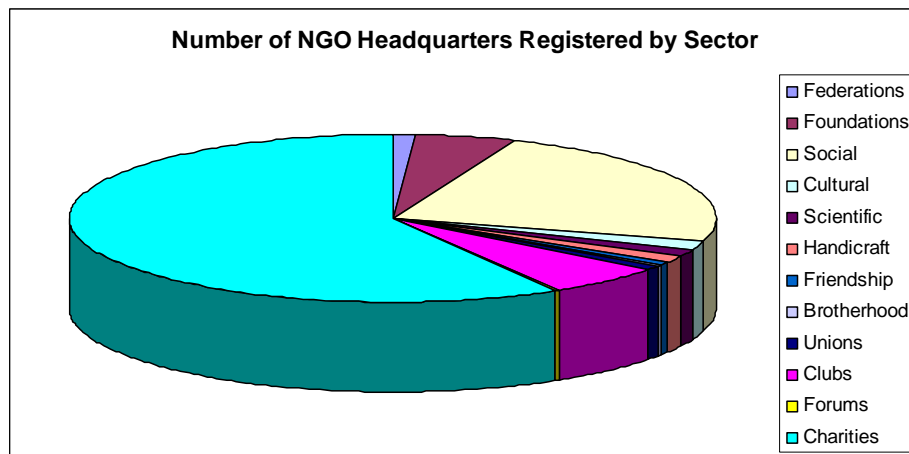
### Civil Society Sector

Yemen has a history of civil society activities.<sup>1</sup> Since the adoption of legislation in 2001, which facilitated NGO registration, there has been a proliferation of registered CSOs and their branches. Most CSOs are reliant on outside funds which come from a variety of sources. For example, funding can come from international donors, the government, individual and religious contributions and remittances. Many civil society actors and associations focus on charity provisions, especially during Ramadan. Other active

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<sup>1</sup> Dating from the colonial period in South Yemen, which spread north through the years, and from the development of local development councils (LDC) in the North.

CSOs include the international donor-funded organizations working on various advocacy issues such as women’s empowerment and human rights, and agricultural cooperatives and rural CBOs established and/or sustained by donor projects and/or government initiatives and funds.



There is a general lack of sophistication across the sector in terms of recognizing the distinct roles of private, governmental, and nongovernmental actors. CSOs are relatively free to operate as long as they do not go outside certain political and social boundaries. Although a few CSOs are increasingly able to address some sensitive issues, others find it difficult and intimidating. Advocacy by CSOs is increasing, but only a few are evolving as outspoken advocates for change. The others are more cautious and low key in their approach. CSOs are gaining more access to decision makers, but most fall short of affecting reform through advocacy.

The legal environment is not a major impediment but is in the process of revision. Recent draft amendments to the NGO law and the draft Unity Law are restrictive and of concern. In Sana’a, some CSOs were concerned that the political environment would become more intolerant as more CSOs become more proactive and assertive of their rights.<sup>2</sup> There is also an increasing level of politicization around CSOs that colors their public image and works to influence their agendas.

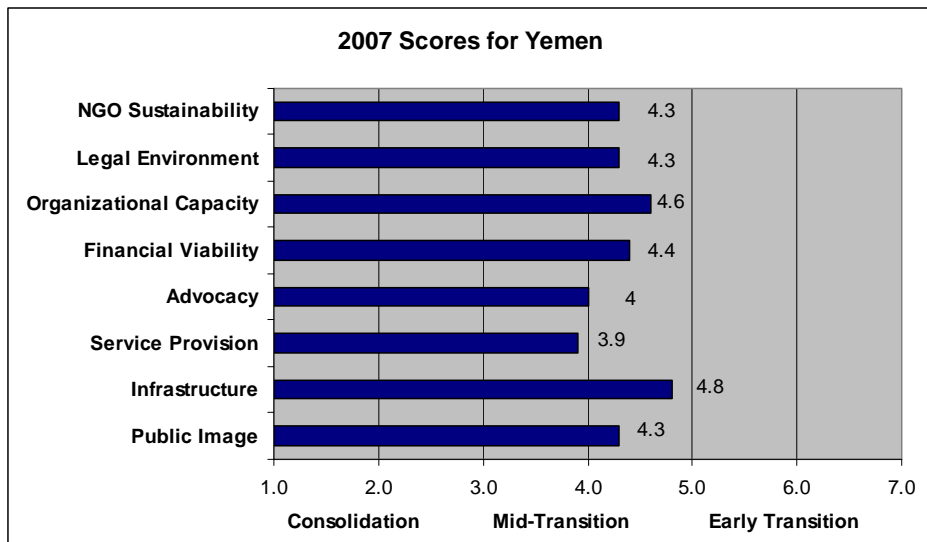
With a few exceptions, CSO-to-CSO relationships are unstructured and coordination mechanisms are ad hoc. Relationships tend to be personal rather than institutional, and there is a widespread lack of understanding of the different roles of CSOs and government. Service delivery CSOs have a better public image than the bilateral and multilateral donor-funded CSOs in the civic sector. Democratization activities and some civic action are unfamiliar to communities and viewed with suspicion. Both the media and civil society lack sophistication and skills in communicating with and about each other.

Most CSOs have limited absorptive capacity, especially among donor-favorites that attract a multitude of funding offers and arrangements. For most CSOs, constraints include a general lack of transparency, distance from communities, and limited government responsiveness. Personal contacts play an important role in CSO effectiveness: having a close relationship with a well-respected and/or religious figure provides CSOs with access—both physical access as well as political space for their issues. Some collective CSO actions, especially on economic and social issues that are part of wider UN programs and which include a Government of Yemen (GOY) role, have been effective.

<sup>2</sup> This same concern was not heard from CSOs during the regional Assessment interviews.

## NGO Sustainability Index

The Assessment Team held the first NGO Sustainability Index for Yemen. The scores are based on a scale of 1-7, with 1 indicating a very advanced NGO sector with a high level of sustainability, and 7 indicating a fragile, unsustainable sector. The country score for Yemen was 4.3.



The scores were developed by a panel that included a cross-section of civil society institutions representing CSOs active in the sectors of human rights advocacy, service delivery, media, think-tanks, labor, consumer protection, and the environment. Panel participants agreed on a country score of 4.3, indicating that Yemen civil society is at a mid-transition stage marked by an unrestrictive legal environment and improving sector capacity. Panel participants, however, agreed that as CSOs grow in number and assertiveness, the potential for a more restrictive legal and political environment is becoming more evident.

## Media Sector

The media sector is active but faces serious limitations on freedom of speech. These include lack of access to information, inability to address certain politically and culturally sensitive issues, intimidation, licensing problems, and a government monopoly in broadcasting.<sup>3</sup> The established media tends to exercise restraint in its coverage and therefore is less likely to have problems. Independent journalists and press reporting on the Sada'a conflict, issues in the South, and around the top layer of the executive are the most likely to be targeted for intimidation and harassment. TV news is perceived as Sana'a-centric and both TV and radio are government-owned and politically biased. The print media is more able to address traditionally taboo subjects, especially the English language press given its limited readership.

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3 Three new TV stations have opened or are about to open. There is no clear consensus as to whether they are privately owned with significant ties to government or broadcasters with nominal freedom (self-censored because of their ties to prominent business interests).

Journalism training is inadequate and theoretical. There is a lack of investigative journalism and sector specialists. The media does not understand the role of CSOs and expects compensation in exchange for coverage. There is a national journalist association which has made some strides with its first-time democratically elected board, but which still faces serious internal constraints caused in part by its diverse membership (which includes military and government journalists). Other associations are active but represent smaller subgroups, such as women journalists. The media law is outdated and based on the printed medium. The new media law, now under deliberation, is more restrictive. However, the government has promised that new drafts will not go to Parliament without the consensus of the Yemeni Journalist Syndicate. There is no broadcasting or freedom of information legislation.

## Lessons Learned

There are many ongoing programs supporting **CSOs** in sector programming. A few of these include capacity-building elements. Some of their lessons learned and best practices include:

- Working with local councils, government counterparts, and/or prominent citizens to open doors, facilitate program implementation, and advocate;
- Developing regional links between CSOs for information sharing and technical exchanges;
- Developing inclusive programs with beneficiary involvement and buy-in;
- Incorporating sustainability mechanisms from the start of assistance (such as support to develop fee-based services and to increase capacity for other types of income generation); and
- Helping CSOs to develop a long-term organizational vision and plan; business plan; organizational capacity and institutional structures; program implementation and monitoring capacity; and transparent, accountable operating systems. One way this can be assisted is by supporting ISO development.

For **media** assistance, the lessons learned include:

- Ad hoc workshops helped raise awareness among media professionals, but proved to be inadequate to meet sector needs and develop a professional cadre of modern journalists;
- There is good potential to develop state radio stations in the South into responsive community-based-type radio stations and to replicate this in other areas in the country;
- The need to increase the number of women journalists and editors and expand their role within the sector;
- The need to directly link human rights programs and monitoring with issues of media freedom and access to information; and
- The need to enforce journalistic standards and develop a modern code of ethics to increase professionalism.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

There is a relatively high level of donor support to and through CSOs, but it lacks cohesiveness and an overarching strategic framework. This is already creating project mentalities, dependence on donor funding, and entitlement mentalities among some CSOs. The Team believes that a well-designed program that addresses the primary constraints to civil society and media sector development can significantly enhance the capabilities of these institutions to contribute to development of the democratic process at both the central and local levels.

The Assessment Team recommends that USAID consider a substantive civil society and media strengthening program that incorporates technical and financial assistance to targeted CSOs that is integrated, phased, and responsive to the specific needs of the organization and its sector. These programs should directly address the major constraints to civil society development (lack of capacity, ineffective advocacy, inadequate legal framework and selective implementation, non-responsive policymakers, etc.). It should take a long-term perspective and incorporate strategies for CSO sustainability. In addition to targeting CSOs, key partners and actors critical to the development of an effective and pluralistic civil society and media sectors should be included in activities, so as to open channels of communication, and build trust and effective partnerships. There should also be a focus on building professionalism, networks, and effective advocacy—even for CSOs working outside the civic sector. Specific programming options are provided in the full report.



# 1.0 BACKGROUND

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

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## 1.2 YEMEN

Yemen is a nation of contrasts, characterized by stony mountains rising over 12,000 feet running north and south through the central highlands and rolling deserts across the east; cities beset with modern civic development problems; and over 138,000 isolated mountain villages and hamlets,<sup>4</sup> many without access to government schools, electricity, health centers, water grids, televised media, and Internet services. Over 50 percent of the population lives below the poverty standard with an adult literacy rate of 53 percent.<sup>5</sup> The middle class is vulnerable and shrinking, and an emergent elite class benefits from privileged contact with the central government.

Yemen ranks in the bottom third of world nations in economic and human development indicators.<sup>6</sup> Some notable examples include \$900 per capita income, 6.2 live births per child-bearing woman, 3 percent per annum population increase, and per capita access to a mere 120 cubic meters of fresh water annually. Yemen lacks a skilled, modernized workforce and unemployment is at 40-50 percent.

Yemen faces two major impending crises: dwindling water and oil resources. It is dependent on income from oil fields that are expected to expire within 7 to 15 years. Unless major new discoveries are made or the government increases its streams of revenue collection, its already limited ability to provide services will be severely curtailed.<sup>7</sup> If current water usage practices continue, catastrophic shortages are forecast within 10 to 20 years in major urban centers including Sana'a, Taiz, and Sada'a. In addition, recent anti-state uprisings in the North and the South, both linked to the inability of the central government to

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<sup>4</sup> 2004 Census.

<sup>5</sup> Male literacy rate is 73 percent, female rate is 31 percent. 2003 estimates for literacy and population from *WHO Country Profiles, Yemen*.

<sup>6</sup> *UNDP Human Development Index, Yemen, 2005*. Yemen ranks at 153 out of 177 countries with data.

<sup>7</sup> Oil exports account for 85 percent of Yemen's export revenue and 33 percent of its Gross Domestic Product. In 2006, about 240,000 barrels/day were exported. U.S. Department of Energy, *Country Analysis Brief, Yemen, 2007*.

provide services and fueled by a deep sense of injustice, threaten the stability of the government and the overall security of the region.

Yemen's political history directly impacted its civil society and media development. The socialist People's Democratic Republic of Yemen established in the South after independence from the British in 1967 unified with Northern Yemen Arab Republic (established after a military coup in 1962) under a democratic form of government. The resulting Republic of Yemen adopted a multiparty system and elected offices for president, parliament, and local councils. Civil war in 1994 resulted in the North consolidating its power, most notably through its president, Ali Saleh, and his General Party Congress (GPC) Party and the off-shoot Islah Party (a coalition of tribal and Islamic groups). The Islah Party succeeded in having Islamic law declared as the "sole" law rather than the "principal" law in 1995.

Since 2004 there have been increasing restrictions on political pluralism and media freedom<sup>8</sup> with Freedom House characterizing Yemen as partly free.<sup>9</sup> President Saleh has been in power since 1978. He was re-elected in 2006, but for the first time, faced a credible opponent who won almost 22 percent of the vote.<sup>10</sup> Corruption is a major mainstay of political stability and, according to the USAID anti-corruption study, thrives within the weak state institutions, fragmented elite structures and proliferates through informal patronage networks.<sup>11</sup> According to USAID's Democracy and Governance assessment, key governance problems are the ineffectiveness of government institutions and authoritarian control measures that undermine accountability and the rule of law.<sup>12</sup>

### 1.3 CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR

Civil Society Councils (CSCs) are not new to Yemen. In North Yemen, during the Ibrahim al Hamdi era (1974–1977), local development councils (LDCs) were encouraged to attract and focus remittance incomes sent from expatriate workers abroad, mainly those working in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf. These LDCs were typically rural, community-based groups focused on building schools, encouraging agricultural extension, drilling new wells, irrigation schemes, and feeder road construction. In South Yemen, charity and cooperative CSOs appeared in Hadramout in the 1930s. Charities, trade unions, sport and literary clubs were created in Aden in the early 1940s after British authorities issued the first regulations regarding CSO registration and licensing.<sup>13</sup> The civil society movement in the South played an important leadership role in the politics of the colony until its independence. With independence, the South replaced associations and organizations with Public Defense Committees connected to the ruling party. In the North, the first charities started in the 1950s in Taiz and Hodiedah. Registration started in 1963 with the passage of the *Laws on Charitable Associations and Cooperatives*.

Unification in 1990 brought in a constitution that allowed for the free organization of associations. Enabling legislation was enacted for associations (1994) and for cooperatives (1998). These laws were updated after the adoption of a new constitution in 2001 in the *Associations Law of 2001*. This law

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<sup>8</sup> ICG Report: Chapter 6: Yemen, p 153.

<sup>9</sup> Freedom House, *Freedom in the World- Yemen* (2006). Yemen has a political rights and civil liberties score of 5.

<sup>10</sup> Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, *MENA Election Guide*. 2006.

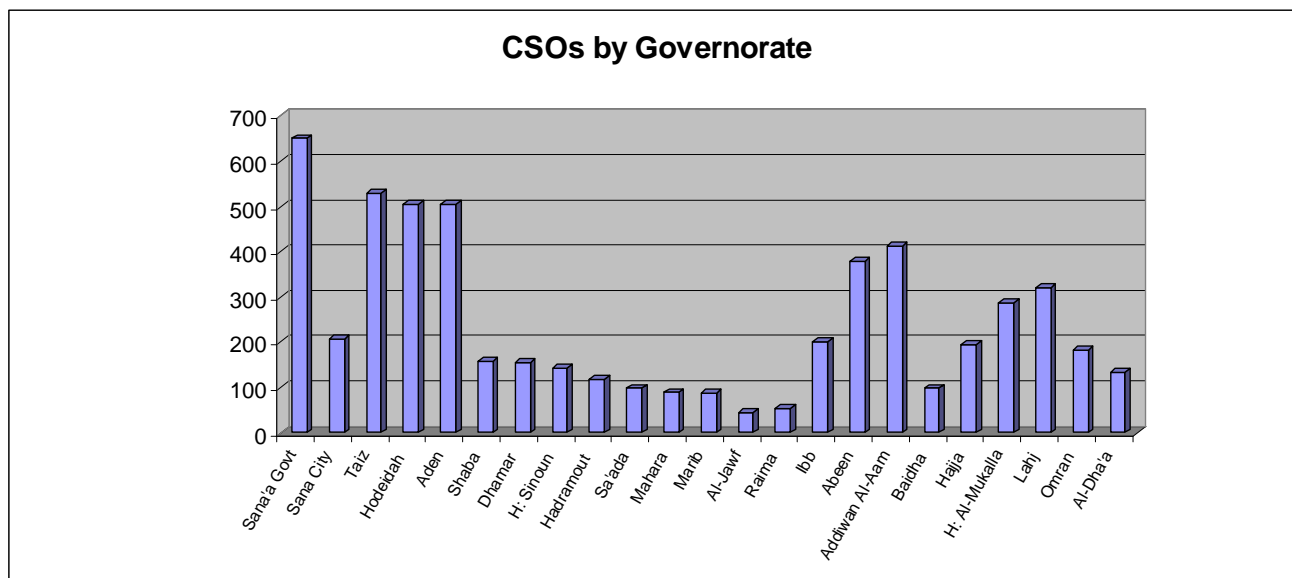
<sup>11</sup> USAID/Yemen. *Yemen Corruption Assessment*, p. v 2006.

<sup>12</sup> USAID/Yemen, *Democracy and Governance Assessment*, p iii.

<sup>13</sup> Save the Children Sweden, *Civil Society in Yemen, A Situational Analysis*, 2005 p. 4.



allowed for the easy registration of NGOs resulting in a considerable expansion within Yemen’s civil society sector. Registration is managed by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MSAL) which currently has 5,632 NGOs and their branches registered. Most of these CSOs are located in urban centers with about half located in Sana’a.

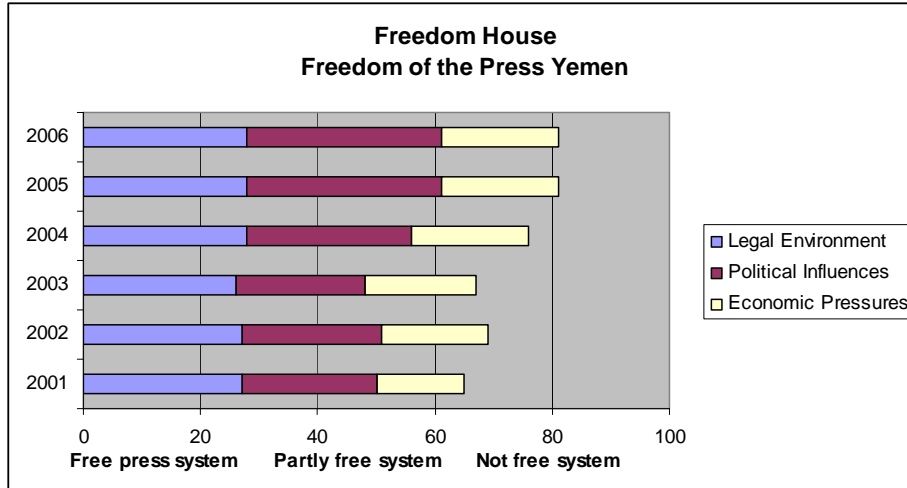


NGOs range from small, one-person organizations to large-scale operations. Some are independent, others are quasi-governmental. Some of these operate with government staff and work out of government premises, such as the Yemeni Youth Union. Other NGOs are affiliated with political parties, such as the Al-Salih Charitable Organization and the Islah Charitable Organization for Development. At community levels, donors, INGOs, and the Social Development Fund are creating CBOs and NGOs related to their specific sector activities. Some of these continue to be active after the end of the project, especially in areas such as water resource management, service delivery, and rural development. There are 14 trade unions, all of which come under the umbrella of the General Federation of the Workers Union (GFWU). In addition, there are professional and vocational associations such as the Bar Association and Fisherman’s Association with member-based constituencies.

#### 1.4 MEDIA SECTOR

Yemen has one of the most active press in the region, dating back to the 1930s. Private newspapers flourished in Aden for readership in the South and the North, while Sana’a had one official newspaper. The government established radio stations in Sana’a (1946) and Aden (1954), and television stations in Aden and then Sana’a in the 1970s. An independent press was a condition of unification, and over 60 independent and partisan newspapers were licensed in the early 1990s under the 1990 *Press and Publications Law*. After the civil war, press freedom suffered a setback as political power was consolidated. Since then, journalists have won back a substantial margin of press freedom despite persistent government attempts to exert control. Within certain limits, journalists are able to cover a wide variety of topics. Journalists and papers that go beyond these limits, however, face intimidation and attacks which have resulted in the press in Yemen being rated by Freedom House as not free.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Freedom House, *Freedom of the Press - Yemen* (2006).



Government has a monopoly of broadcast media with seven TV stations and nine radio stations.<sup>15</sup> With more than a million radios in households, radio has nationwide reach. TV viewership is primarily urban and, with the advent of satellite TV, a broad range of international and regional programs are available. There is one major

journalist association and a number of smaller specialized associations, such as women journalists.

Yemen is a signatory to the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, a legally binding treaty that includes freedom of expression and the right to access and distribute information. In 1996, Yemen hosted a regional UNESCO forum on promoting an independent and pluralistic Arab media which resulted in the *Sana'a Declaration* signed by Yemen and other participants. Among the key principles in the Declaration are the right for journalists not to be arrested or detained as a result of their professional activities and the need to reform laws that restrict the freedom of press.<sup>16</sup>

## 1.5 ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN CIVIL SOCIETY AND MEDIA

Donors are actively supporting activities of civil society organizations, but few programs directly target civil society development per se. The media sector receives less attention than the civil society sector, and its assistance tends to be more ad hoc and less programmatic. CSOs benefit from a broad range of donors, including traditional bilateral and multilateral donors, Islamic faith-based funders, and remittances from Yemenis abroad.

**Civil Society Sector Assistance.** International donors are very active in supporting civil society development in Yemen, although few label their programs as such. CSOs are primarily used as implementers in sector-focused programs, such as family planning, better governance, or women's empowerment. These programs usually involve some CSO capacity-building elements, but these are secondary to the program's primary purpose of service delivery or advocacy. There is also government support of some civil society programs, most notably through the Social Development Fund, and a small annual sum from the Ministry of Social Affairs, along with a limited amount of in-country private sector donations.

It is extremely difficult to get an idea of the scope of civil society sector assistance given the number of different funders, funding mechanisms, implementers, and sector programs. As an example, USG funding comes from USAID/Yemen and its different sector programs, the U.S. Embassy's Self-Help Fund, Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL), National Endowment for Democracy (NED), regional USAID programs, and other sources. Their

<sup>15</sup> Statistics from 1998 from *World Development Database* and *CIA World Factbook*.

<sup>16</sup> IFES Rule of Law White Paper Series, *A Regional Strategy for Promoting A Free Media and Freedom of Expression in the Middle East and North Africa*, 2005 p. 6.

implementers include nonprofit and for-profit organizations, some of which have offices in Yemen and others that work from regional or headquarter-based offices. Around 47 INGOs are registered in Yemen and work in every governorate but Ma'rib and Al Bayda.

Twenty-four INGOs started a voluntary coordination mechanism called the **INGO Forum**, which meets regularly to coordinate activities and which includes an observer from the Donor Forum.<sup>17</sup> They have created a working group on civil society comprised of ADRA, Save the Children Sweden, Oxfam, and Progressio, which intends to undertake civil society mapping in 2008. Other than that and inter-donor coordination on certain sector-based activities, there is no one group with a good idea of all of the assistance that is going to and through civil society.

Some bilateral and multilateral donor programs to civil society include:

- **Netherlands**, which provides grants to a number of NGOs and INGOs to assist NGOs to implement certain activities within the framework of their Local Women's Fund.
- **DFID**, which provided over £12m to the Social Development Fund that provides grants to NGOs and others for development projects.<sup>18</sup>
- **France's** funding of NGOs as a means to implement their programs in education health, agriculture, and women's rights. Programs included capacity strengthening by linking senior NGOs as mentors with nascent NGOs. One example of this is SOUL, which serves as a mentor for smaller social organizations.
- **UN Agencies** that work through civil society organizations as well as government. UNDP is working with a coalition of 20 NGOs to monitor the national development plan and intends to develop a more direct civil society strengthening strategy.
- **EU** will be providing direct grants to NGOs through three programs starting in 2007 and 2008. The first is directed towards the protection of child and women's rights (€m), democratization (amount TBD), and non-state actors to increase social dialogue (€m).

**USAID/Yemen** is providing significant levels of assistance through a number of sector programs implemented in its five key governorates (Amran, Al Jawf, Marib, Sa'adah, and Shabwah,) and at the national level in Sana'a. Some of its programs include:

- **National Democratic Institute (NDI)**, which works with CSOs on election monitoring and helped create and build capacity for the principal tribal NGO and its three off-shoot CSOs with a primary focus on conflict resolution.
- **Abt Associates and Pathfinders**, which are implementing health reform programs. Among other things, they helped establish the National Midwife's Association, the Public Health Association Committee, and the Safe Motherhood Alliance (a network of government, private sector, and CSOs).
- **AED**, which will be working with parent-teachers' associations and other associations in education.
- **CARE**, which provided strengthening to 60 CSOs, mostly in service delivery, and 17 women's associations, many of which they helped to organize and register.
- **ADRA**, which has helped establish CSOs and strengthen them in the development sector since 1995. One of the CSOs it helped establish is Al Mustqbal.

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<sup>17</sup> From information collected in 2006 from 19 INGO members, they implemented more than \$16.6 m on programs (2006) in service delivery and advocacy. Sectors included water and sanitation, health, women's empowerment, food security, social welfare, humanitarian assistance and conflict prevention, education, and capacity building. Almost 80 percent of their staff are Yemeni. *INGO Forum/Donor Liaison Workshop Report, February 21, 2007.*

<sup>18</sup> Over a four-year period. *Civil Society Organization's Consultative Meeting, Report, 07.03.06.*

Assistance is also provided through the **Social Development Fund**, which is an autonomous government agency created in 1997 with assistance from the World Bank and other donors. It assists communities, local authorities, and a limited number of NGOs with pilot development projects. To fill the void at the grass roots, the Fund helped establish about 6,000 CBOs along a village development committee model, primarily as a means to manage and implement the Fund's projects.

**Media Sector Assistance:** The media receives much less programmatic attention by donors. Assistance is primarily limited to occasional trainings and workshops. The primary actors include:

- **MEPI**, which funds a variety of regional media assistance programs through IREX and others that included a focus on improving the legal framework. IREX's partner in Yemen is the Human Rights Information and Training Center (HRITC).
- **DANIDA**, which is finishing a two-year pilot program (€350,000) that was primarily ad hoc workshops and trainings. In 2008, it will start a two-year program (about \$2 m) on access to information, freedom of the press, strengthening the Yemeni Journalist Syndicate, and professional training (primarily at the universities in Sana'a and Aden). This will be done through off-shore contractors, including the Danish School of Journalism and the INGO Article 19.
- **Fredrick Ebert Stiftung Foundation**, which sponsored a media study by the Women Journalists without Chains and a few workshops to raise awareness on press issues.
- The **Public Diplomacy** section of the U.S. Embassy, which provides \$50,000–70,000 per year in small grants on press freedoms and journalist training.

# 2.0 ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

## 2.1 CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR

### 2.1.1 Current status

CSOs in Yemen experienced noticeable growth as an expression of an established associational trend going back to the mid-1990s. The number of registered NGOs grew from a few hundred in the early 1990s to 3,150 by mid-2002<sup>19</sup> and 5,600 by mid-2007.<sup>20</sup> Though only a small fraction of registered NGOs are thought to be active (with estimates ranging from a few hundred to a thousand), there is an obvious correlation between the growth in numbers of NGOs and increased citizen awareness of the possibilities and benefits of associational life in a permissive, if not enabling, environment. There are severe limitations, however, on interpreting this associational trend alone as a manifestation of increased citizen participation in public life or, much less, as progress towards democratic governance in Yemen.

A number of factors contributed to the proliferation of NGOs in Yemen. Poverty, population growth, and the state's increasing inability to provide essential services led to an expansion of service-oriented and charity-based NGOs. A contracting role of political parties as civic institutions—especially in advocating for democratic participation within their own structures and the public sphere, and in championing basic rights—has created a void and, thus, an opportunity for rights-based advocacy. Another catalyst is the state's declaratory policy of considering NGOs as economic and social partners and its demonstrated cooperation with NGOs on nationally recognized issues, especially when the subject is of an international concern, such as child protection and safe motherhood. In addition, there are no significant impediments to establishing NGOs in the 2001 law governing the registration and operation of NGOs. Finally, there is the widespread perception among Yemenis in government and civil society that establishing an NGO results in personal financial gain.

In general, civil society organizations in Yemen can be classified into three broad categories: charity-based and service delivery NGOs, first-generation national unions and syndicates, and nascent advocacy and rights-based NGOs. There are also community-based organizations along with tribal and religious organizations.

#### Organizational Profiles of CSOs Interviewed

- 90% have boards
- 42% have full time paid staff
- 48% have part-time paid staff
- 94% have volunteers (1 to 500)
- 88% have a Finance Officer
- 96% have offices
- 75% have members (1 to 7,193)
- 19% have a code of ethics
- 71% have a mission statement
- 77% implement projects

Based on Assessment interviews of almost 50 CSOs in the regions.

<sup>19</sup> *Civil Society Organizations in Yemen: Reality and Future Prospects*, a publication by the Shura Council, 2003.

<sup>20</sup> Figure provided during an interview on October 31, 2007 with officials of Yemen's Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor.

**Social Sector NGOs.** The vast majority of NGOs are in the social sector. Most of these are charity-based organizations that build on tradition and religious beliefs. They are the easiest to organize and recruit volunteers in the mosques and *Quranic Madrasas* (religious charities) and along the *Awn* (collective assistance) tradition in villages. Many of these NGOs focus on the distribution of goods, especially during religious celebrations. A major source of income for these organizations is in the form of donations from wealthy individuals in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states.

Other social sector CSOs are directly involved in social development programs and service delivery. Although many are institutionally weak, some are extremely well organized, such as the Charitable Society for Social Reform (CSSW). These stronger NGOs are assisted by UN programs (such as UNICEF for child protection, UNHCR for refugee support, WHO for health programs) and the specific sector development programs of donors and their implementers, such as ADRA and Save the Children. Some of these CSOs are involved in setting national standards for things such as health care delivery, others are actively advocating for child rights, while others provide direct services such as training for unemployed youth. Of note is the Ibb-based CSO, the Al-Aiyn Association for the Rehabilitation of the Blind, led by its blind founder, that provides services for the blind.

Some CSOs are direct off-shoots of international development programs, such as the National Midwife's Association (from USAID's health program). Others are created by dynamic individuals and/or spouses of prominent citizens. Most of these NGOs have a project outlook and survive on project funding, although the Assessment Team was struck by the number of CSOs that have started their own income-generation activities. This income only covers a small percentage of their operating costs, but has potential if developed. The income-generation activities of the Al-Islah Foundation are of note. Starting out as a charity, this NGO is now implementing development programs, such as micro-credit and vocational training, that integrate income generation. These activities generate income not only for their beneficiaries/participants, but for the Foundation, which is then reinvested in Foundation activities.

**Unions and Professional Associations.** This category includes established unions and professional associations such as labor, women and youth unions, the bar and the journalists' syndicate, and chambers of commerce. Such institutions tend to have nationwide presence and fee-paying members. The value of associational membership is understood by those in Sana'a, but most associations appear to be ineffective in providing services to their members and representing their members' needs. Many also tend to be under the influence and/or control of the government.

Chambers of commerce and industry are active in most governorates. Their main mandate is to organize the industry; register members; and advocate on issues of laws, taxes, and government policy. Their elections are a matter of national interest due to the economic weight of their membership.

Unions and associations tend to be highly centralized and do not delegate authority for local initiatives to their branch offices, creating inertia and frustration among branch staff. Most donor assistance for associations also tended to be captured by the headquarters, leaving little to no training for their branches.

**Civic Advocacy NGOs.** Advocacy NGOs represent a relatively recent development in Yemen. They advocate for such things as the protection of human rights, civic and political participation, freedom of expression, and an accountable government. Some of these organizations are based around a founder while others are more institutionally developed. They tend to be urban-based and, with few exceptions, donor-dependent. As with social sector NGOs, the reliance on donors has resulted in project-based planning and staffing. A few organizations have a programmatic vision and purpose (such as women's

#### Financial Profiles of CSOs Interviewed

- Annual budgets: \$600 – \$400,000/yr
- Funding sources:
- International donors: 21%
- National donors: 25%
- Own income: 34%

Based on Assessment interviews of almost 50 CSOs in the regions.

empowerment), but still operate on a project-by-project basis. The level of capacity and skills among civic CSOs varies, but these are usually personalized rather than institutionalized. The larger civic sector NGOs receive considerable levels of funding from a diverse range of bilateral and multilateral donors and some appeared to be operating at, if not past, their implementation capacity. Others have more modest funding but similar absorptive and implementation capacity issues.

Some CSOs have been able to build occasional networks of volunteers, especially through specific events such as election monitoring and participation in awareness campaigns. As an example, according to the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referenda, 37 organizations deployed 27,851 monitors during the last presidential election.

There are a relatively large number of **women's organizations**, many of which are magnets for international donor support. Some of these, such as the Sisters Arab Forum for Human Rights, are well integrated into the international women's rights networks. Others are less high-profile, but still work for the empowerment of women and equal rights. Women's organizations and women-led CSOs faced social resistance in many locations visited by the Assessment Team, but once operational, appeared to be doing as well as or, in some cases, better than their male counterparts. One difference noted during the Assessment was that although women's organizations were found in every region visited, women in the South did not get involved in the legal sector or in journalism. If they became involved, they would do so in Sana'a.

**Rural CSOs and CBOs.** There are fewer civil society organizations in rural areas. They tend to lag behind urban CSOs in nearly every aspect, including financial management capacity, income-generation capacity, human resource capital, fundraising, planning, and access to technology and to donors. Rural CSOs include producer cooperatives, CBOs, women's associations, and water users associations. The government encouraged the growth of **agricultural cooperatives** through the provision of subsidized agricultural products that were made available only to registered cooperatives. However, rather than resulting in true, producer-based cooperatives, this policy had the effect of encouraging cooperatives that acted as for-profit entities, benefiting relatively few.

**Fishing Cooperatives** suffer from the same Achilles' heel as their agricultural counterparts—overdependence on state subsidies. However, its impact is worse for two reasons. The first is that fishing cooperatives are a cross between an agricultural coop and a trade union. Fishermen find it hard to survive outside the co-op because the co-op not only monopolizes state subsidies, but it also controls the daily catch. The second is that unlike farmers, fishermen need substantial capital outlay to pay for a boat and to start their business. As a consequence, they turn to the head of the co-op, who is usually a more well-off fish trader, to lend them the matching funds required for credit to buy a boat or motor. Often, the fisherman defaults on the loan and has to sell the boat to the head of the co-op. That turns many co-ops into virtual fiefdoms with little protection for the fishermen. Heads of co-ops are then able to fix prices and introduce foreign commercial ships to cooperative fishing grounds.<sup>21</sup>

**Community-based organizations** are active throughout Yemen. The government and donors have been funding development projects in education, health, and water for 30 years, and many of these projects included close cooperation with local grassroots organizations and local NGOs. Where they did not exist, their creation was facilitated by the development project. As an example, access to and the efficient use of water is the key factor in the rural and agricultural sectors, and decreasing water resources threaten the sector. Over 500 rural water user committees have been created by the Social Fund for Development, World Bank, Ministry of Water and Environment, and INGOs such as CARE. These committees register as CBOs with local authorities, and some eventually develop into NGOs and undergo the more formal

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<sup>21</sup> According to interviews with Fish Exporters Association.

registration process with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor. Many of these committees, especially for water and sanitation, are women-run.

**Tribal CSOs.** Tribal affiliation is vertical, permanent, and lineage-driven rather than cause-driven. Tribal affiliation does not extend to the nation and the state, and tribal power often conflicts with such symbols of state power as law and order. CSOs in a tribal context are often headed by sheikhs and replicate tribal lines of authority. The exceptions are cross-tribal associations that are occasionally set up for a specific cause, such as conflict resolution and blood feud settlement. Some of those are formal associations specifically mandated to deal with a specific conflict. These arbitration panels usually dissolve at the end of their mandate. Others are informal (i.e., not formalized or mandated) associations of tribal dignitaries that offer their services to those combatants who choose to use them. Several of these have been created in recent years and are often disbanded quickly.

Tribal communities participate in civil society mobilization as others do in Yemen—in agricultural cooperatives, general purpose CSOs, water user associations, and even in PTAs under the pioneering USAID educational project. There is no apparent difference between donor-driven tribal CSOs and other donor-driven CSOs which primarily respond to donor-articulated needs rather than community aspirations.

NDI has been working with four local tribal CSOs since 2005 on issues of conflict resolution. They helped to create the tribal CSO Yemeni Organization for Development and Social Peace, which includes tribal leadership from the three governorates, and which subsequently generated three tribe-specific CSOs under its umbrella. There is some networking among these four tribal NGOs and others, especially during the electoral period when the tribal NGOs facilitated access for CSO election monitors to their areas.

**Religious CSOs.** Religious CSOs (Sunni and Zaidi Shia) are active throughout Yemen, primarily in the social service delivery sector. With the exception of a few politically active organizations, such as Al-Islah, most of the organizations interviewed were socially active but, in the post-9/11 context, tended to stay away from politically tense issues and work instead at the grass-roots level through mosques and individual charities. The Assessment Team met with the two types of Sunni CSOs: Sunni-Wahabi and Sunni-Sufi. The primary example of a Sunni-Wahabi CSO is the Al-Islah Social and Charitable Association, which is the largest, best-established charity in the country. It is politically sophisticated and usually coordinates its activities with the Al-Islah Party. It receives external funding from international Islamic charities and from UN agencies, including the World Health Organization (WHO). It has the largest membership, is successful in attracting volunteers, and covers the entire country both in activity and membership. The prime example of a Sunni-Sufi CSO is the Okhowah and Muawanah Charitable Association. It is consistent with the Sufi tradition of shunning politics. It promotes Islam as a lifestyle rather than as a political ideology. Its funding comes mostly from Saudi donors through a prominent religious leader, Al Sayyed Abu-Bakr al-Mahoor. Its activity is limited to Sunni shafi areas, with greater emphasis on Southern governorates.

SUNNI CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS		
TYPE	SUNNI-WAHABJ	SUNNI-SUFI
Example	Al-Islah Social and Charitable Association	Okhowah and Muawanah Charitable Association
Funding	Domestic and external from Muslim charities and some UN agencies	Domestic and external from Muslim charities
Membership	Large	Smaller
Geographic Reach	All of Yemen	Sunni-Shafi areas only
Politics	Highly political, advocates for Islamic State	Non-political
Volunteers	High	High
Organizational capacity	High	Medium
Networking	High, specifically with similar regional CSOS, not so much with local CSOs	Low



**Social Movement in the South.** There is a growing social movement in the South resulting from protests by the Associations of Forcibly Retired Military Personnel (and Civil Servants), with recent participation by the Association of Unemployed Youth. They have not formalized their entities and, in Assessment interviews, some claimed they had sought, and were denied, a license. They distrust the political system, including the opposition parties that they consider as co-opted. The government recently recognized the movement when the president met with its leaders in Aden. This social grouping is formed around a cause, marshals broad popular support, and has articulated some of its constituency's expectations. Whether this is a fleeting protest phenomenon or something that could turn into a durable expression of civil society is too early to tell.

## 2.1.2 Enabling Environment

The Yemeni *Law Concerning Associations and Foundations* (Law No. 1 for the year 2001 – hereafter *Associations Law*) may need some revisions, but it remains one of the least restrictive NGO laws in the region.<sup>22</sup> In drafting the law, the government consulted with key members of the NGO community and responded to some of their demands, including a request not to require government approval prior to accepting foreign funding. The *Associations Law* provides for a straightforward process of registration and approval within one month, justification in case of refusal, and an appeals option (Articles 9, 10, and 11). Articles 39 and 40 authorize associations and foundations to engage in conditional profit-making activities and exempt all revenues from taxation and customs fees. Articles 62 through 66 provide for the right of associations to form unions, though some of the provisions are intrusive and may be crafted with the intent to create a national structure in the image of many of the existing unions under government control. The Association law also provides for discounts on utility expenses and calls on state monetary and in-kind support to associations meeting certain conditions (Article 18).

A number of associations, under the leadership of the Yemeni Civic Democratic Initiative Support Foundation (CDF) and in consultation with the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL), drafted revisions to the law and are currently advocating for their adoption.<sup>23</sup> Improvements sought mainly pertain to penalties,<sup>24</sup> purpose of the law,<sup>25</sup> vague provisions, financial audits by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, and organizational structure. There are also concerns about provisions in the *Executive Bylaws (No. 129)*, which was issued by MSAL in 2004. The *Bylaws* are widely recognized as instituting new restrictions, especially with regard to independent internal governance of associations and foundations.

An analysis of legal texts alone, however, does not fully describe the legal and political environment in which Yemeni civil society organizations operate. On a political discourse level, the Yemeni government states it is committed to a vibrant civil society. What allegedly drives this public commitment is an official view that CSOs can be trusted as partners in social and economic development, and its interest in being perceived by the international community as a tolerant and democratic state. In reality, however, CSOs interviewed felt that Yemeni officials, while recognizing a role of CSOs in democratic development, still harbor a distrust of a class of CSOs they see as “meddling” with politics.

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<sup>22</sup> The law provides, for example, provides for far less intrusive and hindering government oversight than Egypt's Law 84.

<sup>23</sup> Activity is MEPI-funded.

<sup>24</sup> Some provisions are found to be redundant with existing laws and harsh in subjecting all people affiliated with an association to personal liability in cases of violations.

<sup>25</sup> One of the objectives of the law is to “develop democracy and Muslim civil society.”

The primary constraint mentioned by CSOs interviewed (outside of a lack of funding) was the selective application of the law, which ranged from outright abuse to favoritism. Law enforcement is a systemic problem throughout Yemen stemming from a lack of capacity and the general state of the rule of law.

There is a widespread sense among NGOs in Sana'a that the political space and the somewhat enabling legal environment of the past years may be contracting as some CSOs assume a higher-profile and more proactive role. There are fears that recent incidents surrounding the actions of army pensioners in the South, increased advocacy and outspokenness of journalists on a number of issues—including those bordering on traditional taboo subjects regarding the army, the presidency, and social conflicts—and current debates surrounding potential constitutional reform may trigger a government clampdown on dissent and rights-based activism. There is also a consensus that civil society may be at a critical stage where progress is possible, but regression is more likely. At the essence of this outlook is the weakness of Yemen's experience in establishing the rule of law, the fragility of its democratic institutions, and dependency on political will. This same concern was not heard during the Assessment interviews in the South.

Some of the friction between civil society organizations and the government are evident in the following

**Renewal of NGO Licensing.** MSAL requires all registered CSOs to submit financial reports annually in order to continue operations. This de facto periodic licensing system is an expansive interpretation of the law. MSAL told the Assessment Team that the annual renewal is automatic and the intention was to obtain annual NGO financial records. It dropped the requirement in 2005 with the hope that NGOs would voluntarily submit their reports, but when they did not comply, the requirement was reinstated. During interviews with CSOs, the Assessment Team heard an anecdotal account from an advocacy NGO that its license was not renewed even though it had submitted the required reports. It was advised to “lower its voice” as a condition for renewal, but it continues to operate without authorization. While the government has a legitimate justification to know the sources of funding of NGOs, especially those receiving massive funding from wealthy “good doers” in rich Gulf states, its oversight authority is seriously undermined by CSO perceptions that its agenda is to manipulate and control them.

**Provision of Government Funding.** Article 18 of the Associations Law states that: *The State provides monetary and in-kind assistance to associations under these conditions:*

- a. *That the beneficiary association has been founded for at least one year and that it has carried out real activities for that year;*
- b. *That its activities support a public good; and*
- c. *That it submit its internally-approved annual financial report to the concerned Ministry or office.*

The vague language, especially as it relates to what constitutes a public good and the legal obligation of the state, leaves MSAL with some discretion to determine which organizations merit assistance. How this is handled and the level of funding involved varied according to different interviews. Some said MSAL can provide annual funding to NGOs up to 25,000,000 Yemeni Riyals (YR) (approximately the equivalent of \$125,000), while others said that such large sums (in excess of YR10-15m) were given out instead through the Ministry of Finance to politically relevant associations, especially during election periods. Whatever the channel, many organizations characterized national government assistance as selective and arbitrary, while others felt the funding was available but the paperwork was not worth the effort. CSOs can also receive assistance from local councils and government ministries, such as office space and operating costs—but this appeared to depend to a great extent on personal relationships.

**NGO Cloning.** The Assessment Team heard of cases where NGOs were “cloned” and, when time came for their annual registration, the cloned NGO received the license<sup>26</sup> or funding. This is allegedly why the CSO Women Without Borders ended up as the Women Journalist Without Chains (WJWC). This is also reportedly linked to the discretionary disbursement of public funds and government cloning, most evident in professional associations, such as the Teachers Union in the public school system and in public universities.

### 2.1.3 Relationships

The Assessment found that most CSO relationships were unstructured, with primarily ad hoc coordination mechanisms between them. Most relationships were personal rather than institutional, and both CSOs and government lacked a well-defined understanding of and confidence in their roles and the benefits of partnerships and participation. This was also true of CSOs working at the local level with local councils. The more successful CSOs interviewed in the regions had good relationships with the government and community support for their programs, which they reported were easier to develop when the work of the CSO was well understood.

Most charity-based CSOs have a good public image, but many donor-funded CSOs, especially those in the civic sector, are seen with suspicion as their functions are not as well known. CSOs lack communication skills for an effective interaction with the media and, in some cases, with the communities. Most CSOs have difficulties attracting volunteers, and the Assessment Team found that many of the volunteers in the regions were the founders themselves or friends of the founders who had started to believe in the purpose of the NGO.

A strong civil society sector is based on well organized and active organizations that are diverse, independent, and networked. Networks, through not necessarily formal structures, serve as channels for information sharing, coordination, and mentoring services. There have been some aspects of networking among NGOs in Yemen, such as a few NGOs that served as mentors in a French-funded program and, to a very limited extent, playing the role of an intermediary service organization (ISO). In coordination with INGOs and UN agencies, some have joined coalitions, such as the NGO Coalition for Child Rights and other alliances around social issues. Other coalitions include and coordinate with the government, such as those working with the Higher Council for Motherhood and Childhood and the 24 NGOs that form the Civil Society Working Group in the framework of monitoring the national strategy for poverty reduction. An advocacy-oriented forum that appears to convene regularly and discusses current events is the Civil Society Coalition. It is a platform for information sharing and coordination of decisions and actions.

<b>How CSOs Characterize Their Relationships</b>			
<b>Findings from Assessment Interviews in the Regions</b>			
<b>Relationships with</b>	<b>Not good</b>	<b>OK</b>	<b>Good</b>
Local Government	23.6	0.4	63
National Government	43	8	49
Other NGOs	30	12	58
Community	14	5	81
Media	19	7	74
Donors	44 (no relations)	-	55

<sup>26</sup> Article 4, Paragraph b, sub-section 1 states that the registration application must include “the name of the association or foundation, which must not be similar to another’s organization [...]”

Participation in Coalition events is open to a variety of civil society representatives from associations, foundations, and unions.

Formal structures mandated by the law nationally and at the level of each governorate act as a superstructure to coordinate and report on NGO work. These structures,<sup>27</sup> called sectoral unions and governorate unions, are inherently inefficient, bureaucratic, and prone to government domination.

In Assessment interviews in the regions, almost two-thirds of the NGOs interviewed claimed to share information with other NGOs. However, although more than half claimed to be members of coalitions, only a few of these were actually coalitions (such as the National Union for Special Needs Associations)—the remainder were organizational affiliations, such as branch offices. A few organizations did stand out in the Sana'a-based interviews as networkers; in particular, the two large party-affiliated NGOs, Al-Saleh and CSSW, with established networks with CSOs in the regions for service delivery programs.

During the Assessment, over 20 CSOs worked together to prepare for the Forum for the Future that was due to be held in Sana'a on December 4-5, 2007. The Forum is an annual meeting initiated out of the Broader Middle East and North Africa Region (BMENA) countries, the Group of Eight (G8) industrialized countries, and others to promote economic, social, and political reform in the region. Themes for this year's Forum included freedom of expression and the legal environment for CSOs, both timely topics for Yemeni civil society. With MEPI funding, participant CSOs were organizing a parallel CSO conference in Aden and to subsequently present their resolutions to the Forum.

Most NGOs interviewed outside of Sana'a thought they had a good relationship with the media (85 percent) and two-thirds thought they received adequate media coverage. They ranked the public image of CSOs a 2.9 on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being most positive). Sixty-seven percent thought the public understood the role of an NGO, especially those involved in professional associations and service delivery. The Assessment Team found otherwise and believes that the lack of a good public image and understanding of their role is at the root of many of their problems with the community and government.

#### **2.1.4 Effectiveness**

CSOs in Yemen are becoming relatively more effective. Civil society members interviewed by the Team reported improvements in some of the established unions and syndicates, such as the Yemen Women Union, the Journalists' Syndicate, and the Health and Teachers' Unions. Most national unions, however, are reportedly ineffective, bureaucratic, and tightly controlled by the government. One newly established business association which just received funding from the WTO had the same to say about the country's chamber of commerce.

Advocacy CSOs, though relatively new civil society actors, have yet to develop into democratic institutions and expand their base of support. However, they are proving adept in tackling issues of human rights and democratic development. They have effectively brought to national attention the state of human rights, the rule of law, freedom of speech, and government accountability. They have also engaged in creative ways to advocate for democratic reform, ranging from rallying public support for media freedom through peaceful demonstrations to lobbying members of Parliament on changes to the Associations Law.

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<sup>27</sup> Modeled after Egypt's NGO structures under the infamous Law 84 of 2002.

There are several fairly sophisticated and effective charity organizations such as CSSW, Al-Salah Association,<sup>28</sup> along with SOUL, Al-Gorfa, and others whose effectiveness emanates from their organizational capacity, drive, expertise in specific service delivery areas, ability to fundraise, and nationwide outreach. Some have advocated successfully on issues of social welfare, such as the CSSW that is helping the Ministry of Health develop national standards for psychiatric care and other health issues in coordination with the WHO. Others are working with the International Labor Organization (ILO) and government ministries on issues of child trafficking and child labor. Although their impact has been limited thus far, these discussions have opened the door of once-taboo topics (such as HIV/AIDS) which now receive more coverage in the media and among policymakers.

In Assessment interviews from Mukulla and Sey'un, some of the grassroots CSOs working on women's rights and girls education reported that the more effective they became, the more their harassment levels went up from the religious and male members of the community. They eventually worked with the religious leaders to develop a better community understanding of and appreciation for their work. This partnership with key local and religious figures was seen as a critical component for CSO efficacy and success.

Water user associations have some prospects. The Ministry of Water and Environment, in anticipation of the devolution of power to the local level, is considering the option of granting these associations the legal authority to participate in decision making on water issues. This would create a checks and balance mechanism which could have significant consequences for the role of CSOs in Yemen.

Chambers of Commerce have access for advocacy due to their economic weight, but this does not always translate into political weight and an improved business environment, primarily due to the discretionary power of the government to regulate access to state contracts and other state benefits such as licenses (oil and gas, telecommunication, fisheries, financial services, and heavy industry) as well as access to state land and tax exemptions. They are reportedly more effective at a political level and at the local level than at a regulatory level in promoting their members' interests.

In Assessment Team interviews in the regions, CSOs rated their program strength on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the strongest. The average response was 2.9. This is higher than what the Assessment Team would rate them. In terms of advocacy, 58 percent of these CSOs said they advocated for causes related to their mission. The interviews revealed they understood, for the most part, the meaning of advocacy, but there was not enough information available to be able to judge the effectiveness of these efforts, which covered a broad range of interests from child protection, to the rights of the disabled/fishermen/union employees/women and rights in Palestine.

### 2.1.5 Major Constraints

Yemeni civil society is emerging despite considerable constraints. Some of these are the hallmarks of social and economic underdevelopment, while others mirror the fragility of democratic institutions and practices. In particular, these constraints include the following.

**Lack of Capacity.** Most NGOs lack the human and institutional capacity to build themselves into sustainable, program/service-focused organizations. Their absorptive capacity for donor assistance is extremely limited. Many are dependent on the founder and/or a few key members. They are not well-structured or organized and do not have standard operating procedures and adequate administrative and

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<sup>28</sup> While CSSW is the largest charity NGO associated with the opposition Islah Party, Al-Saleh Association is also a large charity associated with the GPC and Yemen's president Ali Abdullah Saleh.

programmatic systems in place.<sup>29</sup> These NGOs live from project to project (or donation to donation), and are unable to keep qualified staff and volunteers between projects. In addition, few NGOs have access to modern technology, IT systems, and essential communication mechanisms such as the Internet.

**Lack of Outreach and Advocacy Skills.** Most NGOs have a purpose, whether it be improved services for members or more accountable governance for the nation, but their ability to advocate and build support for their cause is extremely limited. Most do not know how to develop an outreach strategy or a campaign to build public awareness and support. Very few know how to effectively lobby key policy and decision makers. Even fewer understand how to explain their activities and interests to the media so that they can get informed and effective coverage for their activities and campaigns.

**Lack of Effective Partnerships.** Effective partnerships and coalitions forming among CSOs and between CSOs and the government are limited and primarily ad hoc. Many NGOs work in isolation, not knowing there are other NGOs working on the same programs or with materials or training that might help them. Information is not shared broadly with either the community or relevant government agencies, and few NGOs have a partnership with the press that results in appropriate coverage. This results in suspicion and obstruction, especially for the civic sector in urban and rural areas. While CSOs have increasing access to Parliament, with some partnerships developing on specific issues, this area needs to be developed more fully so that advocacy translates into policy and increased government responsiveness.

**Lack of Support Organizations.** NGOs have almost nowhere to turn for support to develop their institutional systems and programs. Resources are limited to donor-funded, sector-specific programs and a few rudimentary ISOs. There are no models NGOs can easily access to develop their administrative rules and procedures, communication strategies, and other institutional systems. Each NGO is developing its own systems out of trial and error, and most do not even know what systems they need to develop.

**Limited Political Space.** Existing laws are not a constraint, but their implementation is. They are either selectively applied or are not well understood by those who implement them. The government, which is synonymous with the party in power since there has been no change in government for decades, sees an interest in having a diverse and active civil society, but not one that could challenge key aspects of state power or mobilize broad public support for fundamental democratic reform. As a result, CSOs are free to operate, but within a limited space. Most CSOs have learned to approach certain contentious issues with restraint. However, there is an increasing level of politicization around some CSOs—some of which are becoming more vocal and active while others are coming under party influence. Some CSOs in Sana'a fear that the growing protest movement and more assertive actions by some NGOs will test government tolerance and bring more restrictions on CSOs and their activities. There are already indications of this in the more restrictive provisions of the draft unity law.

**Lack of Financial Sustainability.** Most NGOs are dependent on donors, particularly external donors. Although a few NGOs have started income-generation activities, such as kindergartens or clinics, this is not widespread and needs to be developed, especially among the NGOs in Sana'a that are magnets for international donor funding (and which subsequently see little need to find other income-generation activities). There is a limited base for domestic financial support through corporate programs or private philanthropy. Wealthy business people and some firms do give donations, especially around religious times of the year, but this is usually done through a corporate "foundation" or directly to individuals, rather than channeled through NGOs, and the idea of corporate sponsorships beyond funding a specific event has yet to be developed.

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<sup>29</sup> Some associations and union structures and practices reflect Yemen's patronage system. For example, in Chambers of Commerce, the more affluent members pay the dues for the less affluent members, especially during election years, when the collection of memberships reportedly doubles, allegedly in exchange for votes.

**Lack of a Good Public Image.** There is a widespread lack of understanding about the different roles played by the government and CSOs in Yemen's developing democracy. In particular, the role of civic NGOs is not well understood or appreciated by the public and government. Many NGOs have a negative public image, being seen as out for money or serving the interests of foreign governments. This hinders the development of constructive relationships with the broader community. For the most part, the media does not help NGOs to develop a constructive image as its CSO coverage is inadequate and often factually inaccurate. Both the media and civil society lack sophistication and skills in communicating with and about each other. In addition, most journalists require payment from CSOs to cover their events. This means that CSOs with more resources are able to buy better media coverage.

#### The Media On Providing CS) Coverage

We believe NGOs are important for the community and should be supported. — *Local radio Say'oun*

Of course, we love to cover CSOs. Mukulla Newspaper; Yes, we believe in them. — *Taiz Newspaper*

CSOs don't know how to articulate issues, and pay journalists for coverage. This discourages journalists' ability to discover rights and wrongs. — *Sana'a English language paper*

**Cultural Environment.** Some of the areas addressed by social service and civic advocacy CSOs are sensitive social and political issues. This includes issues of equal rights, sexual behaviors, and political change. Some CSOs are able to work despite the taboo nature of the topic and have succeeded in opening political space for discussion, but most have had difficulties and/or shy away from addressing these kinds of issues. In particular, women-run NGOs in rural areas reported significant levels of community pressure against themselves and their programs on issues such as women's empowerment, prevention of domestic abuse, and girls' education.

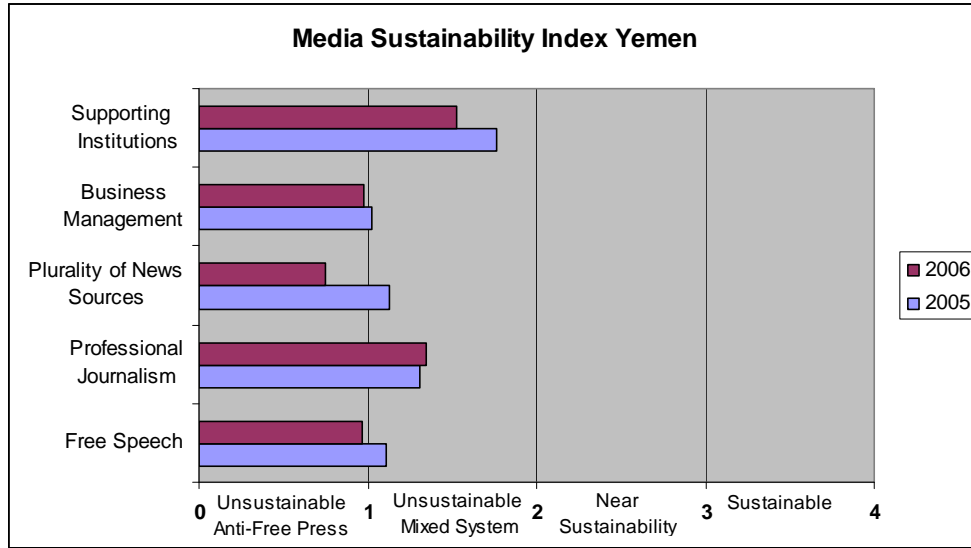
## 2.2 MEDIA

### 2.2.1 Current Status

In comparison to media in the region, the Yemeni press is relatively free to operate and cover the news. However, this freedom is limited by certain political and social boundaries. Most of the established press and the government-controlled broadcasters choose to operate within these boundaries and do not have problems. Those who report more broadly, however, and, in particular, on issues of political power, problems in the South, or the conflict in Sada'a, face serious problems of intimidation, harassment, criminal charges, and, in some cases, kidnapping and torture. This is dividing the journalistic community among those who do not want trouble and stay within boundaries, and those who are actively protesting restrictions and are seen by others as troublemakers.

The government continues to maintain a tight control on the broadcast media and regulation of the airwaves, but there is a small but growing number of alternative news sources through the Internet and satellite television. Reach of these mediums is limited due to the level of poverty and illiteracy within Yemen.

Yemen's scores for the 2006 Media Sustainability Index show a regression in every dimension measured but one (professional journalism).



**Freedom of Speech.** The ability of journalists to cover sensitive political issues is severely constrained. The Assessment Team spoke to journalists who had been kidnapped and tortured allegedly by state-affiliated enforcers, found media outlets closed through the revoking of licenses, and heard of journalists facing criminal prosecution for their reporting. The increasing number of assaults against journalists and freedom of speech are reflected in the lower level of Media Sustainability Index scores for 2006 and in the number of incidents tracked by Women Journalists Without Chains.

**Attacks on Journalists**

2005: 53  
2006: 69  
2007: 74 so far

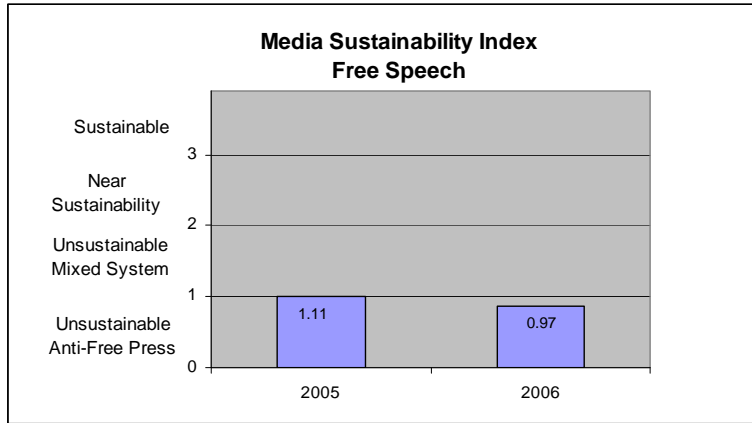
*Source: WJWC*

Because most journalists and papers choose not to antagonize the power structure, incidents of arrest or torture are limited. Even more broadly, however, the press faces serious limitations. These include a lack of access to information, overt intimidation, withdrawal of advertisers, and licensing problems. Official censorship is limited and newspapers do not have to go through a censor’s review before publication. Occasionally printing houses are instructed to refuse printing of an offending newspaper. The main censorship mechanism is intimidation and expansive application of the press law. Intimidation can take many shapes, depending on the topic, newspaper, and/or journalist. Some of the examples provided to the Assessment Team included being identified as a troublemaker in the military newspaper, receiving death threats and being threatened, and/or taken to court where criminal law still allows for the death penalty for certain journalistic crimes. The draft National Unity Law is also seen by the independent press as a dangerous restriction on freedom of speech and association.

The issue of freedom of speech and the protests being waged against arbitrary government treatment by some journalists and associations has the potential to spread beyond freedom of the press issues. The sit-ins started by WJWC outside the Prime Minister’s office during weekly Cabinet meetings has grown from about 20 women to several thousand persons,<sup>30</sup> and the sit-in tactic is now being used by army pensioners in the South which has gotten government attention. The WJWC also issues a yearly blacklist of government officials whom they believe are responsible for press restrictions, which are pasted up on walls and covered by the national and international press.

<sup>30</sup> According to the WJWC.





The treatment of the WJWC is a case in point. Originally named Women Journalists without Borders, they lost their name to another CSO that registered using their name. They had a growing SMS news service last year that generated about \$35,000/month in revenue which was shut down by the government. They have repeatedly unsuccessfully applied for a newspaper license. According to them, their main objective is not to change the press laws, but to get them fairly applied.

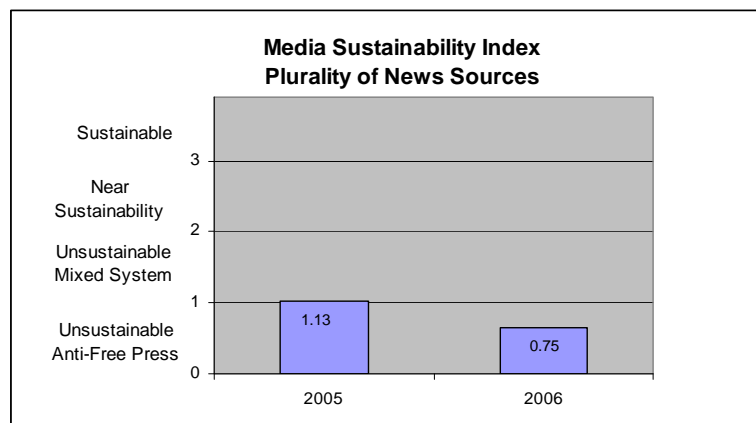
**Professional Journalism.** Although the Media Sustainability score for professional journalism rose for 2006, the Assessment Team found the lack of professionalism in the sector as a primary constraint. Journalists and editors are underpaid and have little expense money, and they expect compensation in exchange for reporting. CSOs complained that the amount of coverage they received from the press was synonymous with the amount of money they paid to the journalist.

There is a code of ethics dating back to the 1990s which most journalists have forgotten. The Yemeni Journalist Syndicate is attempting to revamp the code but is hampered by its diverse memberships, some of whom are civil servants and military personnel regulated by military law and the civil service code.

Journalists lack specialization and investigative journalism skills. There are few journalists who appropriately cover issues such as the economy, health, or politics. Most papers have a political bias and the government-owned broadcast news reflects a pro-government position. Many issues outside of politics are socially sensitive and one on which journalists and editors exercise self-censorship; among these are issues related to sexual behavior, child trafficking, and tourist marriages.

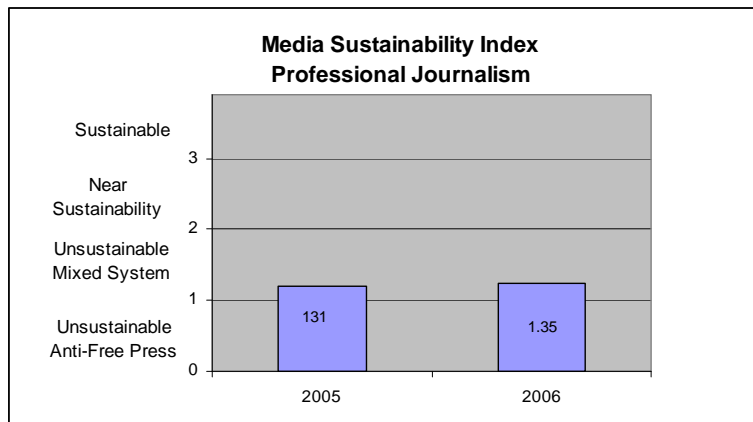
**Plurality of News Sources.** There is a dearth of news outlets in Yemen with the Media Sustainability Index scores dropping from 1.13 (2005) to 0.75 for 2006. Most newspapers belong to the government or are affiliated with a political party. There is a small independent press, but newspapers have limited reach and circulation and there are no independent broadcasters.

There are four types of newspapers in Yemen: commercial newspapers (with limited readership), official newspapers (such as *Al-Thawra*), independent newspapers, and the military press. Readership is limited with some of the larger circulation figures cited at around 80,000 copies.<sup>31</sup> The military press has a weekly paper that has wide distribution due to its inexpensive price and reputation for reflecting presidential positions. According to journalists, the paper is used to



<sup>31</sup> Others say the maximum circulation is actually around 40,000.

threaten journalists by naming them and their “dark future” on the back page. The paper with allegedly the highest circulation is an MP-owned tabloid that covers “crimes and strange events.” There are a few community-based newspapers, most said to be outlets for the local council or ruling party.



Broadcast media remains a state monopoly. There are four government TV stations and reportedly another three stations waiting in the wings. There are nine radio stations. Several years ago, the Alayyam newspaper, among others, requested licenses to operate TV and radio stations. These requests are still pending as there are no regulations allowing for private broadcasters or for allocation of the airwaves. The government has promised to pass such regulation, but has yet to do so. This monopoly is now

being challenged by several foreign-based but Yemeni-owned and -operated TV stations with programming specifically targeting the Yemen market through satellite broadcasts.

Television news is partisan and Sana’a-centric. Radio is seen as more representative, especially with local radio stations, some of which come close to community-based radio models; for instance, the radio station in Sey’un. It is owned and operated by the government but slated for closure and its funding discontinued. The workers continued to operate the radio station, however, volunteering their time and using the small income from advertising to keep the station on the air. Sey’un’s radio programming is reportedly more liberal, reporting on such issues as HIV/AIDS, and more responsive to listener demands than other government-owned radio stations.

Media laws are outdated and include no regulation of the electronic press. In the past few years, there has been an explosion of Web-based media that exercises uncensored freedom of expression. The government blocked five of these Web sites during the 2006 presidential elections (along with the shutting down of several printing presses).<sup>32</sup> There is a market for Web-based papers; the *Yemeni Times* states its Internet readers outnumber its paper readers, but most of their Web-readers are Yemeni’s abroad. The Yemeni Youth General Union, a quasi-governmental CSO, is intending to start an Internet radio (Shabab net Radio).<sup>33</sup> Its studios and facilities are already built. There was an SMS news service with information from political parties and organizations such as the WJWC until last year when the government stepped in and stopped some of these services.

<sup>32</sup> IPI, *World Press Freedom Review*, 2006, Yemen.

<sup>33</sup> [www.youth22.net](http://www.youth22.net).

**Business Management and Supporting Institutions.** Although the Media Sustainability Index found scores for business management falling for 2006, the Assessment Team found that, in the current environment, business management was not a major constraint for the independent press. Advertising in newspapers is an established tradition as is selling papers for a fee. Even the independent papers under attack for their reporting, said they were able to cover costs either through paper sales or their advertising revenues. Some said controversy was good for business.

There is an issue, however, with advertising. Much of it is directed at politically acceptable papers, and several independents reported threats from advertisers to withdraw their advertising if the papers did not reframe from criticizing the government or covering certain stories.

Salaries for journalists and editors are an issue. Journalists routinely expect payments and/or gifts for covering stories which can lead to a bias in the type of stories covered. There is only one domestic press agency (Saba) which is government-controlled. Journalists are trained primarily at the universities in Sana'a and Aden, but training is reported to be generic and theoretical. Their first graduates though (from the mid-1990s) are now the ones advocating for more professional journalism and change within the sector. Most newspapers lack modern journalism tools and, at the largest paper (the government-run *Al-Thawra*), copy is still written by hand.

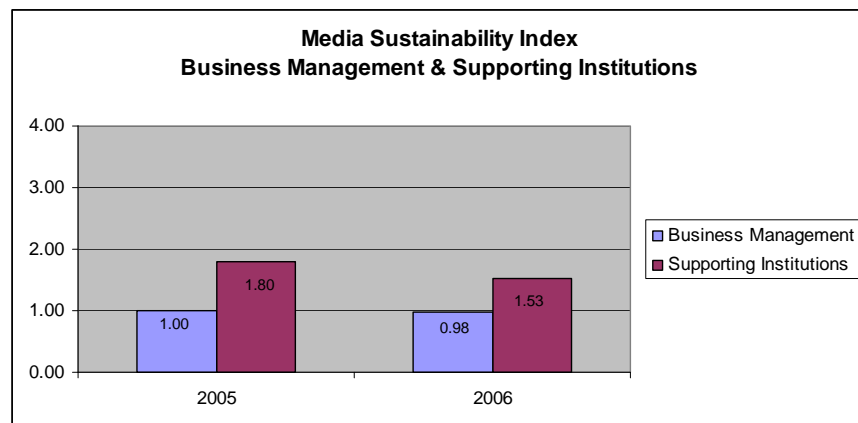
There is one national journalist syndicate (Yemeni Journalist Syndicate) which has made some strides in professionalizing the syndicate with its democratically elected board, but it still faces serious internal constraints. This is caused in part by its diverse membership which includes military and government journalists that operate under a different set of laws and expectations. With 1,350 dues-paying members, the syndicate has tried to support journalists under attack, but it lacks capacity and experience. Other associations are active but represent smaller subgroups, such as women journalists. UNDP is supporting a group of 30 journalists who cover anti-corruption issues. It links its assistance with a network of lawyers to assist journalists who get into trouble. The press receives solidarity from human rights CSOs, as these issues are perceived within the context of freedom of expression and ability of the press to undertake its watch dog role.

## 2.2.2 Major Constraints

Most of the major constraints to the development of a pluralistic and independent press have already been discussed above, but in addition, some other constraints include the following.

**Inadequate Legal Framework and Lack of Enforcement of Existing Framework.** The constitution provides for freedom of the press, but the legal framework protecting these rights is inadequate. There is no freedom of

information law or regulation of the broadcast media. The only law is related to the print media (*Press and Publications Law No. 25*) dating from 1990. The law prohibits direct personal criticism of the head of



state, and the penal code provides for fines and imprisonment for publishing false information that threatens public order or interest.<sup>34</sup>

Although the president called for an end to prison sentences for press offenses in 2004, journalists continue to face charges. The Ministry of Information did draft new legislation. Some of these provisions were more liberal (such as removing prison time), but others would have given government control in almost every aspect of print media operations.<sup>35</sup> After journalists objected, the Ministry withdrew the draft and stated it would not submit any bills without the concurrence of the Yemeni Journalist Syndicate. The Syndicate, supported by a number of CSOs and political parties, is now engaged in negotiations with the government over the drafts. However, even if the new law is improved, imprisonment is stipulated in the penal codes and could still be applied to journalists for publishing offenses that fall short of libel.

**Government Policy.** The government has a monopoly on the broadcast media, which has the most reach of any medium in Yemen. Independent broadcasters are not allowed. Another constraint noted by those interviewed was the inconsistency and unpredictability of government policy over what they could and could not cover. What was alright one day could become forbidden the next day. Not wanting to upset government also impacted advertisers and where they placed their advertisements. This provides government and pro-government media with an unfair business advantage and limits the possibilities of small upstart papers to become sustainable. The government also controls most of the printing presses and subsidies to papers.

**Lack of Access to Information.** Journalists complained of being unable to access information at either the national or decentralized levels. They reported widespread suspicion among government officials and others who asked them why they would need information. There is no freedom of information legislation, leaving government officials with the discretion to limit information and access.

**Lack of Modern Journalistic Tools.** The sector suffers from a dearth of modern journalistic tools and techniques. Among other things, many journalists are not computer-literate, and have no access to information on the Internet or basic information technology (IT) tools.

**Lack of Effective Collective Action.** The Yemeni Journalist Syndicate is attempting to help some of the journalists under attack and, in particular, the journalist currently being tried for his coverage. It has also solidified its role as an organization that must be consulted on draft press legislation. It has yet to move beyond these preliminary actions, however, and become an effective defender and leader for the rights of its members. The journalists and papers under pressure are also coalescing against arbitrary treatment by the government, but an effective, action-oriented coalition of media, human rights organizations, and reformist MPs has yet to develop that could effectively advocate for and achieve needed policy and legislative reforms.

### 2.2.3 Lessons Learned and Best Practices for Civil Society Sector and Media

There are a number of important lessons learned from ongoing programs involving CSOs. Some of these include the need to:

- Work with local councils, government counterparts, and/or prominent citizens in order to open doors, facilitate program implementation, and advocate;
- Develop regional links between CSOs for information sharing and technical exchanges;

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<sup>34</sup> Freedom House, *Freedom of the Press, Yemen 2006*

<sup>35</sup> Article 19, *Memorandum on the Draft Law on Press and Publications of the Republic of Yemen. 2005*

- Develop inclusive programs with beneficiary involvement and buy-in;
- Incorporate sustainability mechanisms from the start of any assistance (such as support to develop fee-based services and/or increase capacity for income generation);
- Help CSOs to develop a long-term organizational vision and plan; business plan; organizational capacity and institutional structures; program implementation and monitoring capacity; and transparent, accountable operating systems. One way to assist this is by supporting ISO development;
- Engage local NGOs with capacity to mentor grassroots NGOs on specific programs and activities; and
- Consider the large number of rural water and health groups currently being established in future assistance programs.

CSOs whose activities consist mostly of advocacy campaigns have also accumulated some important best practices and lessons learned. There is also an evident collective will to build on some of those gains across sectors. Examples include the following.

- **Coordination, Information Sharing, and Coalition Building.** Many CSOs report having been involved in various collaborative forums and, more importantly, learned to make their participation conditional on efficiency and focus on specific issues. Members of the Civil Society Coalition interviewed by the Assessment Team valued their participation, but also recognized that the experience remained limited and that much coordination was needed within and across governorates. In observing civil society preparations for the Forum for the Future, which is to be held early this December in Sana'a, the Team witnessed much enthusiasm for collaborative and effective<sup>36</sup> action among representatives of 20 CSOs.
- **Public Outreach and Lobbying.** CSOs articulate novel ways to approach the government and reach out to the general public. Some CSOs, such as CDF, have learned from their experience in 1999 how to lobby the government on key aspects of the *Associations Law*. Now that they expect the government to amend the existing law, they have already begun working with a selected number of parliamentarians to gain their support for the CSO draft.<sup>37</sup> At the same time, some CSOs developed and tested new methods to publicly advocate for causes they support. Women Journalists Without Chains, for example, has diversified its protest mechanisms against state restrictions on the media. These include peaceful demonstrations by women journalists, the posting of a blacklist of government offenders,<sup>38</sup> and annual monitoring reports on oppressive measures taken against the media.
- **Specialization.** As they mature, some Yemeni CSOs are beginning to focus on specific areas of action and on improving the quality of that action. Sisters' Arab Forum for Human Rights (SAF,) for example, has an organizational vision and only accepts funding for projects that help support its vision. It is also aware of the limits to its absorptive capacity and balances the amounts of funding it accepts with its ability to deliver. Some other CSOs, however, are not as ethical and their activities tend to follow the availability of funding regardless of the topic.

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<sup>36</sup> Members of various sub-committees – working with MEPI funding under the leadership of HRITC – engaged in debating ways to improve sharing of information, enhancing roles of the subcommittees, and allocating scarce resources. Debates attended by the Assessment Team were cordial and frank.

<sup>37</sup> CDF has coordinated with four other NGOs and sought help from MEPI through ICNL, in redrafting a number of provisions in the *Associations Law*. CDF held a workshop in November with seven Shura Council members and 15 MPs to discuss the law and the desired changes.

<sup>38</sup> Most often in the Mukhabarat or El-Amn El-Quawmi, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Defense.

For **media** assistance, the lessons learned include:

- Ad hoc workshops were interim mechanisms that helped raise awareness among media professionals, but they are inadequate to meet sector needs and to develop a professional cadre of modern journalists;
- The potential to develop state radio stations in the South into responsive community radio stations and the possibility of replicating this in other areas;
- Need to increase the number of women journalists and editors and expand their role within the sector;
- The need to directly link human rights programs and monitoring with issues of media freedom and access to information;
- The need to enforce journalistic standards and develop a modern code of ethics to increase professionalism; and
- The importance of the role of the media (in collaboration with like-minded CSO monitors) in the checks and balance system and in holding government accountable, no matter the sector.

# 3.0 PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

## 3.1 STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES FOR ASSISTANCE

There is a relatively high level of donor support to and through CSOs, but it lacks cohesiveness and an overarching strategic framework. This type of ad hoc assistance is creating project mentalities and dependence on donor-funding among most CSOs. Donor assistance is focused primarily on sector development in areas such as democracy and governance, health, education, and agriculture. There is no assistance to the development of the CSOs themselves as a sector. This is a critical time for Yemeni CSOs. Although there are still opportunities and potential for democratic growth, this is overshadowed by the fear of closing political space. The Assessment Team believes that a well-designed program to strengthen civil society organizations and their enabling environment has the potential to make a significant difference in the pace and quality of democratic development in Yemen. The same is true for the media sector. Existing media programs lack a strategic vision for the development of an independent and pluralistic media sector, and assistance has been piece-meal.<sup>39</sup> The media and journalistic freedoms are also at a critical juncture, and direct assistance to strengthen independent voices and their enabling environment also has the potential to make a significant difference.

The Assessment Team recommends that USAID consider a substantive civil society and media strengthening program that focuses on building their capacity to work effectively within the current context and to improve their operating environments. These programs should directly address the major constraints identified for the CSO and media sectors as well as build the links between them for collective action and effective partnerships. The programs should also help develop partnerships with government offices critical to CSO and independent media success, and build constituencies for reform among the broader community, including the private sector. The program should be an integrated effort that provides technical assistance with financial assistance with an emphasis on sustainability and viability from the start.

## 3.2 RECOMMENDED PROGRAMMING OPTIONS

### 3.2.1 Civil Society Development

The Assessment Team recommends that USAID/Yemen develop a program to strengthen the capacity of the CSO sector to promote democratic reform and better represent the interests of civil society. As donors are already funding CSO implementation of specific sector programs, this program should focus directly on addressing the specific constraints identified in the Assessment, such as strengthening their

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<sup>39</sup> The exception being the upcoming Dutch program that has developed a strategic framework for assistance that is consistent with the findings of this Assessment. The difference is that the Dutch program is to be implemented by four offshore contractors, while the Assessment Team is recommending a continued presence that would provide synergies with the Dutch program.

institutional and advocacy capacity, improving the legal framework and its implementation, and developing effective partnerships and outreach.

In general, these programs should include:

- **Capacity building** to address the lack of institutional capacity among targeted CSOs working in the civic, professional and social sectors (related to USAID sector programs and key related programs of other donors), and especially programs related to rights-based advocacy and democratic reform. Key national and local government partners should be included in programs so that they also learn to constructively engage with civil society and help create effective partnerships. This would include key staff within the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor at the national and regional levels. In addition, several political parties support a number of advocacy CSOs for their own political purposes. Improving CSO governance and transparency as well as building institutional capacity would require these CSOs to fulfill their stated mandate for advocacy while serving as channels of communication with the government and other parties at the same time.
- **Improving advocacy and outreach** of CSOs and coalitions to build constituencies for reforms and increase government responsiveness to CSO advocacy efforts. In addition to building specific advocacy skills among CSOs, the program should help them to develop their relationships with government at national and local levels as appropriate. This can be done through joint trainings on specific topics and by including lawmakers and administrators in CSO workshops and other activities build the personal relationships and trust needed for advocacy to take root. CSO outreach to communities and community leaders also needs to be developed.
- **Encouraging partnerships** between CSOs, with INGOs, the private sector, other donors, other USAID programs, and with the Yemeni government at the national and local levels to help increase their exposure, develop effective networks, and provide protection for activists. This would also help improve their public image and increase government and community understanding of their roles and purpose. Second-generation activists within beneficiary CSOs should be targeted and the concept of partnerships institutionalized through the development of specific coordination and other mechanisms. Partnerships should be a condition for eligibility for assistance under this type of program.
- **Constituency building** of CSOs and coalitions to help expand membership, attract volunteers, and build broad bases of support for programs. This is needed across the board for most NGOs, but in particular for organizations working on increasing the political space and for women's organizations dealing with sensitive social and cultural issues. CSOs also need assistance to develop constituencies at the policy-making level, such as with specific committees within Parliament or offices within government agencies.
- **Supporting existing intermediary support organizations** to expand and provide appropriate programs and services for CSOs relevant to implementation of USAID's operational objectives for Yemen. This type of assistance should be directly targeted to enable ISOs to provide the capacity building and training needs of NGOs identified by the civil society strengthening program rather than a generalized ISO capacity-building initiative.
- **Improving the legal framework for CSO operations and its implementation.** The selective implementation of the existing legal framework and the move towards more a restrictive legal environment warrant direct concerted CSO action. The capacity-building program should focus on how CSOs can better lobby for improved legal and regulatory provisions, build effective coalitions to support reform, and monitor implementation of existing legislation and regulations. Assistance should also target key government implementers of CSO-related legislation, such as registration officers at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, to increase their efficiency and level of professionalization.



Other areas of focus could include increasing the transparency and public reporting of MSAL on the provision of licenses, status of renewals, reasons for rejections, and timely, detailed information on distributions of annual CSO subsidies. Potential CSO partners for this type of program include media outlets, professional associations, Parliament committees, government agencies, think tanks, and the private sector.

Civil society strengthening assistance should be an integrated program that is tailored to the specific needs of each participating CSO. It could include technical assistance, training, internships, exchange programs, mentoring by INGOs and stronger local NGOs, and a targeted small grants program for capacity building and developing long-term institutional sustainability.

A **small grants component** should be included to enable CSOs to build their capacity and long-term sustainability. These should be provided in stages. First-tier grants (\$500-\$3,000) would be available to nascent CSOs and CBOs. Graduation to a higher level of funding in tiers two (up to \$50,000) and three (up to \$250,000) should be dependent on an organizational review and certification of its capacity to manage larger-scale grants and programs. Areas of focus for small grants would be to:

- **Build CSO sustainability** by increasing the CSO's institutional capacity to develop operational and business plans; creating codes of ethics and implementing ongoing ethics training programs; providing staff and board training and development; expanding membership and participation in associational activities; diversifying funding basis including developing income-generation activities such as production and/or services; increasing its volunteer base; developing and/or updating organizational policies and procedures; and developing and implementing public relation plans to improve its public image and promote its mission.
- **Increase advocacy skills** so CSOs are better able to advocate for democratic reforms, protection of human rights, media freedoms, and to keep the political space open for CSOs and the media to work. Other areas for advocacy include independent broadcasting rights, improved mechanisms for public funding of CSOs; tracking MP voting records on issues of importance to participating CSOs, promoting reform and social policies benefiting CSO constituents; and improving the legislative framework for CSO and media development. Programs should be designed to encourage cross-sector CSO collaboration on major governance issues facing Yemen, such as corruption, women's empowerment, slowing population growth, and conflict prevention.
- **Develop partnership and coalitions** to address the major political and social constraints to CSO and media sector developments. Collective action and campaigns should be encouraged to build constituencies and advocate for such things as improving the legal framework for CSOs and the media; sensitizing local councils and businesses in the need to get involved; promoting transparency in government funding of CSOs, increasing transparency within CSOs; and increasing the professional application of the NGO law by the various government offices. The program could provide links to a number of regional and international programs that could be of benefit to Yemeni civil society leaders and their CSOs. Partnerships should be between CSOs (within and between sectors) as well as with government, private sector, communities, and others.

Some of the **key principles** that should be integrated in any potential CSO development program include the following:

- **Include key partners**, such as the government, Parliament, communities, and, where appropriate, the private sector in trainings and activities. Given the political climate in Yemen and the pervasive lack of trust, it is important to be as inclusive as possible in programming in order to build social capital and increase awareness among key actors and policymakers of the importance of CSO activities and their role; in particular, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, the other line ministries where CSOs register, Parliamentary committees, and local community leaders. An example of a potential

partner is the Yemen Parliamentarians Against Corruption (YEMPAC), which is a branch of the Arab parliamentarians Against Corruption. Developing partnerships between CSOs and active legislators should be encouraged as it not only helps strengthen civil society development, but the development of Parliament as well.

- **Develop nascent CSOs and ISOs** in Taiz and other regional hubs. The program should not create new CSOs or ISOs and it should not be Sana'a-centric. Existing CBO partners of USAID-funded sector programs and those of related other donor-funded sector programs should also be eligible.
- **Encourage leadership training and development of negotiation/conflict resolution skills.** Capacity building should include mentoring and training of CSO staff and activists in communication and outreach skills, including the effective use of the media and how to improve their public image. The training and transfer of skills and knowledge should become institutionalized within the CSO and not just provided to the main CSO founder or director.
- **Provide IT skills** and training in management information systems (MIS) and other modern organizational development and communication tools that are directly applicable to the work and functioning of the individual CSOs.
- **Provide a phased and integrated approach** of assistance. Participating CSOs and coalitions should be required to meet specific benchmarks in order to move to the next level of assistance so that continued assistance is not automatic or taken for granted. As CSOs graduate from one stage to another, capacity (including their absorptive capacity) should increase, which means that the size of the subgrants could increase. Graduation from one phase to another should be recognized through a formal type of certification process.
- **Build bridges** between CSOs within sectors and between the sectors to reduce isolation, increase their efficacy and advocacy, and encourage synergies. It should also build bridges with communities and traditional leaders. Coordination with tribal CSOs is a useful mechanism to open doors for civic and other CSO to work within tribal areas. In areas with agricultural cooperatives and water-user associations, especially those run by women, these newer CSOs often compete with tribal authority and, without the tacit endorsement of traditional leadership, they can not become effective or sustainable.
- **Build on existing CSOs and community mechanisms** to avoid creating new institutions. The Assessment Team found a wealth of nascent CSO organizations and activities even in the most remote locations and does not recommend the creation of any new CSO or CBO under this type of capacity-building program. CSOs will need to be prioritized for assistance as the demand can be expected to exceed the supply of funds. In addition to the selection of CSOs based on programmatic priorities, the Assessment Team recommends priority be given to women-run rural and tribal CSOs as these provide alternative leadership and role models in the more restrictive environment outside Sana'a. Engagement with rural and tribal CSOs should emphasize governance to ensure that these CSOs are more than mechanisms to reinforce tribal authority.
- **Leverage the organizational strength and reach of religious charity organizations** by encouraging their participation in coalitions and partnerships with other CSOs and INGOs for strategic actions on more sensitive issues such as women's empowerment and girls' education, youth issues (such as juvenile delinquency and child labor), and advocacy for rights (including women's inheritance rights, labor rights, and civic rights). This will not only make the CSO partnerships and coalitions stronger and more effective, but could also have a moderating effect on religious CSOs and help demystify each side to the other.

### 3.2.2 Media Development

Current assistance to the sector is ad hoc and implemented by offshore providers. Assistance will become more strategic with the start of DANIDA's new two-year media assistance program in 2008 to be implemented by recognized expert organizations in the media sector, but it will still remain an offshore program implemented by four different organizations and consortiums.

The Assessment Team recommends that USAID/Yemen develop a program to strengthen the capacity of the independent media sector and to strengthen its enabling environment. This program should also directly link into the civil society organization strengthening program to ensure synergies and concerted action on media monitoring and advocacy for improved legal framework. The Assessment Team also recommends the program include a continuous in-country program office. When a sector is in transition and under attack, as the media sector is today in Yemen, the presence of an in-country office and experts is a critical element of support for both the independent press and the reform efforts. An office that is perceived as impartial and easily accessible to media professionals and others seeking mentoring and moral support can be a valuable resource for both journalists and government reformers.

The Assessment Team recommends USAID/Yemen consider a two- to three-year media strengthening program that includes the following components:

- **Media reform** to address the major constraints identified in the Assessment related to restrictions on the freedom of speech and increasing access to information. In particular, the program should target strengthening of the relevant CSO and press association in advocacy and their ability to improve the draft print legislation; develop a modern broadcasting law that includes independent broadcasting licensing (TV and radio); reform criminal penalties related to the press; and develop a freedom of information law. This program should be directly linked to the advocacy-building component of the CSO strengthening program. Media-focused organizations and associations should be included in advocacy training programs and be eligible for the award of sub-grants for advocacy activities. The two programs should also ensure synergy between CSO human rights advocacy efforts (and any drafting of legislation/policy proposals) and activities done directly by the media sector associations, such as the Yemeni Journalist Association and others.
- **Strengthening the independent media** to build the capacity of the independent media to provide citizens with alternatives to government news services, and in particular for coverage of political activities and government policies. The Assessment Team recommends USAID/Yemen focus on **increasing the professionalism of working journalists and editors, encouraging the development and reach of independent media outlets, and improving the quality of news.** The Team does not recommend creating new outlets under an assistance program or providing operational subsidies. Rather the Team recommends training for serious independent outlets in business management and marketing to help ensure the long-term viability and sustainability of the sector as a whole. As the DANIDA program will be working to improve journalism school curricula, the Team recommends USAID assistance start at the working journalist and editor levels and include a series of certificated courses. These could be done in conjunction with an academic institution to add credence to the credentials. It could also be done through distance learning through Internet programs to expand the reach of the training programs throughout Yemen. Web-based radio and TV new services should be included in the independent media program as well as local radio stations, and help to transform these stations into more community-based and responsive local news outlets.
- **Improving the watchdog functions of press.** The ability of the press to act as a watchdog is severely constrained by the political environment, but also by the lack of experience in investigative journalism and understanding of democratic systems and how they are supposed to work. In addition to improving the professionalism of the press and the quality of news listed above, the Assessment

Team recommends USAID help develop a cadre of well-trained investigative journalists with an in-depth understanding of the political system, specific sector activities (such as media reform or anti-corruption), and how government is supposed to function. This should include reporters from not only the independent press but from the government press as well, as it would contribute to the professionalization of the broadcast news and improve the overall coverage of these critical issues. To ensure synergies between the civil society and media strengthening programs, watchdog assistance should be related to the CSO advocacy areas assisted under the CSO strengthening program, and especially those related to the protection of rights, conflict mitigation, government accountability, and enforcement of the rule of law. Certificated training programs could, in some cases, be followed up by small grants to outlets and/or journalist associations to help them do actual investigations and increase investigative coverage.

Some of the **general principles and assistance mechanisms** that the Assessment Team recommends for a potential media development program include:

- Continuous in-country presence for program implementers and the recruitment of experts with substantial media experience in countries in transition.
- A systematic and practical training program that includes testing and certification; inclusion of Internet-based training and other innovative methods such as professional exchanges with media within the region and other locations; and targeting of women for training in media roles beyond that of a writer.
- Tailored assistance to individual outlets and credible associations (done within the framework of the main program) that addresses their particular needs.
- Inclusion of governorate and community-level press, broadcasters, and associations in programs and training so activities reach beyond Sana'a to the main media outlets throughout Yemen.
- Training in modern journalism techniques including use of IT, printing, archiving, and electronic distributions for broader reach and more effective coverage.
- Professional training for certain specialties (such as editing, news clipping services, sectors, and issues)
- Development of a code of ethics and strengthening of professional associations in areas related to the three main program components identified above. Among the groups that should be included are the Yemeni Journalist Syndicate and its regional branch offices, and Women Journalists Without Chains. This should only be done after taking the assistance provided by DANIDA and other donors into consideration. Centralization is a major concern for Syndicate members outside of Sana'a, so empowering members and local branches should be a priority.
- Including government press personnel and relevant government officials in trainings as appropriate to foster a sense of program inclusiveness, build trust between key government actors and the press, and increase the professionalism of those within the government dealing with the media.
- Linking journalists and outlets with CSOs working on advocacy and monitoring activities to improve exchange of information, increase effectiveness of advocacy and reporting, and improve the quality of citizen understanding on the issue.

This type of program can be expanded and/or consolidated depending on the level of funding available. The minimum would be to open an office in Yemen with at least two professional media experts. If sufficient funds are available, the Assessment Team recommends the establishment of a small grants fund to enable outlets to practice lessons learned during trainings, improve the capacity of outlets and associations with clear potential to cover the news, advocate for media reform, and perform a watchdog role.

# ATTACHMENT 1: NGO SUSTAINABILITY INDEX

## METHODOLOGY AND EXPLANATION OF FINDINGS YEMEN – NOVEMBER 12, 2007

### A. INTRODUCTION

The NGO Sustainability Index was initially developed as an internal USAID management and monitoring tool for Central and Eastern Europe. It has been used by USAID's Bureau for Europe and Eurasia for the past decade to study the strength and overall viability of NGO sectors in each country in the region, from the Baltics to Central Asia. The Index has been a valuable resource for USAID Missions, other international donors, and local NGO umbrella groups and support centers in that region. By analyzing seven dimensions that are critical to sector sustainability, the Index highlights both strengths and constraints in sector development. The Index uses a focus group methodology and allows for comparisons both across countries and over time. While there are some recognizable limitations to the methodology and the largely subjective data collected in producing the Index, it is a useful tool for understanding and measuring sustainability.

This Index report describes the process and findings of an NGO Index panel held, for the first time, in Yemen as part of a larger ARD-led mission to assess civil society assessment and the media in Yemen.<sup>40</sup> The Index scores and their justifications agreed by the Yemen panel are enlightening. More important, however, are the circumstances and prospects for the new application of the Index in Yemen and the larger MENA context.

### B. CONSIDERATIONS

This section of the report will discuss essential factors in the planning and implementation of the panel activity that may help situate and explain obtained results as well as point to possible improvements in the methodology and its possible wider application.

1. **Materials.** In preparing for the panel, organizers used the 2007 package of materials. These materials were received a few days before the panel, and the sections on Scoring Scale and Dimensions and Indicators were translated into Arabic and sent to participants the day before the panel. Translation was done by the organizers themselves to ensure effective communication of key concepts. Because of time constraints, however, some improvements to the Arabic text are still necessary.

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<sup>40</sup> The Assessment mission was designed to inform USAID/Yemen's overall DG strategy and identify opportunities to assist in the development of the civil society and media in Yemen. The Assessment took place in October - November 2007. For a more in-depth understanding of the civil society sector in Yemen, please refer to the full assessment report.

2. **Participants.** Organizers sought to ensure a representative cross-section of Yemeni civil society. Thirteen participants included four advocacy NGOs focusing on human rights,<sup>41</sup> children empowerment and participation,<sup>42</sup> political and electoral participation,<sup>43</sup> and freedom of the media.<sup>44</sup> Three additional NGOs represented those working in sectors of the environment,<sup>45</sup> charity and service delivery,<sup>46</sup> and consumer rights.<sup>47</sup> In addition, the panel included a representative from the Bar Association, a member of a think-tank, two representatives of Yemen's main labor union,<sup>48</sup> a representative of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor,<sup>49</sup> and a UNDP representative in charge of civil society programs. This resulted in eight men and five women. Due to time and budget constraints, 0 participants were Sana'a based. Many participant NGOs had nationwide outreach and panelists were asked to base their scoring on their organization's sector and geographic experience. They were also cognizant of the need to consider urban/rural disparities in assessing each indicator.
3. **Organizers.** An international member of the Assessment Team, who is also an Arabic speaker, planned and moderated the panel discussion. He was assisted by a Yemeni team member in taking discussion notes and tabulating scores.
4. **Panel Dynamics.** The panel discussion was in Arabic. It was important during the opening of the discussion to briefly explain the methodology and point out that, while the methodology limited in-depth discussion of Yemen's complex and rich experience, it aimed at making an objective judgment on Yemeni civil society. It was also necessary to identify USAID's role and, to reassure the panelists of their independence<sup>50</sup> and the benefits of the Index's findings to the sector and all donors. Panel discussions lasted for 3 hours and fifteen minutes.

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<sup>41</sup> The Yemeni Organization for the Defense of Rights and Democratic Freedoms is an active NGO supported solely by donations of its 36 members the majority of whom were human rights-abuse victims. Its director participated in some trainings in Denmark and Jordan, but missed others as he was detained and reportedly tortured by Yemeni authorities.

<sup>42</sup> The Democracy School is active throughout Yemen and has programs aiming at youth empowerment as well as civic and political awareness for children. It maintains a good relationship with GOY.

<sup>43</sup> The Civic Democratic Initiatives Support Foundation (CDF) is a well known and active NGO. It recently undertook a campaign to reform the NGO law in partnership with ICNL.

<sup>44</sup> Women Journalists Without Chains is a rapidly growing NGO that has undertaken high-profile activities to denounce government repressive actions against the media. WJWC is known to be loosely affiliated with the opposition Islah party, but represents a more progressive and youthful tendency.

<sup>45</sup> The Yemeni Center for Development and Environmental Protection.

<sup>46</sup> Al-Rahmah Foundation for Human Development is a well established organization providing protection services to poor, orphaned and abused children.

<sup>47</sup> The Yemeni Association for Consumer Rights is a nascent NGO close to the government.

<sup>48</sup> Organizers invited one representative, but two came to represent the Training and Women's Departments of Yemen General Labor Union.

<sup>49</sup> MSAL is the ministry in charge of registration and monitoring of NGOs in Yemen.

<sup>50</sup> One of the panelists started by making a political statement about unhelpful US labor policy and questioning the sincerity of USAID intention to help civil society. This event was quickly defused by another panelist who reiterated the development purpose of the exercise.

5. **Methodology.** Organizers added one indicator under the Public Image dimension: “INDEPENDENCE. Are NGOs in Yemen generally perceived to be affiliated with political parties? Are they perceived to be donor-dependent to an extent that undermines their credibility?” The indicator of Local Advocacy and Legal Reform was appropriate in the Yemen context, so organizers rephrased it to focus on the extent of local support as leverage for advocacy at the national level. Organizers did not systematically eliminate the highest and lowest scores in averaging for each indicator. As the case with most indicators, lowest and/or highest scores were not necessarily expressions of extreme or unrealistic assessments; especially if they were repeated more than once and/or that most panelists felt they ought to be counted.
6. **Beyond Scores.** There was an overwhelming acceptance among panelists of the novel methodology as a participatory, rapid and yet exhaustive approach to assessing the civil society sector. Some of the panelists met for the first time around the same table and most appreciated the structured discussion, especially with government participation.

## C. DIMENSIONS & INDICATORS

### LEGAL ENVIRONMENT 4.3

Participants had no major complaints regarding the text of the law regulating NGO registration and operation. Complaints were mostly about applications of the law, which were seen as sometimes selective, arbitrary and politically motivated. For comparison, 4.3 is the legal environment average score for Southern Tier countries of Eastern Europe in 1999 and for the Eurasia region in 1997.

### ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY 4.6

This score could have been lower (closer to 7 than 1) had it not been for the Technical Advancement indicator, which was understood to account for ownership and use of IT equipment. Nevertheless, there was consensus that Yemeni NGOs generally lack in organizational capacity. The agreed score puts Yemen at the same level in organizational capacity as the average Southern-tier country in Eastern Europe in 2000.

### FINANCIAL VIABILITY 4.4

Organizers expected panelists to give a lower score, but there was a general consensus that Yemeni NGOs did well in raising funds, mostly for charity works. Scores for the fundraising indicator were consistent ( $3/3/4.5/3/3/4/4.5/2/4/4.5/4.5/5/2 = 3.6$ )

3.7	REGISTRATION.
4.5	OPERATION.
4.9	ADMINISTRATIVE IMPEDIMENTS.
4.8	LOCAL LEGAL CAPACITY.
3.5	TAXATION.
4.4	EARNED INCOME.

4.2	CONSTITUENCY BUILDING.
5.1	STRATEGIC PLANNING.
5.3	INTERNAL MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE.
4.3	NGO STAFFING.
3.9	TECHNICAL ADVANCEMENT.

4.2	LOCAL SUPPORT.
5.2	DIVERSIFICATION.
4.1	FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS.
3.6	FUNDRAISING.
4.8	EARNED INCOME.

## ADVOCACY 4

Panelists were generally in agreement on the ability of NGOs to adopt and advocate for various causes. They pointed out the existence of various NGO coalitions like the Civil Society Coalition, Shema and others advocating for the rights of women and children. According to Yemen's election commission, NGOs fielded 27,851 monitors during the last presidential election. What the indicators under this dimension fail to adequately address is government responsiveness to advocacy efforts.

4	COOPERATION WITH LOCAL AND NATIONAL GOVERNMENT.
3.8	POLICY ADVOCACY INITIATIVES.
4.1	POLITICAL LOBBYING EFFORTS.
4.2	LOCAL ADVOCACY FOR LEGAL REFORM.

## SERVICE PROVISION 3.9

The majority of active NGOs in Yemen are based on charity and service provision. They receive monetary and in-kind donations from wealthy individuals in the Gulf and some of the remittances from Yemenis abroad. Religious donations in the form of Zakat and Sadaka are common. In addition to the provision of relief items, a number of well established faith-based charities and secular NGOs in Yemen excel in service delivery.

3.1	RANGE OF GOODS AND SERVICES.
3.1	COMMUNITY RESPONSIVENESS.
2.9	CONSTITUENCIES AND CLIENTELE.
5.6	COST RECOVERY.
4.8	GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT.

## INFRASTRUCTURE 4.8

There was recognition among panelists that, although NGO forums and coalitions do exist, there was still much need for technical support, mentoring and access to information. They noted the need for related assistance, as reflected by the 5.6 score for the first indicator.

5.6	ISOS AND NGO RESOURCE CENTERS.
5.3	LOCAL GRANT MAKING ORGANIZATIONS.
4.5	NGO COALITIONS.
4.2	TRAINING.
4.3	INTERSECTORAL PARTNERSHIPS.

## PUBLIC IMAGE 4.3

Indicator scores reflect a conscious effort by Yemeni NGOs to reach out to the general public. Service delivery NGOs and charities enjoy a favorable image. Advocacy NGOs, however, are still at a disadvantage given their relatively nascent emergence, their tendency to be donor-dependent and the government's intermittent and oblique ways to discredit them by linking them with foreign agendas. All NGOs still suffer from a perception that they are closely associated with political parties. In reality, that is changing, albeit slowly.

4.9	MEDIA COVERAGE.
3.9	PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF NGOS
4.8	GOVERNMENT/BUSINESS PERCEPTION OF NGOS.
3.9	PUBLIC RELATIONS
3.5	SELF-REGULATION.
4.8	INDEPENDENCE.



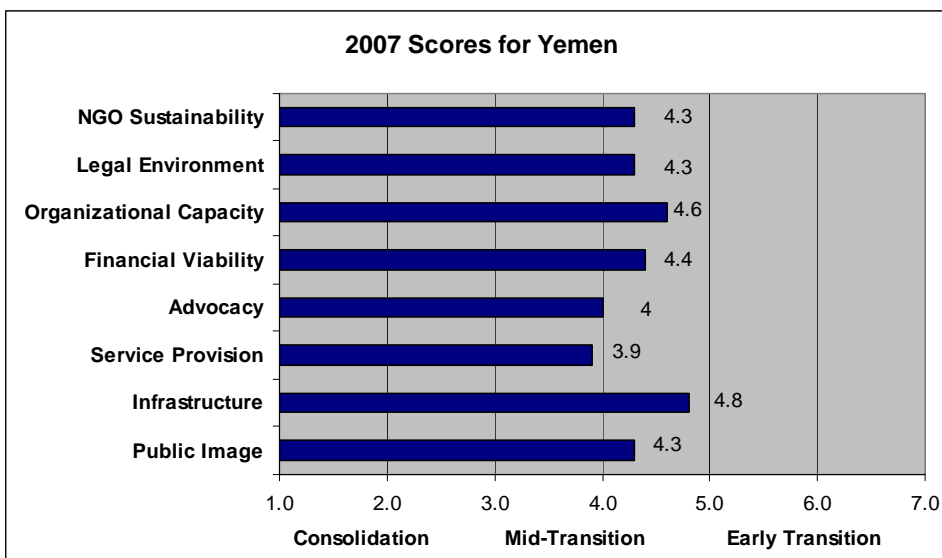
### **COUNTRY SCORE: 4.3**

Panelists were in general agreement that the country score adequately reflected the development stage of Yemeni civil society; a sector in Mid-Transition. They pointed out that, while progress was possible, they feared the government may feel compelled to further tighten its control of NGOs, perhaps in through a restrictive NGO law, as they become more active and vocal. They insisted on the importance of training and coordination, among NGOs and donors, to meet evolving need

For further information or clarification on the Yemeni Civil Society Index, you may contact the 2007 NGO Sustainability Index Panel Moderator, Lazhar Aloui at [lazhar.aloui@gmail.com](mailto:lazhar.aloui@gmail.com).

# ATTACHMENT 2: NGO SUSTAINABILITY INDEX

## REPUBLIC OF YEMEN



**Capital:** Sana'a  
**Polity:** Republic  
**Population:**  
 22,230,531  
**GDP per capita:**  
 (PPP) \$1,000

### NGO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.3

This is the first NGO Sustainability Index produced in Yemen. Panelists were in general agreement that the country score adequately reflected the development stage of Yemeni civil society; a sector in Mid-Transition. They pointed out that, while progress was made possible mainly due to a permissive legal environment, it was feared that the government may in the near future feel compelled to further tighten its control of NGOs because of their increased activity and assertiveness.

Panelists credited NGOs in Yemen for their increasing ability to fundraise and deliver services to disadvantaged populations. While most of that credit was given to charity and faith-based organizations, advocacy NGOs were

also recognized as a rapidly growing and vocal category of CSOs. Advocacy and rights-based organizations remain donor-dependent, urban-based and most prone to government restrictive measures. Nonetheless, they have been increasingly savvy in reaching out to the public, coordinating their activities, and engaging the government.

Unpredictable government responsiveness, conflict, weak internal NGO governance, and sector-wide need for technical assistance will be the main factors determining a noticeable progress or a dramatic decline in associative life in Yemen.

## LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 4.3

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Participants in the Index panel discussion had no major complaints regarding the text of the law regulating NGO registration and operation. Criticisms were mostly about applications of the law, which was seen as sometimes selective, arbitrary and politically motivated. For comparison, 4.3 is the legal environment average score for Southern Tier countries of Eastern Europe in 1999 and for the Eurasia region in 1997.

According to government statistics, there were 5,600 NGOs registered by the end of June 2007. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MSAL) which is the government entity overseeing NGOs in Yemen, estimates that only about a thousand registered NGOs are actually active, most of which are religious charities. On average, MSAL receives 2 to 3 NGO applications for registration per day.

<b>3.7</b>	<i>REGISTRATION.</i>
<b>4.5</b>	<i>OPERATION.</i>
<b>4.9</b>	<i>ADMINISTRATIVE IMPEDIMENTS.</i>
<b>4.8</b>	<i>LOCAL LEGAL CAPACITY.</i>
<b>3.5</b>	<i>TAXATION.</i>
<b>4.4</b>	<i>EARNED INCOME.</i>

of the law, especially in the areas of annual reauthorizations, financial aid, and – on rare but high-profile occasions – registration.

This is reflected in the scoring for administrative impediments which came in at 4.9 followed by local legal capacity at 4.8.

## ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.6

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<b>4.2</b>	<i>CONSTITUENCY BUILDING.</i>
<b>5.1</b>	<i>STRATEGIC PLANNING.</i>
<b>5.3</b>	<i>INTERNAL MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE.</i>
<b>4.3</b>	<i>NGO STAFFING.</i>
<b>3.9</b>	<i>TECHNICAL ADVANCEMENT.</i>

Understandably charities in Yemen have a wide support base, but most active NGOs have yet to evolve into democratically run, effective and transparent organizations. The recent emergence of advocacy NGOs and their cultural environment do not favor a rapid transformation of those NGOs from ad hoc structures built around project-based activities and dominant roles of original founders into sustainable organizations with defined functions, systems

and procedures. Panelists also blamed the lack of NGO capacity on the short-term nature of funds they have been receiving and the focus of donors on activities rather than capacity building.

The capacity and discipline to plan strategically were described as severely limited. Strategic planning trainings, which also were said to lack mentoring and follow-up, have not been very effective mainly due to high turnover of trained staff, unpredictable funding, and the overwhelming role and status of heads of NGOs

This score could have been lower (closer to 7 than 1) had it not been for the Technical Advancement indicator, which was understood to account for ownership and use of IT equipment. The NGOs most panelists represented are closer geographically and cooperatively with the private sector donors, international organizations and the media and

function in an environment that enables networking. So they are able to fund raise and access higher tech tools for their organization easier than NGOs in other areas in Yemen.

Nevertheless, there was consensus that Yemeni NGOs generally lack organizational capacity. The agreed score puts Yemen at the same level in organizational capacity as the average Southern-tier country in Eastern Europe in 2000.

**FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 4.4**

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Both rural and urban NGOs have yet to develop ways to sustain themselves financially from a diverse source of income and do not have developed projects for income generation. Only few Yemeni NGOs have managed to put in place financial management systems. Those who did struggled to develop manuals of procedures and management controls necessary to ensure proper accounting of project funds. Pre-award assessments and audits by donors are rare. The lack of transparency is also a widely recognized problem that affects public image.

The Yemeni government supports NGOs through tax exemptions and other discounts on payments. It further provides financial aid to NGOs, reportedly up to 227,000,000 YR or approximately \$1,135,000 per year. Smaller amounts, ranging from 60,000 YR to 300,000 YR are distributed through MSAL. Larger amounts, some of which are left to the discretion of the President of the Republic, are reportedly disbursed through the Ministry of Finance. There is no proper and public accounting for how much the government provides to each NGO. In addition, there are no established and disclosed criteria for this government assistance.

Organizers expected panelists to give a lower score, but there was a general consensus among panelists that Yemeni NGOs did well in raising funds, mostly for charity works. Scores for the fundraising indicator were consistent (3/3/4.5/3/3/4/4.5/2/4/4.5/4.5/5/2 = 3.6)

<b>4.2</b>	<i>LOCAL SUPPORT.</i>
<b>5.2</b>	<i>DIVERSIFICATION.</i>
<b>4.1</b>	<i>FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS.</i>
<b>3.6</b>	<i>FUNDRAISING.</i>
<b>4.8</b>	<i>EARNED INCOME.</i>

Diversification of support received the lowest ranking at 5.2 followed by the lack of local support. Fundraising received a high score, primarily because of the urban bias and close donor-connections of most NGO panelists. They also noted the beginnings of corporate social responsibility but this is not yet developed.

**ADVOCACY: 4**

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The responses to advocacy tended to reflect the experience of panelists who were Sana'a-based and had better access to decision makers and can do, and are aware of the possibilities of doing advocacy. They were in general agreement on the ability of NGOs to adopt and advocate for various causes. They pointed out the existence of various NGO coalitions such as the Civil

Society Coalition, Shema and others in Sana'a that advocate for the rights of women and children. NGOs were also able to field almost 28,000 monitors during the last presidential election.

Participants were aware that their ability to effectively lobby the government was a good barometer of citizen participation and government responsiveness. They cited a few

instances of participatory decision making – such as when the government asked for civil society comments on a draft election law in the late 1990’s – but admitted to limited access to decision makers, especially on issues regarded as political and, therefore, perceived by Yemeni officials as the realm of the government.

Some of the Yemeni NGOs are currently lobbying Parliament to improve provisions of the draft law governing NGO registration and operation. They hope to be able to mitigate some expected restrictions if the law is amended. Yemeni advocacy efforts, however, are frustrated by limited government responsiveness and the weakness of democratic institutions.

Other limits to effective advocacy discussed by panelists included restrictions on press freedom,

an ineffective legislature, nascent and powerless local authorities, and CSO limited advocacy campaigning experience. Panelist assessments varied, however, on opportunities to advocate in the context of current debates on constitutional reform.

<b>4</b>	<i>COOPERATION WITH LOCAL AND NATIONAL GOVERNMENT.</i>
<b>3.8</b>	<i>POLICY ADVOCACY INITIATIVES.</i>
<b>4.1</b>	<i>POLITICAL LOBBYING EFFORTS.</i>
<b>4.2</b>	<i>LOCAL ADVOCACY FOR LEGAL REFORM.</i>

### **SERVICE PROVISION: 3.9**

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The service provision scoring was affected by the fact that most active NGOs in Yemen are based on charity and engage in service provision. In addition to relief work, a number of well established faith-based charities and secular NGOs in Yemen excel in service delivery. They attract many people seeking charity services and receive monetary and in-kind donations from wealthy individuals in the Gulf and some of the remittances from Yemenis abroad. Religious donations in the form of Zakat and Sadaka are common. This led to a high score for the constituencies and clientele indicator.

The government was seen to recognize NGOs as partners in economic and social development. Most old-generation NGOs, however, were thought to have failed in providing adequate services to its members.

These include most labor unions, professional associations, and cooperatives. Effectiveness of such organizations is hampered by centralized governance and government control.

<b>3.1</b>	<i>RANGE OF GOODS AND SERVICES.</i>
<b>3.1</b>	<i>COMMUNITY RESPONSIVENESS.</i>
<b>2.9</b>	<i>CONSTITUENCIES AND CLIENTELE.</i>
<b>5.6</b>	<i>COST RECOVERY.</i>
<b>4.8</b>	<i>GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT.</i>

The panelists reported some attempts to recover costs and generate income, such as in the case of one of the panelists- an advocacy NGO that provided news services and produced documentaries. The amounts generated by CSOs through income generation, however, were thought to be limited.

## INFRASTRUCTURE: 4.8

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Characteristics of the civil society sector under this dimension closely resemble those typical of an early transition stage. Some of better established NGOs provide technical services, either in mentoring a partner or in response to a donor requirement. Except for some services provided by the Social Fund for Development, ISO services were said to be lacking.

There was recognition among panelists that, although NGO forums and coalitions do exist, there was still a definite need for technical support, mentoring and access to information. They noted the need for related assistance, as reflected by the 5.6 score for the first indicator.

5.6	<i>ISOS AND NGO RESOURCE CENTERS.</i>
5.3	<i>LOCAL GRANT MAKING ORGANIZATIONS.</i>
4.5	<i>NGO COALITIONS.</i>
4.2	<i>TRAINING.</i>
4.3	<i>INTERSECTORAL PARTNERSHIPS.</i>

## PUBLIC IMAGE: 4.3

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Indicator scores reflect a conscious effort by Yemeni NGOs to reach out to the general public. Service delivery NGOs and charities enjoy a favorable image. Advocacy NGOs, however, are still at a disadvantage given their relatively nascent emergence, their tendency to be donor-dependent and the government's intermittent and oblique ways to discredit them by linking them with foreign agendas. All NGOs were said to suffer from a perception that they are closely associated with political parties. In reality, panelists said that is changing, albeit slowly.

NGOs have yet to learn how to articulate key messages and use the media. They are also at a disadvantage given the widespread practice among Yemeni journalists to ask for payments. In addition, panels decried the government's virtual monopoly on TV and radio.

Panelists' scores varied widely for the indicator on self-regulation, and in particular between the Government and NGO panelists. The Government representative thought the NGOs had not done enough in this regard, while NGO panelists took a defensive response in regards to issues of reporting and financial transparency.

4.9	<i>MEDIA COVERAGE.</i>
3.9	<i>PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF NGOS</i>
4.8	<i>GOVERNMENT/BUSINESS PERCEPTION OF NGOS.</i>
3.9	<i>PUBLIC RELATIONS</i>
3.5	<i>SELF-REGULATION.</i>
4.8	<i>INDEPENDENCE.</i>

# ATTACHMENT 3: NGO SUSTAINABILITY INDEX PARTICIPANTS

	TYPE	ORGANIZATION	NAME & TITLE	PHONE	EMAIL
1	Advocacy HR	Yemeni Organization for the Defense of Rights & Democratic Freedoms	Ali Dailami Executive Director	711677004	<a href="mailto:alidailami@Yahoo.com">alidailami@Yahoo.com</a>
2	Advocacy Pol. Participation	Civic Democratic Initiatives Support Foundation (CDF)	Soltana Jiham Program Officer	500304/6	<a href="mailto:cdf@y.net.ye">cdf@y.net.ye</a> <a href="mailto:cdf_yemen@Yahoo.com">cdf_yemen@Yahoo.com</a>
3	Service	Alrahmah Foundation for Human Development	Ruqaya Abdullah Al-hajri	777101242	
4	Environmental	Yemeni Center for Development & Environmental Protection	Rame Abdu Hamadi	777001115	<a href="mailto:Ycde_yemen@Yahoo.com">Ycde_yemen@Yahoo.com</a>
5	Professional. Association	Bar Association Sana'a Branch	Nabila Mufti	733777608 77207099	<a href="mailto:Mufti2007@yahoo.com">Mufti2007@yahoo.com</a>
6	Professional Association	Yemeni Assoc. for Consumer Protection	Salah Ali Tmilan Technical Unit Director	733572424 226004	<a href="mailto:info@consumeryemen.org">info@consumeryemen.org</a>
7	Think-tank	Yemen Center for Studies and Research AND Yemen Observatory for Human Rights	Dr. Abdulqader Ali Abdo Albanna	733541229 200485	<a href="mailto:Albanna002@yahoo.com">Albanna002@yahoo.com</a>
8	Advocacy Child HR	Democracy School	Jamal Abdullah Al-Shami	711127566 77012040	<a href="mailto:Alshami16@hotmail.com">Alshami16@hotmail.com</a>
9	Media	Women Journalists Without Chains	Tawakkol Karman	712020010 733199832	<a href="mailto:withoutchains@gmail.com">withoutchains@gmail.com</a>

	TYPE	ORGANIZATION	NAME & TITLE	PHONE	EMAIL
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11	Labor	Yemen General Labor Union Women Department	Ridha Garhash	733214345	<a href="mailto:garhash@yahoo.com">garhash@yahoo.com</a>
12	Labor	Yemen General Labor Union	Fadhl Al-Aaqil Member of Executive Bureau	733537777 203751	<a href="mailto:alekelfadle@Yahoo.com">alekelfadle@Yahoo.com</a>
13	GOY	Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor	Hamid Ahmed Maaoudha	777877252	



# APPENDIX A: SCOPE OF WORK

## SECTION C – DESCRIPTION / SPECIFICATIONS/STATEMENT OF WORK

### C.1 PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT

USAID/Yemen seeks to refine its analysis of the many factors that affect the development of the civil society and media in Yemen. The objective of this assessment is to provide an overview of the state of civil society and media in Yemen today, gather concrete lessons learned and best practices, and make recommendations to help inform USAID/Yemen’s civil society and media assistance. USAID is expecting two separate sets of recommendations: one addressing civil society assistance, and one addressing media assistance. The civil society assistance design should include proposed activities how to address the major problems of the civil society in the areas of legal environment, financial sustainability, organizational capacity, advocacy, service provision, infrastructure, public image and other relevant areas where major problems have been discovered. The media assistance design shall include proposed activities how to address the major problems in the areas of freedom of speech, professionalism, pluralism, business management, supporting institutions, legal environment and other identified major problems. The assessment should also include conducting the first NGO Sustainability Index for Yemen per the attached methodology and rating scale.

While the major focus of the assessment will be on the development of civil society in Yemen, the contractor shall conduct a desk survey of existing publications on media sector sustainability in Yemen, such as the Media Sustainability Index, published by IREX, Joint Media Development Program (Dutch Government), and other relevant documentation, analyze existing programs by other donors, and meet with key media professionals. As a result, the contractor shall recommend USAID/media assistance interventions in addition to civil society assistance interventions.

### C. 2 BACKGROUND

#### A. Overview

Civil society as a whole has been a relatively weak actor thus far in Yemen. In part, this is because associations and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) compete for political access and influence with more traditional forms of inclusion and participation, such as family, clan, tribes, political parties, and regional and personal networks. There are three types of NGOs. First, there are advocacy organizations, often with close ties to the ruling and/or opposition parties, such as human rights groups and the national women’s organization. Second, there are small, local associations, which tend to be functionally specific. Finally, there are the professional associations, which thus far have not been able to play much of an advocacy role regarding policy.

Despite its aggregate weakness, there is considerable potential for growth in civil society that could contribute to the demand side of good governance. The formal enabling environment does not preclude the development of this sector. Most civil society organizations will generally favor democratizing reforms, but thus far they do not have good access to decision makers.

Most NGOs in Yemen are located in urban areas, while few exist in rural areas. Most lack not only resources but also skills and experience in their respective fields. NGOs suffer from conflicts within, and perhaps between, their leaders. This phenomenon is likely compounded by competition for donor funds and perhaps the fact that the government has created and/or otherwise dominated some organizations. There is also reportedly considerable duplication of efforts among existing NGOs and a lack of cooperation and collaboration.

Notwithstanding these inherent weaknesses, there are a handful of active and vibrant NGOs. The Forum for Civil Society (FCS) is one example of a dynamic Yemeni advocacy NGO that has not only benefited from donor-funded capacity building but become increasingly active. FCS works across the DG sector and focuses in particular on anti-corruption and rule of law issues, including monitoring judicial independence and promoting legal education. Other DG advocacy NGOs include the Yemeni Organization for Defense for Human Rights and Democratic Freedom; the Human Rights Information and Training Center, based in Tai'z; the Sisters Arab Forum for Human Rights; and the more hybrid Civic Democratic Initiatives Support Foundation, which also runs several service-oriented centers for women, youth, and the poor.

The Society for the Development of Women and Children (SOUL) is prominent among the many service-oriented NGOs in Yemen and has found the rather unique niche of offering technical support to other organizations that focus on women's and children's socioeconomic development. SOUL itself has identified a core group of NGOs in these broad areas that seem relatively strong in terms of management and activities and projects conducted despite a serious lack of material and financial resources. This indicates potential for the future sustainability and enhanced impact of NGO life in Yemen.<sup>51</sup>

The Mission has not undertaken any stand-alone media-support activities, however, a media program, supported by MEPI, has been active regionally. See attached the 2005 Media Sustainability Index for Yemen.

### **C.3 TASKS OF THE ASSESSMENT**

In its report, the team shall present an analysis of the following:

#### **A. Legal Environment**

For an NGO sector to be sustainable, the legal and regulatory environment should support the needs of NGOs.

Questions asked shall include:

Is there a favorable law on NGO registration? On paper and *in practice*, what are the specific roles of the Ministry of Social Affairs and other central government ministries/actors vis-à-vis civil society? Is the internal management, scope of permissible activities, financial reporting, and/or dissolution of NGOs well detailed in current legislation? Does clear legal terminology preclude unwanted State control over NGOs? Are NGOs and their representatives allowed to operate freely within the law? Are they free from harassment by the central government, local governments, and tax police? Can they freely address matters of public debate and express criticism? Are there local lawyers who are trained in and familiar with NGO law? Is legal advice available to NGOs in the capital city and secondary cities? Do NGOs receive any sort of tax exemption? Do individual or corporate donors

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<sup>51</sup> Yemen DG Assessment, ARD, 2004.

receive tax deductions? Do NGOs have to pay taxes on grants? Are NGOs allowed legally to compete for government contracts/procurements at the local and central levels?

## **B. Organizational Capacity**

A sustainable NGO sector will contain a critical mass of NGOs that are transparently governed and publicly accountable, capably managed, and that exhibit essential organizational skills.

Questions evaluated shall include:

Do NGOs actively seek to build constituencies for their initiatives? Do most NGOs have a clearly defined mission to which they adhere? Do most NGOs incorporate strategic planning techniques in their decision making process? Is there a clearly defined management structure within NGOs, including a recognized division of responsibilities between the Board of Directors and staff members? Is there a permanent, paid staff in leading NGOs? Are potential volunteers sufficiently recruited and engaged? Do NGOs' resources generally allow for modernized basic office equipment? Are NGOs Gender-sensitive or an equal-opportunity employer is the NGOs human resources policy based on favoritism and family ties or is it merit and effort base? Do Yemeni NGOs declare their sources of funding and for what purposes?

## **C. Financial Viability**

A critical mass of NGOs must be financially viable, and the economy must be robust enough to support NGO self-financing efforts and generate philanthropic donations from local sources. For many NGOs, financial viability may be equally dependent upon the availability of and their ability to compete for international donor support funds.

Questions asked shall include include: Do NGOs raise a significant percentage of their funding from local sources? Are NGOs able to draw upon a core of volunteer and non-monetary support from their communities? Do NGOs typically have multiple/diverse sources of funding – in particular, from local private sector actors? Are there sound financial management systems in place? Have NGOs cultivated a loyal core of financial supporters? Do revenues from services, products, or rent from assets supplement the income of NGOs? Do government and/or local business contract with NGOs for services?

## **D. Advocacy**

The political and advocacy environment must support the formation of coalitions and networks, and offer NGOs the means to communicate their message through the media to the broader public, articulate their demands to government officials, and monitor government actions to ensure accountability.

Questions shall include: Are there direct lines of communication between NGOs and policy makers – either in the executive branch or in parliament? Have NGOs formed issue-based coalitions and conducted broad-based advocacy campaigns? Have these campaigns been effective at the local and/or national level at effecting policy change? Are there mechanisms and relationships for NGOs to participate in the political process? Have NGOs led efforts to raise awareness of problems or increase support for a particular position? Is there awareness in the wider NGO community on how a favorable legal and regulatory framework can enhance NGO effectiveness and sustainability? Is there a local NGO advocacy effort to promote legal reforms that will benefit NGOs, local philanthropy, etc.? Does

civil society have access to state, partisan and independent electronic and print media? What is the quantity and quality of media coverage of civil society like in Yemen?

#### **E. Service Provision**

Sectoral sustainability will require a critical mass of NGOs that can efficiently provide services that consistently meet the needs, priorities and expectations of their constituents.

The questions shall include: Do NGOs provide services in a variety of fields? Do the goods and services that NGOs produce reflect the needs and priorities of their constituents and communities? Are there goods and services that go beyond basic social needs provided to a constituency broader than NGOs' own memberships? When NGOs provide goods and services, do they recover any of their costs by charging fees? Do NGOs have knowledge of the market demand – and the ability of distinct constituencies to pay – for those products? Does the government, at the national and/or local level, recognize the value that NGOs can add in the provision of basic social services? Do they provide grants or contracts to NGOs to enable them to provide such services? Are there coalitions between service delivery organizations at local/regional levels? Is there collaboration or cooperation between such groups and advocacy groups in secondary cities or Sana'a?

#### **F. Infrastructure**

A strong sectoral infrastructure is necessary that can provide NGOs with broad access to local NGO support services. Intermediary Support Organizations (ISOs) providing these services must be able to inform, train, and advise other NGOs; and provide access to NGO networks and coalitions that share information and pursue issues of common interest.

Questions shall include: Are there ISOs, NGO Resource Centers, or other means for NGOs to access information, technology, training and technical assistance throughout the country? Do ISOs and Resource Centers earn some of their operating revenue from earned income and other locally generated sources? If so, what has been the track record on such initiatives to date? Do local community foundations and/or ISOs provide grants from either locally raised funds or by re-granting international donor funds? Do NGOs share information with each other? Is there a network in place that facilitates such information sharing? Is there an organization or committee through which the sector promotes its interests? Are there capable local NGO management trainers? Is basic NGO management training available in the capital city and in secondary cities? Are training materials available in local languages? Are there examples of NGOs working in partnership, either formally or informally, with local business, government, and the media to achieve common objectives?

#### **G. Public Image**

For the sector to be sustainable, government, the business sector, and communities should have a positive public image of NGOs, including a broad understanding and appreciation of the role that NGOs play in society. Public awareness and credibility directly affect NGOs' ability to recruit members and volunteers, and encourage indigenous donors.

Questions shall include: Do NGOs enjoy positive media coverage at the local and national level? Do the media provide positive analysis of the role that NGOs play in civil society? Does the general public have a positive perception of NGOs? Do the business sector and local and central government officials have a positive perception of NGOs? Do NGOs publicize their activities or promote their

public image? Have NGOs adopted a code of ethics or tried to demonstrate transparency in their operations? Do leading NGOs publish annual reports? Is there an understanding within the population and within the civil society itself of the role of NGOs?

#### **H. Relationship between NGOs and Government**

One of the major sources of support for NGOs worldwide is the respective government funding.

Questions shall include: What is the government's political will and approach vis-à-vis NGOs? Is there a governmental policy towards NGOs? If not, is there an understanding for the need of such policy? If yes, what are governmental sources of funding and the eligibility criteria? Are the NGOs consulted at policy level? Are NGOs considered a potential partner in service delivery and other related fields?

#### **I. State of Independent Media in Yemen**

While NGO sector has not been researched, there is already aggregated information on media development in the country, as well as active programs (Dutch Government Joint Media program). The contractor shall analyze existing information, discuss with key media professionals to perform a reality check as well as include media in its discussions with donors. The contractor shall report on each of the areas identified in the attached media sustainability index such as freedom of speech, professionalism, pluralism, business management, supporting institutions, legal environment, as well as include a separate discussion on other donors' programs in the media sphere. The contractor shall further propose interventions for USAID/Yemen media assistance.

As a result, the contractor shall identify:

- Strengths and weaknesses of civil society in Yemen, with a focus on NGOs, but also including informal citizens groups and other civil society actors or groupings active in Yemen, especially tribal and community groups; strengths and weaknesses of the media sector in Yemen;
- The current effectiveness of NGOs and civil society actors as contributors to democratic development;
- Prospects for enhancing the effectiveness of NGO and civil society contributions to democratic development, at both the central and local levels;
- Key constraints or obstacles impeding further enhancement of NGO effectiveness in democratic development; key constraints and obstacles to media development in Yemen;
- Any intractable problems or areas unlikely to benefit from technical assistance in the near term;
- Lessons learned and best practices from local Yemeni experiences, and current and previous civil society assistance and media programs in Yemen;
- Observations of and recommendations for incorporating linkages between USAID/Yemen's proposed civil society strengthening program and other USAID/Yemen programs, including but not limited to media, local governance, economic policy reform, health, education and political process programs; and
- Recommendations regarding potentially productive strategies and priorities for technical assistance to enhance and strengthen civil society in Yemen, with a detailed description of proposed activities and a suggested budget for each activity; recommendations regarding potentially productive strategies and priorities for technical assistance to enhance and strengthen civil society in Yemen, with a detailed description of proposed activities and a suggested budget for each activity.

This analysis should include a discussion of the range of strategies adopted by various donors and implementers in attempting to support the development of the Third Sector in Yemen, along with the

goals and underlying assumptions of these activities. While the report should draw on a full understanding of the evolution of activities supporting civil society development, the recommendations should be forward-looking, with an emphasis on what should be done over the next few years, and should be specific to Yemen. The report should identify any areas in which the team concludes that USAID should not be involved for any reason, such as the intractability of a particular problem, unreasonably costly results, duplication of efforts by other donors, high probability of success in the absence of donor involvement, or inappropriateness of intervention. Recommendations must be linked to the findings and conclusions presented in the assessment report.

The assessment should have appropriate emphasis on advocacy NGOs, but should also have adequate attention to other civil society actors, such as community-based citizen organizations, informal village governing units, informal issue-based citizens groups, professional associations, independent trade unions and issue-oriented coalitions. The report should also take into consideration the relevance of the Mission's five cross-cutting issues (gender, anti-corruption, youth, capacity-building, and returns/reconciliation) in its conclusions and recommendations, and highlight women and youth NGOs. (Suggestion: I would ask the contractor to highlight women and particularly youth NGOs as possible in the sections above)

The contractor should also conduct the NGO Sustainability Index rating per attached methodology and rating scale.

### **III. Deliverables**

- A. An Outline (Table of Contents) of the report is to be submitted within three working days after arrival in Yemen. While the contractor should propose how to structure the report, the framing questions in this SOW (i.e. those listed throughout section II) offer a logical basis for the outline of the report. USAID-funded civil society assessments of other Middle East countries may also provide useful inputs for how to structure the Yemen report.
- B. Two briefings for Mission staff: one at the half-way point of the assessment and a second before leaving Yemen. The second briefing will likely be for USAID/Yemen as well as Embassy/Sana'a staff and senior management. The contractor may be asked to prepare a power-point presentation for this briefing.
- C. A draft of the final report shall be submitted to the Mission for review before the team leaves Yemen. The report shall include a civil society and media sections. The draft report would include key findings per the framing questions in the SOW and recommendations. The final report, of not more than 30 pages in length if possible, is due 10 days after receiving Mission comments on the draft report. It should contain an Executive Summary and should clearly identify the team's findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Appendices shall, at a minimum, list the people and organizations interviewed, as well as a list of most active NGOs in Yemen by sector. The Mission will provide written comments to the team. The final report is due to the Mission no later than ten days thereafter. The final report should be submitted electronically (as a Microsoft Word document) along with six bound copies.
- D. NGO Sustainability Index report with discussion of scores in each of the respective areas of the index. The NGO Sustainability Index report shall be an attachment to the final report.

# APPENDIX B: METHODOLOGY

The Civil Society Assessment in Yemen was undertaken in October and November 2007. It was composed in two parts: a desk review and meetings in Washington; followed by field work in Yemen that including interviews, site visits, and review of available documentation.

The Assessment Team was composed of seven national and international experts in civil society and development: Sue Nelson, Lazhar Aloui, Kyle Foster, Abdul-Ghani Al-Iryani, Eman Mashhour Ahmed, Yasmeen Al-Eryani, and Mohammed Al-Lawzi.

The Assessment focused on informing USAID/Yemen regarding potential programmatic investments in civil society and media strengthening by analyzing the current status of the civil society and media sectors, identifying existing assistance programs and their lessons learned, and making programmatic recommendations for possible USAID support. This included an analysis of the evolving political situation within the country and its impact on civil society and media development. This was done through a desk study of existing documentation before starting field work in Yemen (Appendix D); interviews with a broad range of actors, participants, and beneficiaries (Appendix C); and site visits and discussions in Sana'a, Ibb, Taiz, Aden, Mukella, Seiyun, and Dhamar.

The Assessment also included conducting the region's first NGO Sustainability Index, which ranked the NGO sector in Yemen using standard USAID methodology. The Assessment Team translated the materials into Arabic and made a minor adjustment to the indicators (which are used in the Eastern European region) to ensure their applicability to the MENA region. A panel discussion was held in Sana'a with broad cross section of civil society and government representatives. The Index's Methodology is provided in Attachment 1.

# APPENDIX C: CONTACT LIST

## IN YEMEN:

### Civil Society and Media

**Al-Aiyn Association for the Rehabilitation of the Blind, Ibb**  
Waleed Esmaeal Albatr

**Al-Ayam Daily Newspaper**  
Head of Mukkala Branch  
Bashraheel Hisham Bashrahell, Head Aden Branch

**Al-Da'awiyah Journal, Ghail ba Wazir, Hadhramout**  
Hussein Alhebshi – Editor in Chief

**Al-Ghurfa Charity and Social Association, Al-Ghurfa, Say'oun**  
Saleh Omar –Chairperson. Mahfoudh Mudhesh –Public Relations

**Al-Irtiqa'a Women's Association, Sah, Say'oun**  
Amnah Ba Ghazah, Chairperson

**Al-Jumhuriyah Daily Newspaper, Taiz**  
Salah Aldakak

**Al-Aqsaa Foundation, Ibb**  
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**Al-Osrah Wal-Mara'ah, Taiz**  
RaniaAl-Sharabi, Assistant Editor

**Al Saheed Foundation for Science and Culture, Taiz**  
Fysal Saeed Fari, Director General

**Al-Saleh Social Foundation for Development, Sana'a**

**Al-Usrah Magazine, Taiz**  
Rania Alsharabi

**All Girls Society for Development, Sana**  
Intisar Al-Adhi, Chairperson  
Sabaa Jaralah, Financial Officer



**Alrahmah Foundation for Human Development**  
**Ruqaya Abdullah Al-hajri**

**Alshurouq Women's Social Association**, Mukkala  
Amnah Haddad -Chairperson

**Alwassat Newspaper**, Sana'a  
Jamal Amer, Editor-in-Chief

**Ard Saba Cooperative**, Ibb  
Hayat Ahmed Al Warafi, Assistant Officer

**Association of Fish Exporters**, Sana'a  
Mohammad Al-Eryani, Director

**Association for the Handicapped**, Taiz  
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**Association for Rehabilitation of Handicapped Children**, Aden  
Yasin Abdulawadod Slaher

**Bar Association**, Sana'a  
Nabila Mufti

**Chamber of Commerce and Industry**  
Awadh Alsabya, Director Mukalla Chapter, Sayoun  
Saleem Arfan, Deputy Director, Taiz

**Charitable Society for Social Reform (CSSW)**, Sana'a  
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Jamal Al-Rammah, Administrative Officer, Acces Mena  
Abdul-Majeed Farhan, Secretary General, Charitable Society for Social Welfare  
Dr. Isam Eldin Al-Hussein, Health Program Officer and International Relations, Charitable Society for Social Welfare

**Civic Democracy Forum**, Sana'a  
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**Civic Democratic Initiative Support Foundation**, Sana'a  
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**Committee for Cleaning Project**  
Al-Maqtari Samir Sa'ad Salim

**Democracy School**, Sana'a  
Jamal Abdullah Al-Shami, Chairman

**Dhiyaá Association for The Blind**, Mukkala  
Rosa Ba Suaib- Chairperson

**Environmental Association, Taiz**  
Abdulraman Mohammed Kaiad

**Fisherman's Cooperative, Aden**  
Ali Salam Abdullah

**Friends of Children Association, Ibb**  
Majidah Yahia Alshwavter

**Garbage Disposal Union, Taiz**  
Smair Saad Salem Almaqtari

**General Federation of Trade Unions of Yemen, Taiz**  
Ali Atia

**Handicapped Children's Foundation, Aden**  
Fatima Mohammed Yaslam

**Human Rights Information and Training Center (HRITC), Sana'a**  
Ezzadin Al-Asbahi, General Director

**Islah Charity, Aden**  
Naser Ali Bababry

**Madar Legal Foundation, Sana'a**  
Ghena Haider Al-Meqdad, General Manager

**Medical Syndicate, Ibb**  
Dr. Abdul-Ghani Ali Ghabshah

**Medical Union, Taiz**  
Dr. Abdulgahni Abdullah

**Mukkala Fishermen Association, Mukkala**  
Mohammed Al-Baiti, Accountant and association assistant

**Mukkala Youth Cultural Forum, Mukkala**  
Mustafa Al-Atas, Chairperson

**National Midwife's Association, Sana'a**  
Suad Qusem, Deputy Chairperson  
Fawziah Hassan Yousef, General Assembly Member

**Okhowah and Muawanah Charity, Aden**  
Abdulraqueeb Ahmed Alattas

**Omar Mosque Research Center, Mukkala**  
Sheikh/ Nadhem Abdulla Ba Jbarah

**Say'oun Local Radio, Say'oun**  
Suleiman Muttran, Programs Director

**Shawthab Foundation for Childhood**

Lamia Al-Eryani, Head of Foundation

**Sisters' Arab Forum for Human Rights**

Amal Basha, Chairperson

**Social and Democratic Forum**

Eng. Nabil Majed, Secretary General

**SOUL for Development**

Dr. Arwa Yahya Al-Deram, Executive Director

**Takaful Charity, Taiz**

Amal Alasbahi

**Trade Union of Al-Jumhuriyah Newspaper, Taiz**

Ameen Maktari

**Transport and Freight Union**

Abdulaziz Abdulah, Taiz

Akram al-Rada'ee, Chief, Udayn route, Ibb

**Union of Environment Associations, Mukkala**

Prof. Salem Ba zar, Chairperson

**Union of the Faculty and Staff of Ibb University**

Abdassalam Al-Iryani, Chairman

**Unity Girls Social Charity Association, Sayoun**

Taleeah Yaslem, Chairperson

**Wadi Aamer Agricultural Cooperative, Ibb**

Jabr Saleh, Finance Officer

**Wadi Al—Haroor Agricultural Cooperative,**

Mohammed Ali al-Hamdi, Chairman

**Women Forum for Research and Training, Taiz**

Soad Alqadasi

**Women Journalists Without Chains**

Tawakkol Karman, President

**Women's Social and Charity Association, Ibb**

Wafa Ahmed Aldaais

**Women Sustainable Development Association, Aden**

Huda Mahmoud Mahfaodh

**Writers Syndicate, Aden**

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**Yemen Center for Development and Environmental Protection, Sana'a**  
Rame Abdu Hamadi

**Yemen General Labor Union, Sana'a**  
Ridha Garhash, Women's Department

**Yemen Online**  
Jamal Al-Awadhi, Editor in Chief

**Yemen Petroleum Company Labor Union, Taiz**  
Abdulrahman Abdo Taher

**Yemeni Association for Consumer Protection, Sana'a**  
Salah Ali Tmilan, Technical Unit Director

**Yemeni Association for the Preservation of Culture and Heritage, Sayoun**  
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Sabri Afif, Deputy  
Alawi Aljunaid, Auditor

**Yemeni Journalist Syndicate**  
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Salim Shahet, Head of Mukkala Branch  
Duaa ba Wazir, Finance Officer, Mukkalla Branch  
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Ali Dalami, Executive Director

**Yemeni Women's Union,**  
Waffa Ahmad, Head  
Salma Ba Kathir, Head Mukkala Branch

**Yemen Youth General Union**  
Moammar M. Al-Eryani, President  
Hussein Al-Ahmed, Executive Committee

**Yemeni Times**  
Amal Alariki, Managing Editor

## **Government**

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs**  
Ambassador Ali Aklan, Deputy Minister

**Ministry of Information**  
Mr. Younis, Deputy Minister

**Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation**  
Ahmed Hussein Jawi, Director General for Cooperation with non-governmental organizations

**Ministry of Public Works and Highways**

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**Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor**

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**Ministry of Youth and Sports**

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**Parliament**

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**CARE International Yemen**

Gareth Richards, Country Director

Mohammad Saad, Director of Program Coordination and Government Liaison

**DANIDA**

Stefania Delfino Bork, Senior Media Advisor, Joint Yemeni Development Programme

**European Union**

Mary Horvers, AttacheCharge de mission, Civil Society, Good Governance and Economic Development

**Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation**

Felix Eikenber, Resident Representative

**Islamic Relief**

Khalid Ahmed Almulad, Country Director

**National Democratic Institute for International Affairs**

Peter Dimitroff, Resident Director  
Abdulhakeem Al-Ofairi, Program Advisor  
Nadwa Al-Dawari, Senior Program Manager

**Netherlands Embassy**

Roelof Buffinga, Deputy Head of Mission  
Djoeke Adimi-Koekkoek, First Secretary Development Cooperation

**Oxfam, Sayoun**

Thabet

**Pathfinder International**

Dr. Ahmed As-Salahy, Technical Specialist, Basic Health Services Program

**Save the Children, Sweden**

Waleed Mohamed Elbashir, Yemen Country Manager

**United Nations Development Programme**

Flavia Pansieri, Resident Representative  
Vibeke Risa, Assistant Representative (Programme)  
Marun El-Krekshi, Programme Officer

**US Embassy Yemen**

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Ryan Gliha, Public Affairs Officer  
Brian McGrath, Political and Economic Officer  
Osama Al-Ansi, Public Affairs Specialist  
Laura Schulz, Civil Society and Rule of Law Program Manager, MEPI (on mission in Yemen)

**USAID/Yemen**

Mike Sarhan, Country Representative  
Diana Arnaudova, Senior Democracy and Governance Advisor  
Raidan Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, Development Program Specialist

**IN WASHINGTON:****International Center for Not-for-Profit Law**

Catherine Shea, Program Director

**State Department**

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Louis-Alexander Berg, Rule of Law Advisor, DCHA/DG/ROL  
Mark Koenig, Senior Advisor for Independent Media Development, DCHA/DG/CS  
Troy Etulain, Senior Advisor for Independent Media Development, DCHA/DG/CS  
Mark Hannafin, Conflict Specialist, DCHA/CMM

# APPENDIX D: REFERENCES

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