

Non-Governmental Organizations in Gaza Strip in Facing of Shortage in External Funding




Palestinian Civil Society Organizations in the Gaza Strip are increasingly concerned about external donor funding to the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) which has significantly declined. The decrease in funding has also affected NGOs in 2016 and contributed to the worsening of humanitarian conditions in the Gaza Strip. Over the past months, the Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO) has looked into the financial deficit facing NGOs in the Gaza Strip especially NGOs members of the PNGO Network and implications of this deficit on NGOs' roles and realities. PNGO conducted a survey which it sent to its members. Results of the survey along with relevant reports and literature were reviewed and analyzed by researcher and developmental expert Mr. Tayseer Muheisen.

Results of the survey conducted by PNGO in 2017 showed that 69% of NGOs are unable to cover their own expenses. The results also revealed that the funding deficit is affecting the quality of provided services to a high degree in 54% of participating NGOs, to a medium degree in 29% of participating NGOs and to a low degree in 17% of participating NGOs. This is clear through either the reduction of services to beneficiaries or reducing the number of beneficiaries receiving provided services.

The results of the survey also showed the main reasons behind the funding crisis, which include:

- The Israeli blockade
- Regional conflicts
- Internal Palestinian division
- Changes in donor policies
- Lack of self-financing sources

In addition to those mentioned above, there are other reasons including the withdrawal of some funding agencies, closure of their offices or reduction of their work, not to mention the financial blockade which comes as part of pressure exercised on the Gaza Strip, as well as termination of service contracts with the government.



"The funding deficit caused a severe shortage in services provided to farmers, especially projects for the impoverished farmers. This was due to the suspension of the association's annual program which helped farmers of border areas cultivate their land with field crops. Hundreds of farmers in Khan Younis and Rafah relied on this program. The funding deficit also weakened the relief projects that targeted the impoverished families, especially in rural areas."

(Palestinian Farmers Association, 2017)

"A large number of core staff have been laid off due to lack of funding, with almost 12 employees being dismissed"

Al Wedad Society for Community Rehabilitation, 2017

"UHWC adopted ration system and temporary job contracts to fill different vacancies in the organization and projects, and tried hard to rely on volunteers."

Union of Health Work Committees, 2017

General recommendations to address the crisis:

To ensure that NGOs continue to play their national, democratic and developmental roles in strengthening livelihood resilience, sustaining resources and social mobilization, we recommend adopting the following public policies and procedures:

First: to start a dialogue with the Palestinian Authority and the private sector on roles assigned to each party in order to coordinate and intensify those roles and build real partnerships.

Second: to reclassify sources of funding linking them to fixed rights and political conditions and to focus on solidarity funding and linking humanitarian funds to developmental dimensions on the one hand and to national dimensions on the other hand.

Third: to reformulate a comprehensive vision of civil work and its national and societal implications while fully independent from the foreign aid system, which means restoration of the resilient community by investing in local resources and mobilizing them.

Fourth: to find alternative or additional foreign funding sources and build supportive partnerships in this regard.

Fifth: to communicate with different donors and re-prioritize promotion and support of NGOs.