

Strengthening the Principles of Good Governance: Institutional Capacity Building for Charity Organizations and the Ministry of Social Development

Event: Training Workshop

Date/Place: February 25th, 2012, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Amman, Jordan

Concept: Dr. Khaled Al-Awamleh, Dr. Martin Beck

Organization: Visions Center for Strategic and Development Studies, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Amman, Ministry of Social Development

1. Program Overview

Saturday, February 25th, 2012

Welcome Speeches

Chairman Visions Center for Strategic and Development Studies Amman – Jordan	Dr. Khaled Al-Awamleh
Resident Representative Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Amman Amman – Jordan	Dr. Martin Beck
Assistant of the Secretary General for Care and Development Ministry of Social Development Amman – Jordan	Mr. Abdellah Smirat

First Session: Good Governance and Management of Charities

Consultant and Trainer Group Work Expert Discussion Moderator Amman – Jordan	Ms. Ahlam Al-Nasser
---	---------------------

Group Work & Discussion

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V.

AUSLANDSBÜRO JORDANIEN

February 25th, 2012

WARREN ALTOUNIAN
DR. MARTIN BECK

www.kas.de/amman

Second Session: The Role of Charities in Local Development

Head of Planning and Studies Unit
Ministry of Political Development and
Parliamentary Affairs
Amman – Jordan

Ms. Marina Henatie

Discussion

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V.

AUSLANDSBÜRO JORDANIEN

February 25th, 2012

WARREN ALTOUNIAN
DR. MARTIN BECK

www.kas.de/amman

2. Objective

Civil society organizations are at forefront of reform in the Middle Eastern states affected by the Arab Spring. In Jordan, the government has begun to restructure by promoting decentralization – causing an advent of new NGOs and CSOs. There are now 1197 national civil society organizations registered with the Ministry of Social Development alone, and several thousand other CSOs and NGOs in the country. Most are engaged in local development, fighting poverty, or political activism. But the majority of these organizations lack financial capacity and governance standards. They frequently operate at the behest of donors, with undefined strategies. While governance problems are paramount, there is no mistaking the well-intentioned nature of these organizations – as volunteerism is the driving force behind most of their work. These volunteers, however, also lack adequate training; often put in charge of operations they are ill-equipped for. Quality of governance is decisive in how effective and sustainable an organization is. Many of the newly-founded CSOs lack the tools needed to be sustainable.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Social Development, and in partnership with the Visions Center for Strategic Studies, KAS Amman hosted the one-day training workshop on governance. The objective was twofold: Provide guidelines and general principles of governance to these organizations; and open dialogue between members of CSOs and the Ministry of Social Development. Presently CSOs feel as though they have very little access to the Ministry—this training workshop aimed to bridge that gap. At times there was contentious debate between members of the Ministry and the CSO representatives, fostering an environment to address grievances and solve problems.

3. Details

HE Mr. Abdellah Smirat introduced the workshop with greetings from the Minister of Social Development, **HE Ms. Nisrine Barakat**. HE Mr. Smirat discussed the

triangular structure of interactive participation in social development: CSOs (foreign and local), the private sector, and the public sector. He lauded topic and timing of the workshop; particularly because the Arab Spring has made good governance and accountability pivotal issues to the reform process in Jordan. While CSOs are often on the receiving end of accusations for a lack of transparency, he said, establishing a code of ethics will help prevent further criticism. He concluded by asking for those present to share their experience from the workshop with those whom could not attend, in order to better develop Jordan's local communities.

Dr. Khaled Awamleh began by outlining the topics of the workshop: Administrative and financial record keeping, proposal and report writing, awareness of legislation pertaining to CSOs, and methodology of good governance. He stated the importance of creating a mission plan for fieldwork while maintaining flexibility in the context of the changing political and social landscape.

Dr. Martin Beck spoke on the subject of good governance by stressing the importance of integrity. Social development requires the individual to adapt to ever-changing political challenges, while operating with constant awareness of their personal values. Integrity transcends cultural and national identities and should be the priority of all successful organizations. Dr. Beck concluded by identifying existing political structures as the causal factor which prohibits individuals from acting with integrity. Creating a framework which enables people to work hard and be accountable is integral to development.

First Session: Good Governance and Management of Charities

Ms. Ahlam Al-Nasser led the workshop by stating there are over 5000 CSOs in Jordan, yet in 2011 their economic contribution was minimal to GDP. Ms. Al Nasser attributed this problem to financial mismanagement and poor governance. CSOs cannot be

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V.

AUSLANDSBÜRO JORDANIEN

February 25th, 2012

WARREN ALTOUNIAN
DR. MARTIN BECK

www.kas.de/amman

partners to development when they seek financial support without contributing substantially to the economy. Good governance is the mechanism through which successful decisions are implemented and monitored; it guarantees transparency and integrity. While voluntary work and public service are the main driving forces, management and planning lack focus. She noted that pillars of effective communication and standards are fundamental to sound administration. The participants were then separated into groups and discussed different governance topics amongst each other, then offered feedback:

Administrative Evaluation: Periodical performance assessments of organizations' management and employees should be given. Participants stated that although these organizations begin as voluntary projects, members begin to question their own self-interests rather than that of the organization. Because volunteers are not accountable to the Jordanian General Assembly, planning is sub-standard and performance suffers.

Election Committees: Participants stated the need to define administrative bodies within organizations. They suggested having election and auditing committees to enforce the results and terms of elections. It will incentivize performance because administrators can be voted out if they do not execute their role well.

Job Title Definition: One problem is with people who leave organizations because they see no objectives or their roles are not clearly defined. To address this, they recommended clarification via letters of objectives for the administration.

Strategic Planning: Traditionally, donor support determines priorities, which should not be the case. Rather, priorities must be set and then funding should be acquired. While stakeholders must be considered, financiers and donors must understand the mission statement of an organization before supporting it, preventing any conflict of interest.

Goal Identification: Organizations which have good governance set one or two goals and make a specific timeframe to achieve them. Associations should be licensed by the MOSD for one or two goals; oversight of the timeline, target goals, projected results, and indicators must take place before the license is issued.

Ms. Nasser recommended establishing centers for governance similar to ones in the West, the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt. Volunteerism is the basis of most CSO work; they are frequently the most well-intentioned employees. But poor administration leads to conflict of interests – with procurements going to the benefit of the board of directors. If these organizations cannot fight corruption, she said, do not expect democracy. Initiative starts with the individual, with that, others will follow. Proper planning and marketing will convince regional donors to support projects which demonstrate clear objectives.

In the discussion session which followed, there were many issues raised between representatives of the MOSD and CSOs. One participant noted a major problem being an inability to recruit new members. Familiar faces, in what are often ineffective organizations, cause donors to lose faith in the projects they fund. Another participant said the problem was with too many organizations within small geographic areas; all needing investment yet not enough money to go around. It was suggested that these organizations merge to alleviate the problem.

Others were concerned that people are losing faith because there is no policy development. They feel no sense of belonging to an organization because there's no evaluation of its importance or efficacy.

Another contended the problem is with management in rural areas. These organizations start as a group of people who want to help but lack a clear-cut aim; they begin a project to help the poor and suddenly move to other tasks without follow-through on the original.

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V.

AUSLANDSBÜRO JORDANIEN

February 25th, 2012

WARREN ALTOUNIAN
DR. MARTIN BECK

www.kas.de/amman

Second Session: The Role of Charities in Local Development

Ms. Marina Henatie provided a brief history of CSOs in the Middle East: Created as humanitarian organizations by the West to fight despotic governments in the 1980s-90s. CSOs supplement the state in meeting the needs of the people. In theory, volunteers come together to provide social and political services through scientific methods – finding appropriate solutions for the community they serve. Ms. Henatie asserted that social policy is designed by specialists. Without adhering to the scientific methods previously established, it is impossible to sustain quality work. She outlined the process into five steps:

Exploratory Period: Analysis of economic, social, educational, and cultural climate. This is the only way to improve quality of life without imposing plans which are considerably culturally insensitive. This requires communication with the local community to establish understanding.

Situation Analysis: Using questionnaires and other methods of assessment is integral to diagnosing the problems in the community. If they misdiagnose the problem then all subsequent projects and activities will not net the desired results. Failure to diagnose the situation accurately will lead to a waste of money and resources.

Identify Indicators: Determine what the benchmarks for success are. Categorize a group of solutions to the problem and prioritize solutions based cost efficiency.

Planning Phase: After all research and analysis has been conducted, a plan must be made to implement change. This can be in coordination with the Ministry of Social Development, other CSOs or independently.

Implementation: Execute plan according to the processes determined in the planning phase.

Development without these methods is haphazard. It is unsustainable and will not

produce long-term results. Research and the foundations for development work are proven and can be replicated. Self assessment through daily, weekly, and monthly reports helps to identify problems or weaknesses within the organization. Ms. Henatie concluded that one of the most important aspects of CSO work is motivation from the bottom to the top of the organization, not a top-down approach.

During the discussion which followed, the participants extended their gratitude for the entirety of the workshop, planning to adopt many of its recommendations. Amongst each other, they resolved discrepancies over transparency issues and governance standards. Social development was likened to a judge referring to the precedents of law: Something tried, tested, and to be built upon.

4. Conclusion

Political reformation is noticeably occurring in Jordan through the principle of subsidiarity. Beginning at the smallest level, citizens are actively participating in changing the political landscape. Jordanians have taken the lessons of the Arab Spring to heart; not through violent revolution, but through the application of human capital. While previously, many complained they felt that the Ministry of Social Development is inaccessible to them, they now feel their words were heeded. This workshop was an opportunity for CSO directors and Ministry staff to address their misgivings and misunderstandings in an environment conducive to their mutual benefit.

Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and the Visions Center will continue to enable direct dialogue between government and citizens. It is in the interest of Jordan and the region's stability to promote the trend of grassroots development. Project management, proposal and report writing, financial planning, and governance standards are only part of what makes for successful reform. Without them however, CSOs may inadvertently inhibit progress. The Ministry of Social Development

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V.

AUSLANDSBÜRO JORDANIEN

February 25th, 2012

**WARREN ALTOUNIAN
DR. MARTIN BECK**

representatives addressed the concerns of the CSOs respectfully and openly. All participants were awarded certification for participation in the training workshop. The recommendations made by the trainers and participants provided a basic framework for governance standards of civil society organizations.

www.kas.de/amman