

# **Partnerships in Development and Development in Partnerships**

*An Explorative Study into Partnerships between the Royal Netherlands  
Embassy and Civil Society Organisations in Yemen*

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## Preface

The end of my studies is near. Writing this thesis was the most difficult task in four and a half years of studying Policy and Organisation studies at the University of Tilburg. Finally I realize how poor my knowledge of this world is. Nonetheless I have become more curious and motivated than I have ever been before to explore, investigate and learn. In this final phase of my studies, I have tried to combine my passion for travelling with my interest for development cooperation. My fascination for the Arabic culture and my international ambitions also logically preceded the choice to conduct my research in Yemen. I have had a wonderful time in this marvellous country. Therefore I owe a great and genuine gratitude to the Yemeni's I met, for their incredible hospitality, friendliness and cooperation I enjoyed virtually everywhere I went.

Furthermore I wish to acknowledge those who contributed to the realization of this study. First of all I would like to thank his Excellency the Ambassador Hans Blankenberg, for the opportunity he gave to me to conduct my research at the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Sana'a. During my research I received a lot of support from the staff of the Embassy; therefore I would like to thank everyone for their assistance and making my time in Yemen one of the most remarkable times in my life. A special thank you here would be appropriate for Irma van Dueren, my supervisor at the Embassy, for her time and effort she put in helping me and her friendly guidance during my stay in Yemen. I would like to express my appreciation for my supervisor, Sjo Soeters, who provided me with valuable feedback and supported me enthusiastically during the whole process. Also I need to thank Hans Siebers, Nicky van Tol and Kirsten who critically reviewed my thesis. Finally I would like to thank my parents who always gave me their consent in whatever I wanted to do, and always supported me in what I was doing.

Sincere thanks to you all.

## **Abstract**

In the international development sector one makes extensive use of the terminology of partnership, emphasising development cooperation instead of development aid. In a partnership, two or more parties combine their knowledge, skills and resources to achieve a common goal. The added value that this generates is assumed to lead to benefits for all. This partnership philosophy has become the organizing principle of the Dutch development cooperation. Traditionally, bilateral development cooperation efforts have taken shape through interaction with national governments. Nowadays, citizens, the private sector and civil society organisations are playing a more crucial role in development cooperation. In particular, civil society will be involved more in the Dutch development policy, especially in the developing countries.

This study is conducted by order of the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Yemen, and addresses the question what perceptions the relevant stakeholders from the Embassy have regarding the opportunities that the Embassy has to engage in partnerships with civil society organisations in Yemen and the way in which these partnerships should be handled in order to make them successful. The study has an explorative and qualitative nature. The data were collected by means of document study, interviews and a roundtable-discussion with respondents who held key positions in civil society in Yemen, and participatory observations during field research in Yemen. The findings revealed that it is difficult to have partnerships between donors from developed countries and civil society organisations in Yemen, due to the inequality between both partners in terms of capacity, financial means and resources. Therefore, one is recommended to build the capacity of civil society organisations in Yemen so as they can become more equal partners for the donors. The Embassy could help to establish support centres and bring foreign experts to Yemen, both in order to build the capacity of local civil society organizations. More attention should be given to rural organizations and human right based civil society organizations. In addition, the Embassy could support the government in creating an enabling environment for civil society organizations, for instance in making adjustments in the legal framework, and stimulate discussion with respect to the role of civil society in Yemen. Due to the fact that there are not many options to engage in partnerships with local civil society organizations, the Embassy is recommended to

engage in partnerships with local intermediary civil society organizations and international non-governmental organisations. They could provide a valuable link between donors and local civil society organisations which are not yet fully mature in organisational terms.

Capacity building seems to be an essential prerequisite for having a successful partnership with local civil society organizations. Building a partnership is a process, a step by step development of a relationship. The findings suggest that donors should support civil society organizations according to their needs and aspirations as they themselves define them and accordingly setting them on their own course. This could be a long process in which the first stages should be marked by intensive capacity building. As a result, in later stages of the process both partners should be able to focus on their comparative advantages and work synergistically within networks and partnerships to achieve common goals.

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# 1 Introduction

***“By now we know that peace and prosperity cannot be achieved without partnerships involving governments, international organisations, the business community and civil society. In today’s world, we depend on each other.”***

*(Kofi Annan, address to the World Economic Forum, Davos, Switzerland, 31 January 1998)*

We are in a new stage of history, characterized by networks of nations working together to solve global problems. The increasing complexity of the earth’s problems is forcing us to work together to find solutions and to share the costs of those solutions (Alter & Hage, 1993). We are emerging from a period when competition was promoted as the effective means of achieving social change. Now the call is for partnership, across public sectors, between private and public sectors, between professionals and lay people, and with citizens (Gordon, Plamping & Pratt, 1999). The language of partnership suggests that everyone is now participating in a common enterprise; people are not alone, but are members of societies, drawn together for mutual benefit. They are fundamentally connected in social, economic and cultural relationships. When these relationships are shared and symmetrical, not one institution, organisation or citizen can dominate another; all elements work together. It is a process where partners are producing synergistic complementarities, all in the context of a globalising and interdependent world (UNDESA, 2000). Himmelman (1996) even claimed that collaboration is central to a significant spiritual, cultural and social paradigm shift that is currently underway.

Also the international development sector has witnessed a paradigm shift. Development *aid* has become development *cooperation*. Partnership even has become a buzzword in the development sector. Everybody is talking about partnerships. The concept has been used to describe all different kinds of relations between all different kinds of development organisations (Robinson, Hewitt, & Harriss, 2000; Fowler, 2000). However this language of partnerships, that has become standard part of the vocabulary of many development organisations, may mean different things to different people, or nothing at all to some (Robinson et al., 2000).

## 1.1 Partnerships as an attitude

In the policy memorandum in 2004 entitled *“Mutual interests, mutual responsibilities: Dutch Development Cooperation en route to 2015”* (<http://www.minbuza.nl>), the Dutch new development policy has been outlined. As the title suggests, development cooperation calls for commitment from everyone involved. The commitment consists of meeting the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the target date of 2015. Sustainable poverty reduction is the main objective. The MDGs are the means of achieving it. To meet these goals the Dutch government plans:

- to make everyone more involved in meeting the MDGs by 2015
- to boost the quality and effectiveness of development cooperation
- to make Dutch efforts and results more visible

According to this memorandum it is necessary to redefine the role of Dutch development cooperation:

*“Development cooperation is no longer a moral obligation; it is increasingly in our mutual interest. That is why we owe it to each other, not just to continue our work, but also to look for ways of improving it.”* (<http://www.minbuza.nl>)

One of these ways of improving is to put emphasis on partnerships. Therefore, partnership has become one of the ten pillars of the Dutch development policy. For the other main policy priorities of the Ministry is referred to appendix A.

In a partnership, two or more parties combine their knowledge, skills and resources to achieve a common goal. The added value that this generates will lead to benefits for all. The cooperation is based on mutual responsibility and mutual interest. But, referring to the memorandum, there is more. Essentially, partnership is an attitude, a working method and a means. The implications, such as the responsibilities and roles assumed within the various partnerships and the forms they take, should be elaborated in more detail in the next years.



The partnership philosophy has become the organizing principle of the development cooperation. Private citizens, the business sector, civil society organisations (CSOs) and institutions are now playing a crucial role in development cooperation. The Dutch government will therefore be calling more urgently on the responsibilities, strengths and motivation of these players, in both developed and developing countries. This joint commitment will lead to thinking and acting from an attitude of partnerships.

In developing countries, civil society will be more involved in the Dutch development policy. According to the Ministry, civil society is often referred to as the 'third' sector, situated in the space between the market, the state and the family. It encompasses a broad variety of activities, organisations and informal connections. Examples are religious institutions, foundations, labour unions, peace activists, political parties and development cooperation groups. A strong civil society is assumed to be important for any society. It could be regarded as the glue between individuals, it binds people together. The reason for the Ministry to engage in partnership with civil society in developing countries, is that the knowledge and outreach from this sector should be used. In addition, partnerships with civil society will strengthen and empower this sector and that is what development is all about. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development cooperation has delegated the authority of the implementation of her policy to the Dutch embassies in the developing countries.

## **1.2 Occasion**

This study has been conducted at the Royal Netherlands Embassy (RNE) in Yemen. The Embassy in Sana'a is contributing to many of the operational objectives of the Dutch government. Examples of these are found in promoting Dutch trade and investment, providing consular services and increasing foreign support for Dutch policy. However, development cooperation is the first priority of the Embassy.

This thesis will elaborate further on the findings of a prior conducted study. The study was conducted for the Embassy and addressed the question how change works in Yemen. In particular it was meant to analyse the dynamics of change in Yemen and to map out the different actors and the change they can bring about. The

recommendations show that it could be useful for the Embassy to engage in partnerships with civil society organisations.

Through its cooperation programme, the Embassy is seeking to strengthen those actors that are supportive of change. Traditionally, bilateral development cooperation efforts have taken shape through interaction with and support of government and to a much lesser extent with civil society and the private sector. Referring to the Embassy's multi-annual plan 2005-2008 for the cooperation between Yemen and The Netherlands, the government is the main partner in the different sectors. However, in view of the nature of the challenges that Yemen faces, increased emphasis will be put on partnerships with civil society and the private sector. The influence of both sectors is fairly limited as yet, but potentially they have important roles to play. The Royal Netherlands Embassy therefore has the wish to engage in a more meaningful way, in partnerships with civil society.

### **1.3 Objective**

This study has an explorative character. The aim is to explore civil society in Yemen and to identify options for increased engagement for the Netherlands Embassy, in partnerships with civil society organisations. In addition recommendations will be provided, based on the respondents' experiences, on how one should deal with these partnerships. In order to give a clear direction to this study, the following objective has been made:

*This study will be conducted in order to explore civil society in Yemen and to identify opportunities for the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Sana'a to engage in partnerships with civil society organisations in Yemen. Furthermore this study aims to afford recommendations on how one should deal with these partnerships.*

## 1.4 Research question

The following question will be addressed in this thesis:

*What perceptions do the relevant stakeholders from the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Sana'a have regarding the opportunities that the Embassy has to engage in partnerships with civil society organisations in Yemen and the way in which these partnerships should be handled in order to make them successful?*

Stakeholders here are defined as any group or individual who can affect or who is affected by achievement of the objectives of an organisation. The relevant stakeholders involved in this study were selected in cooperation with the Embassy. For instance multi-lateral organisations, local non-governmental organisations (NGOs), international NGOs and bilateral donors were considered to be relevant stakeholders. For more details regarding these stakeholders is referred to chapter four.

The main topic in this study is partnership. To be more specific, the object of this study is the donor-recipient relationship between a donor from a developed country with a recipient from a developing country. In this case the Dutch government, represented by the Embassy, is the donor. Civil society organisations in Yemen are considered to be recipients of the Dutch development aid. In the next chapters these concepts will be discussed extensively.

Another important concept in this thesis is civil society. This study will address civil society in Yemen in general. Civil society as an object of identification seems to be extremely broad. Therefore it is important to mention that although this study will say something about civil society in Yemen in general, particular the focus will be on local NGOs. The main reason for this is that NGO is a more operational concept than that of civil society. Secondly, when referring to the concept of NGO, most people have the same understanding of the concept, which is not often the case when referring to civil society. Lastly, an important reason for choosing the concept of NGO is that NGOs in general are more accessible for research. Both concepts will be discussed in detail later.

Opportunities are referred to as the possible groups, organisations and/or institutions where the Embassy could engage with in future partnerships. In addition, this study attempts to map out which specific issues, subjects, geographical areas etc., may be important to address when engaging in civil society activities. Finally, it is important to know what the Embassy understands a successful partnership to be:

*“A successful partnership is a situation in which both partners benefit from the partnership and what is more, that they gain something extra.” (Irma van Dueren, First secretary gender RNE).*

The research question has been divided into five sub questions in order to cope with its complexity. They have been designed in close cooperation with the embassy.

- 1. What is a partnership?*
- 2. What is civil society?*
- 3. What are the specific features of partnerships between donors and civil society organisations in the context of development cooperation?*
- 4. How does civil society in Yemen look like?*
- 5. How should the Royal Netherlands Embassy act in order to build successful partnerships with civil society organisations in Yemen?*

The first three questions will be addressed by means of desk and literature study. The remaining questions will be answered through empirical findings. For more details with regard to the methodology and research design of this study one is referred to chapter four.

## **1.5 Scientific and social relevance**

Research in this kind of partnerships could provide a valuable contribution for practical as well as academic purposes for a number of reasons. In the first place, it is a very topical subject. This could be indicated by the fact that this concept now has become one of the pillars of the Dutch development cooperation. Everybody in the development world, from business to government, and from civil society to

international organisations is now talking about partnerships (Brehm, 2001; Robinson et al., 2000; Fowler, 2000). Hence the findings of this study can contribute to this discussion. Secondly, this research is interesting as it has empirical findings. So far, there has been little empirical research conducted on what CSOs and donors actually mean when referring to partnerships, how they implement it in practice and the challenges they face in developing and managing effective partnerships (Brehm, 2001; Hulme & Edwards, 1997). This research could very well serve to help to bridge this gap. Third, the empirical findings are of value because this research has been conducted in an extraordinary context. The structure and the performance of civil society in the Arab region have been hardly explored. Literature dealing with this sector is scarce (Kandil, 1995). Yemen is a bilateral partner in the Dutch development cooperation, however Yemen is a very isolated country and not very much is known about partnerships in this setting. According to Oliver (1990), more research has to be done in different inter-organisational relations (IORs) types and settings in order to move to a more generalizable theory.

For the Royal Netherlands Embassy this research will have an obvious practical relevance. The study could be used to get more understanding of the situation in Yemen with regard to partnerships and civil society. In addition, the embassy could make better strategic choices in the future, based on the recommendations of the study. Eventually, partnerships are meant as a means to implement the Dutch development policy more efficiently and more successfully. The objective of the development policy is to improve the quality of the lives of the people who live in Yemen. The social relevance of the study is then that this research could contribute, at least to a certain extent, to solutions for social problems in the Yemen society.

## **1.6 Overview**

This thesis is divided in a theoretical part and an empirical part in order to address the research question and its sub-questions. The theoretical part consist of chapter two, three and four. Relevant literature regarding partnerships and civil society will be discussed there. Hence this part could be considered as the background and context of the study. Chapter two deals with the concept of partnership. First, general theories concerning inter-organisational relations and partnerships will be discussed. Subsequently, the background and the meaning of the term in the development

sector will be outlined, in order to come to a working definition for this study. Furthermore, the partnership building process will be examined in this chapter. Chapter three is about civil society. The general idea about the concept will be discussed, and in addition, the characteristics of civil society in the Middle-East as a whole and Yemen in particular will be outlined. Moreover, this chapter will pay attention to specific features of Yemen as a country and the donor relations with CSOs in general. Subsequently, in chapter four the methodology of this study will be outlined and substantiated. The empirical findings of this study will be presented in chapter five. Finally, in chapter six, the conclusion and recommendations will be outlined. In addition, a reflection on the literature, limitations of the study and suggestions for further research will be presented in this chapter.

## **2 Partnerships**

### **2.1 Inter-organisational relations and networks**

The formation of collaborative alliances among organisations is often seen as a significant strategy that organisations use to cope with turbulence and complexity of their environments. Many organisations are finding it advantageous and often necessary to find partners with whom to work toward mutually desirable ends (Gray, 1991). These inter-organisational relations come in virtually all sizes, shapes, and classifications. They exist in both the private and public sectors, and sometimes bridge them. Inter-organisational relations (IORs) here are the relatively enduring transactions, flows and linkages that occur among and between an organisation and one or more organisations in its environment (Oliver, 1990). IORs can transcend industry and national borders. They can compose of organisations ranging from the worlds largest to its smallest. They can exist for an indefinite period of time, or they can operate for a very limited time. Many people are seeing how other people and other organisations can help them to achieve key goals more efficiently and effectively. They are creating new structures that are more collaborative, more egalitarian, and more flexible in nature: structures in which people view themselves as a part of a whole, complex system; structures in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts (Bergquist, Betwee & Meuel 1995).

Many of today's collaborative efforts are responding to the erosion of hierarchy and patriarchy, attempting to distribute power differently (Bergquist et al, 1995). In order to be competitive in today's and tomorrows world, cooperation need to be designed in such a way that power between people and the organisations involved is roughly balanced. This trend: the gradual erosion of hierarchies and the emergence of more collaborative, partnerships-driven structures is the dominant reality in today's organisational life. Alter and Hage (1993) even argue that a new culture is developing, the culture of cooperation. Networks become the dominant institutional arrangement for producing products and providing services. If the old model of organisation was the large hierarchical firm, the model of organisation that is considered characteristic now is a network, of lateral and horizontal inter-linkages

within and among firms (Nohria & Eccles, 1992). Referring to Lipnack and Stamps (1994) throughout history, a variety of organisation principles have existed. This is a gradual process of development where new things of doing things are often growing in and alongside the way things are and always have been. Now we have arrived at the age of the network. De Mann (2000) affirms this thought. However, he also notes that although networks are proliferating, not necessary all other organisation principles are disappearing over time. What is more, he claimed that networks could be constraints for the parties involved and that it is not necessarily the best way to organize. Nevertheless, the rise of the network paradigm will have a significant impact on the competition and collaboration between organisations.

There is nothing new about partnerships and relations. For centuries, people in every conceivable line of work have been forming them. In fact we could trace the concept of partnering all the way back to the creation of the first family unit. But for many, partnerships especially in business, represents a great unknown (Bergquist, 1995). Clearly, no single theoretical perspective can serve as the foundation for a general theory of collaboration. According to Gray (1991), none of the major theoretical perspectives (for instance the resource dependence theory, institutional economic theory, social ecology theory, microeconomics theory, institutional theory, political theory) offers a comprehensive model of collaboration. One of the crucial characteristics of this field of research is its fragmentation. Moreover it is interdisciplinary, involving diversity and complexity of both theoretical views and research methods (Stern, Mitsuhashi & Oliver, 2001). A key limitation of existing theory is that most perspectives are oriented toward the individual focal organisation, rather than toward an inter-organisational problem domain (Gray, 1991).

These differences among current theoretical paradigms are partly attributable to differences in their locus of attention for explaining IORs (Oliver, 1990). Inter-organisational relations could be explained in many different ways. Robinson et al. (2000) mention eight practical reasons for setting up inter-organisational relations. They include:

- gains in scale and scope
- meeting flexibility of demand



- information sharing
- building complementary skills and resource synergy
- strengthening competitive position
- access to new technologies and/or new markets
- protecting an existing resource base against competition
- strengthening a group of organisations as a political lobby

Oliver (1990) noted that: “we no longer know what we know about the formation of IORs”, referring to the fragmentation of the IORs literature. She proposes in her article six general determinants for establishing inter-organisational relationships. These determinants are based on an integration of the existing IOR literature. Below these motives will be described briefly:

- **Necessity:** linking in order to meet necessary legal or regulatory requirements or linking because of resource dependency. There is no choice.
- **Asymmetry:** organisations engage in relations because of the potential to exercise power or control over other organisations or its resources.
- **Reciprocity:** relationship formation is based on reciprocity. Aim of the relation is to pursue common or mutually beneficial goals or interest.
- **Efficiency:** relationships formation is there for improving the input/output ratio. Central in the relation is to decrease the transaction costs.
- **Stability:** IOR formation is an adaptive response to environmental uncertainty. Aim of the relation is to reduce uncertainty and share the risks.
- **Legitimacy:** enhancing legitimacy is aim of the relation. Partner with actor who has a higher level of legitimacy.

According to Oliver (1990) IORs could also be based on multiple motives at the same time. Besides, there may be more reasons for establishing IORs. However, this discussion is beyond the scope of this research. Important here, is to recognise that different reasons and paradigms exist which all have their own focus for explaining IORs.

These theories do not apply to the business sector only. Cooperation is no less prominent in the public and community sectors (Alter & Hage, 1993; Huxham, 1996). These sectors share many characteristics although they seem to be different worlds. Soeters (1993) shows that network theory is becoming increasingly important for both business and public administration. Furthermore, he argues that network theory could be useful for the analysis of other similar attempts at network development both within and across nations.

## **2.2 Concept of partnership in the organisation literature**

Inter-organisational relations can have many different forms and many different names. For instance we have strategic alliances, joint ventures, outsourcing, cross-licensing agreements, consortia, internal networks, compact agencies, contracts etc. The list of terms does not stop here. There seems to be little consensus in the field about how these terms are used either in theory or in practice (Alter & Hage, 1993; Huxham, 1996). The focus of this study is on partnership between two or more parties. Therefore, this term will be discussed here.

The so-called partnership style relation is a form of co-operation. The uniqueness of this form of co-operating, compared to other forms of co-operation, is the fact that the co-operating organisations do not lose their autonomy (Plasier & Bouwman, 1999; Propper, 1999). According to Propper, autonomous acting means that actors act independently, separately from each other and without tuning on the basis of individually assessed goals. Autonomous acting is not the same as fully isolated acting and does not exclude actors showing consideration to each other or anticipating strategically towards each other.

A partnership is not the same as a merger or acquisition. There is a distinct difference in that a partnership has nothing to do with a loss of identity and independence. For instance, a partnership is not the same as a merger or acquisition, where control is not shared, because one integrated organisation is formed. In a partnership the organisations are connected in another way. Bergquist et al. (1995) noted that a partnership includes a non-hierarchical structure, a collaboration based-culture, and a relatively equitable distribution of power and authority among the partnership's members. Partnerships will recognize the

interdependence of multiple parties and replace control with cooperation and collaboration. The terminology of partnership is very much related to concepts such as equality, reciprocity, harmony and mutual benefits (Douma, Bilderbeek, Idenburg & Looise, 2000; Hemmati, 2002).

Cross-sectoral partnerships are often assumed to be more intense and stable (Alter & Hage, 1993; Gray, 1996). The reason for this is that they bring complementary rather than similar technologies to the partnership. Based on the comparative advantages of the individual partners, synergy could be created in the partnership. Thus, the sum of the whole partnership has the potential to be greater than the sum of the parts.

The theory of partnerships suggest that this form of cooperation is basically motivated by the reciprocity determinant of Oliver (1990). The concept of partnership is widely and increasingly used to describe relationships based on equality, reciprocity, harmony etc. However, referring to Oliver again, there are more reasons for organisations to engage in relations with others, such as necessity, efficiency, asymmetry, etc. Hence, one should recognise that the use of the concept of partnership often is applied inappropriately in practice.

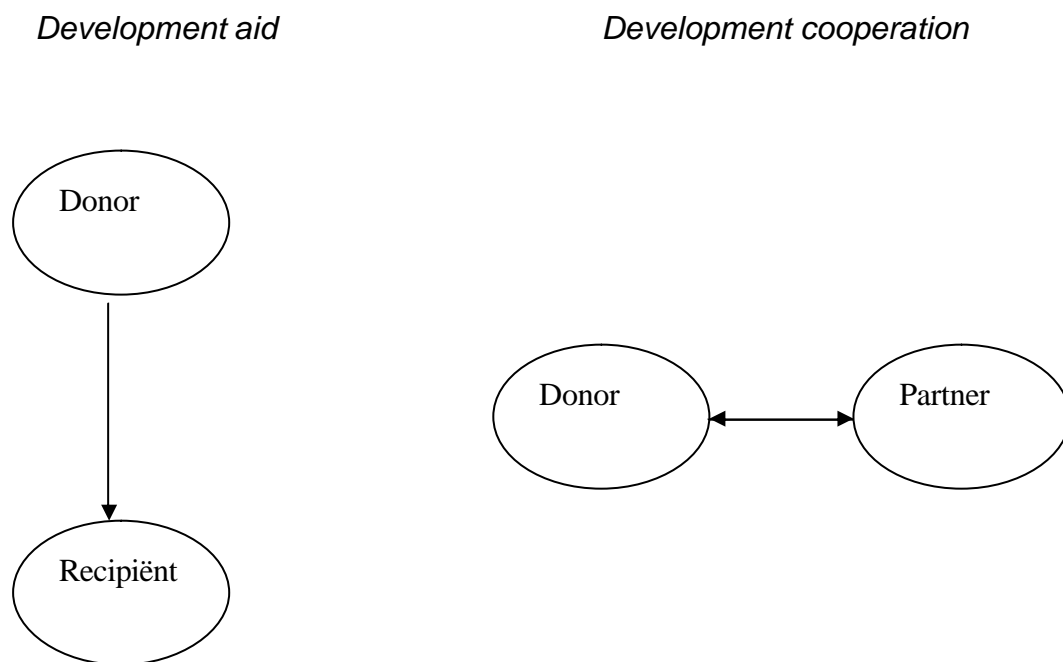
### **2.3 Concept of partnership in the development sector**

It has already been noted in the introduction that in the development sector one makes extensive use of the language of partnership. For many development organisations, partnership has become a standard part of their vocabulary. Fowler (2000) argues that it is vitally necessary for healthy relationships to clarify what an organisation understands by the terms it uses. In order to be able to do so, it is important to reveal the historic context of this terminology.

The notion of partnerships stems from the 1970s, when it expressed an ideological aspiration of international solidarity in the development cause (Fowler, 2000). Official aid agencies, both bilateral donors and multilateral institutions have increasingly used the concept. The focus on partnership is inevitably connected with a paradigm shift in the development sector. During the last 50 years a trend has developed from development *aid*, to development *cooperation* and *partnership* (Robinson et al. 2000;

Baaz, 2005). The former used to emphasise a top-down approach, centralisation, professional expertise, materialist values, and the short term. The latter, on the contrary, emphasises a participatory bottom-up approach, decentralisation, voluntarism, holistic development and the long term. The next figure shows the paradigm shift:

*Fig. 2.1 Paradigm shift in the development sector*



Increasingly, the concept of partnership is recognised as central in this new way of thinking about development. The goal of partnerships in development is no longer giving aid, but instead building capacity and local ownership. It is all about working *together* with people instead of working *for* people (Robinson et al., 2000). The reason for this is that nowadays it has been widely accepted that development is more successful when the community is involved (Nederveen Pieterse, 2001). Local organisations are often better acquainted with the project area; they usually maintain better relations with the local communities and are more sensitive to local cultures and traditions. Partnerships between organisations from developed countries and organisations from developing countries, therefore, can bring benefits based on their comparative advantages. Donors from developed countries, for instance, are well

placed to engage with the donor public and to undertake policy influencing and advocacy (Brehm, 2001).

According to Fowler (2000), in the last 25 years, the term has been used and abused as a blanket covering all sorts of relationships between different development agencies. The term partnership means different things to different people and referring to Robinson et al. (2000):

*“The language of partnership often masks a complex reality, which is that relationships take many different forms, and that these vary widely in terms of ways in which power, interest, substance and so on are organized. “ (Robinson et al., 2000)*

According to Robinson et al. an example of this is found in that the word contract does not convey the sense of intimacy, understanding and equality that is commonly associated with the term, if not the practice of partnership. Therefore it is also a preferred alternative to variations on the donor-recipient relationship. Fowler (2000) even points that this phenomenon has been used for years, and often is applied inappropriately. The most important reason for this seems to be that partnership reflects an idealistic notion of what relations should be like, rather than providing an accurate description of what they are actually like. In chapter three this point will be elaborated upon.

In order to find a suitable working definition for this study, it is important to know what the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs understands when referring to the term partnership. On the website of the Ministry, the following has been written about partnership:

*“Partnerships concern the way in which we conduct our work, as well as the final result. In a partnership, the parties concerned combine their knowledge, skills and resources – based on their specific roles and responsibilities – to achieve a common result. You can achieve more in a partnership than you can by working alone. This added value is what makes a partnership meaningful for all the parties concerned. A partnership is therefore a means to an end. It is a voluntary cooperation agreement*

*(though not without obligations) between governments and non-governmental actors such as enterprises, civil society organisations and knowledge and research institutes. They work towards a common goal or specific task, and therefore share the risks, responsibilities, resources, competences and benefits.”*

<http://www.minbuza.nl>

This description is very important since this study will be conducted by order of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The next working definition contains the major points from this description, and therefore will be presumed in this study:

*“A partnership is a voluntary cooperation agreement (though not without obligations) between stakeholders from at least two different groups, who work towards a common goal or specific task and therefore share the risks, responsibilities, resources, competences and benefits.”* (<http://www.partnerships.nl>)

Another point worth noting here, is that the terminology of partnership used by the Ministry seems to reflect the same terminology as described in the organisation literature, mentioned in the previous section. Hence, apart from the development literature, the organisation literature will significantly contribute to a better understanding of partnerships in this study.

## **2.4 Building successful partnerships**

Successful partnerships require a great deal of effort to begin and continuous attention to sustain. It is a well recognized feature of alliances and partnerships that they are highly instable. Studies have reported that two thirds of all alliances experience severe problems in the first two years and reported failure rates range as high as 70% (Das & Teng, 2000). Douma et al. (2000) add that despite high hopes for realising synergies, many partnerships do not deliver the value that the partners had expected. In this section the process of building partnerships will be discussed. Before some key success- and failure factors will be identified, it is important to examine the nature of partnerships.

#### 2.4.1 Dynamic relations

One could argue that the traditional concept of partnership is too static considering the dynamic nature of relationships. Huxham and Vangen (2000) therefore claim that collaborative structures need to be understood as rather ambiguous, complex and dynamic. They are continually evolving and changing. The alignment that the partners have established will be continuously challenged by changes in the environment or within the organisation of one of the partners. For instance, factors such as withdrawal of funding, public sector reorganisations or mergers have a significant impact on the formation of partnerships. This is especially true for public and community organisations. They depend on external funding and policy imperatives. Another example is that changes of government policy may imply that the specific concerns of the partnership cease to exist, or that other issues become more important for some members. Individual changes within organisations also have an influence on the partnership. Role changes, career moves to other organisations or the ending of a contract, often lead to a change in representatives from an organisation on the collaborative group or partnership. According to Huxham and Vangen this could lead to significant changes in the partnership.

However, it is not only these forces, which ensure that the structure of partnerships remains dynamic. Partnerships are, by their very nature, dynamic:

*“Indeed every partnership is a repetitive sequence of stages of negotiation, commitment and execution in which the strategic objectives, organisational structures, operational activities and cultures, as well as the individual interests of the partners must be aligned.” (Douma et al., 2000)*

To understand what is meant here, Huxham and Vangen suggest that it could be helpful to imagine a partnership at the point of initiation. The initiator of the partnership will have an initial view about the intended purpose of the partnership. Moreover, the initiator will have a view about which other organisations or individuals are relevant to that focus. Because the purpose as defined by the initiator may not be of central importance for the other organisations, the dynamic arises. In addition to this, Waddock (1989) has noted that, since members both learn from previous

activity and finish with agenda items, there will be a ongoing process of negotiating purpose and hence coalition building and membership changes. Referring to Huxham and Vangen again, this negotiating and interaction process in partnerships is very difficult. What is more is that it is exacerbated by differences in professional languages, organisational cultures and procedures. When people from different organisations work together for the first time, a great deal of effort generally has to be invested by all concerned into understanding the world as seen by the other participants. Any differences in natural language or national or religious culture add another layer of difficulty. In short, partnership is a continuous iterative process. There is neither one best way to organize a partnership nor are there fixed factors leading to success. It is important to recognize that ambiguity, complexity and dynamics are inherent features to the partnership building process.

#### *2.4.2 Life stages*

Although partnerships always require some risk taking, the start-up phase seems to be very essential for building effective and sustainable partnerships. Levinthal and Finchman (1988) addressed in their research the question whether the lifetime of any relationship has any influence on the survival of that relationship in the future. They showed that the chance for survival decreases in the first years. In the long run, chances for survival of the partnership are increasing. Bergquist et al. (1995) found in their studies repeated examples of partnerships that failed or were seriously troubled because the start-up phase was never addressed and/or completed. Therefore, they suggest that one should take more time before making the commitment. More time could give a better chance both to get to know your prospective partner and to design a successful working arrangement. However, a major dilemma is that it makes sense to take time when considering a partner, but it is often not feasible.

Many organisations find it very hard to choose a suitable partner. To understand this, Bergquist et al. identified four motivations which often do dominate the selection process:

1. The desire for what is familiar rather than what is unfamiliar.
2. The desire to work with like minded people.



3. The desire to hold exclusive or at least consistent access to scarce and valuable resources.
4. The desire to learn from a partner willing to share expertise.

Although these motivations often are dominant, one should realize that there are a number of factors to consider, before selecting an appropriate partner. De Man (2004) suggests that there are five building blocks of networks. Any organisation, therefore, has a choice to manage and influence its portfolio of alliances and partnerships. According to de Man, an individual organisation should consider the following factors when building up a network:

- **Partnership tie strength:** are intimate or loose partnerships required in the network?
- **Network size:** is it better to have many partners or only a few?
- **Membership mix:** is similarity or diversity of partners required?
- **Collective governance:** how should decision-making, planning and control be organized?
- **Clustering:** do all partners need to be allied with all others?

In order to find the right fit for the organisation in the network and between the building blocks, one should understand that each factor has a number of choices, opportunities and limitations. The right choice depends on the environment and on the goal that the individual organisation wants to attain with the network or partnership. These five building blocks could be very useful in identifying suitable partners, especially because the focus is on the network as a whole.

Partnerships develop. As is being showed in the previous section, they should be regarded as dynamic entities. Therefore, different stages could be identified in the partnership building process. Pekar & Allio (1994) described four stages of the partnership process which will be explained here briefly:

**Strategy development:** in this stage the partnership feasibility, objectives and rationale are being studied. It focuses on the major issues and challenges and the

development of resource strategies for production, technology and people. It also requires aligning the partnership objectives with the overall corporate strategy.

**Partner assessment:** emphasizes building a database on possible partners, analysing the potential partner's strengths and weaknesses and preparing appropriate partner selection criteria. Great weight is placed on understanding the partner's motives for joining the partnership, creating strategies for accommodating all partners' management styles and addressing resources capability gaps that may exist for a partner.

**Contract negotiations:** determine whether all parties have realistic objectives, form high calibre negotiating teams, define each partner's contributions and rewards as well as protect any proprietary information. This stage also addresses termination clauses, penalties for poor performance and the degree to which arbitration procedures are clearly stated and understood.

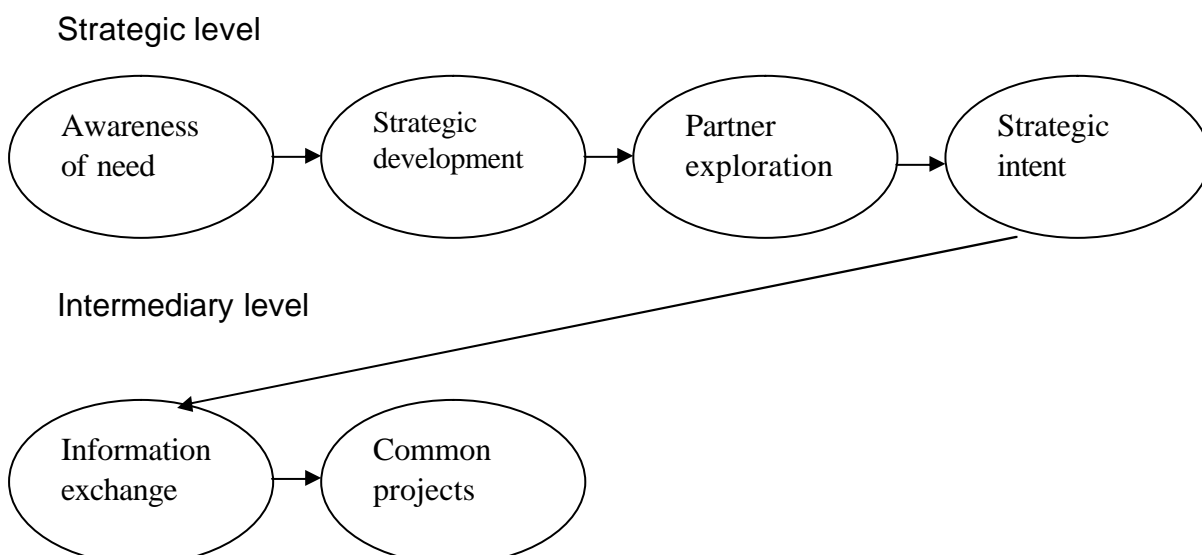
**Partnership operations:** address senior management commitment, the calibre of resources devoted to the partnership, linking of budgets and resources with strategic priorities and measuring and rewarding partnership performance.

Furthermore, Soeters (1993) showed that different life-stages could be identified in the development of networks. He suggests four different phases which will be discussed here. Statements of mutual respect, trust and common interest are done in the first, *expressive phase*. In this stage, inter-organisational agreements are formulated and undersigned at especially ceremonial meetings. Prior to this, there is a *zero phase* in which the idea of common interest and interdependence is first proposed by one or more parties. The discovery of common interest logically precedes its expression. The *expressive phase* requires the strategic, diplomatic capabilities of the people starting the networks. These people fulfil the function of legitimising the basic mission of the network. In the second, *cognitive phase*, information and new ideas are exchanged. Active brokers are necessary in this phase. They should act between the parties and function as architects who design the network. The third phase is the common *production and distribution phase*. The focus of action shifts in this phase to the middle managers of the participating organisations, while the network is expanding and maturing. The brokers should monitor the existing network. In the last *integration* phase, authority, resources and competences are divided.

In order to evolve successfully from the introductory stages to the productive phase, some conditions should be met. First of all, the necessity of collaboration should be made clear to all people involved. When the transfer of ideas by the strategic level does not take place with enough enthusiasm, pressure and clarity, further network development is doomed to fail. Second, the elaboration of the basic strategic ideas by the brokers should be done in close collaboration with the middle managers. If ideas developed and specified in the second stage are not realistic or pragmatic enough, there is another reason why further network development may fail. Third, in the transition to the productive phase, the brokers should nurture the networks in order to develop a sense of community among their members. According to Soeters, networks operate effectively when members voluntarily behave as if they are all part of a broader organisation sharing common objectives and rewards.

Identifying the life stages of networks is only one way to study network dynamics. Maybe not all stages have to be followed necessarily or maybe the order of stages could be changed under certain circumstances. For example, the integration phase is not present in the development of a partnership since the partners remain autonomous. Important to note here is that the focus of this study is on partnerships between two parties, not on a network as a whole. Nevertheless, it could be very useful when analysing partnerships, to make a distinction between different phases (Pekar & Allio, 1994; Soeters, 1993; Nohria & Eccles, 1992). In conclusion, both models by Pekar & Allio and Soeters, will be summarised in figure 2.2.

*Fig. 2.2 Life-stages of network development*



### 2.4.3 General success- and failure factors

A lot has been written about the features of partnership formation, however, little is known about the success- and failure factors of partnerships (Spekman & Mohr, 1994). Given the variety of the cooperation settings and the complexity of the difficulties inherent in it, it would be naïve to suppose that precise recipes could exist.

Careful examination of the available literature does suggest that behavioural characteristics are more important in partnership-success as more tangible characteristics (Olson & Singsuman, 1997; Pekar & Allio, 1994; Schruijer, 1999; Brehm, 2001). For instance, respect, trust, integrity etc., are essential in personal relationships, so are they in partnerships between organisations. And as Bergquist et al (1995) put it:

*“The key ingredient in success and failure has inevitably to do with the interpersonal relationship found in the partnership.”*

People need to trust and respect each other if they want to establish a fruitful relationship. The representatives of organisations are individuals, and therefore personal relationships are central to a successful partnership. Moreover, one could view an organisation as a group of people working together to achieve a common goal. Thus, when organisations have a partnership, groups of people are connected with each other. Indeed, like individuals, organisations as a whole have personalities, values, specific ways of looking at the world, and other attributes that make up what is known as organisational culture. Wilkof, Brown and Selsky (1995) stated that managing partnership culture is a challenge, because it is about blending and harmonising two different organisational cultures. Many organisations are concerned about losing their own organisational identity in a partnership. That is why the challenge is to make cultural blending work, and at the same time preserve the separate cultures. In short, successful partnership management places greater emphasis on the human and cultural side of the process.

One of the most essential behavioural characteristics in a relation is trust (Das & Teng, 1988). Partnerships are more intimate than virtually any other form of

organisation. Opportunistic behaviour simply does occur in any kind of relationship. Partners, therefore, must rely on each other completely. Trust could be seen as the glue in any inter-organisational relation. Bergquist et al. (1995) distinguished three different kinds of trust in a partnership. There is trust in:

**Intentions:** we trust someone because we are convinced that they are interested in our welfare or in the welfare of the organisation or project we are involved in together.

**Competency:** we trust someone because we are convinced that they have the skills, knowledge, or experience necessary to benefit us or our organisation.

**Perspective:** we trust someone because we are convinced that they see the world in the same way as we do. This is a particularly critical form of trust, especially for partnerships composed of people from different cultures or socioeconomic backgrounds.

Bergquist et al. claim that trust in one's partner in all three of these areas is essential for a successful partnership. However, the *perspective* component seems to be a very complicated one. It is important to recognize that different people may see the world in a different way. Some people indicate that partners should share common attitudes and look at life in a similar manner. However, for others it seems to be important that partners share complementary, rather than identical attitudes. Bergquist et al. showed in their studies that for most people successful partners tend to share *common values* and *complementary skills*. In short, successful partnerships have established a level of commitment, based on shared values that move well beyond the functional level.

Partnerships succeed when the partners click in a certain way. There has to be some kind of meaningful connection. According to Douma et al. (2000), partnership success depends on an effective and efficient alignment or fit between the partners involved. Fit is a prerequisite for partnership success. The management should primarily focus on achieving and maintaining a good fit between the partners. There are five areas of fit recognized by Douma et al., namely strategic fit, organisational fit, human fit, cultural fit and operational fit. It is crucial that partnership managers address all of these five aspects of fit in their mutual relationship because an

insufficient fit in one area can lead to partnership failure. Important to understand is that a good fit may deteriorate over time, whereas an insufficient fit at the start of a partnership can sometimes be improved. Therefore it is the partners' capacity to manage the dynamics of fit over time that will make the difference between partnership success and failure. Douma et al. claim that this capacity to manage fit is determined by four factors:

1. Management must be able to identify those areas where fit is limited or where it may erode over time.
2. Effective partnership managers focus on creating win-win situations, adopt a collaborative attitude and develop relationships based on trust. This is an attitude which should be deeply embedded in the partners' cultures.
3. Partnership managers should not only focus on managing the relation itself, but also invest substantially in the development of the partnership management capabilities of their own organisation.
4. Managing fit effectively requires that partners set clear and ambitious performance targets for their partnership and regularly compare the partnership results with their initial objectives and targets.

The cultural and human side of a partnership already have been discussed. In order to illustrate what is meant with fit the strategic and organisational dimensions of fit will be examined here briefly. According to Douma et al. (2000) six drivers for strategic fit could be identified. Firstly, partners should have a *shared vision* of the future. A shared vision will build trust and commitment between the partners. The second precondition for strategic fit is *compatibility of strategies*. Also the objectives and goals of both partners should comply. Potential partners must be aware that compatible partnership strategies do not necessarily correspond to compatible corporate strategies. The partners will only be prepared to make these concessions when the partnership is of *strategic importance* to them, which is the third driver for strategic fit. The fourth factor is *mutual dependency*. Douma et al. claim that in general, it may be stated that the better the partners complement one another, with respect to know-how, resources and so on, the better the chances are that the partnership will be successful. In addition to this, any partnership should have *added value for the partners*. Furthermore, partners must carefully consider whether the

*environment will accept the partnership*; which the last driver for strategic fit is. For instance, if other organisations in the same sector do not accept the partnership, resistance and opposition from the environment are likely to occur and this could harm the partnership.

Organisational fit is the other dimension which is extremely important for successful partnerships. Organisational fit is not the same as organisational equality. Partners will almost always differ in terms of market position, organisational structure, management style and corporate values. Explicating these differences is of crucial importance in arriving at a profound understanding of the partners. According to Douma et al (2000) the main challenge when designing the partnership is to *address organisational differences* in such a way that effective cooperation is facilitated. Changes in the environment or within the organisation of one of the partners may challenge initial premises and may force partners to redefine their partnership objectives or design. The partnership must, therefore, provide *strategic and organisational flexibility*. This second driver is closely related to the third, the *complexity* of the partnership design. Complex partnerships will, in general, face more difficulties in adapting to new developments. Therefore a partnership must be simple enough to manage. The fourth driver of organisational fit requires that the partnership design enables *effective management control for both partners*. Control is not only concerned with formal authority and equity shares, it also concerns the way in which authority is exercised, and the way in which decisions are made. Furthermore, partners must *address potential strategic conflicts* in the partnership design to ensure long-term stability. In negotiations, concessions are often made. Therefore it is very important that before signing a deal, partners think whether the chosen design enables them to *achieve their objectives*.

For more elaboration on the dynamics of fit, and an explanation of operational fit is referred to the article of Douma et al. (2000). The point that has been made here is that it is crucial to balance the interests and backgrounds of the partners involved. As a result, a win-win situation could be created and a successful partnership is established.

Mattessich and Monsey (1992) have identified 19 factors under six broad headings which are key factors to collaborative success. These factors were derived from a

review of the US literature concerning collaboration in social services. They summarize some of the already mentioned factors and add new elements to consider.

*Box 2.1. Key factors of collaborative success (source: Mattesich & Monsey, 1992)*

### **Environment**

- History of collaboration in the community. Also a special event could reinforce cooperation.
- Collaborative group seen as leader in the community
- Political/social climate favourable: a convergence of needs, public opinion, legislative priorities and agency readiness. Even when the environment is less than optimal, collaborating partners should consider strategies and tactics for improving the environment

### **Membership**

- Mutual respect, understanding and trust: important is to understand how organisations operate, their cultural norms and values, limitations and expectations.
- Appropriate cross-section of members: a balance between breadth and depth of membership
- Members see collaboration as in their self-interest
- Ability to compromise

### **Process/Structure**

- Members share a stake in both process and outcome. A structure should be designed for cooperation.
- Multiple layers of decision-making: decision making is participatory
- Flexibility
- Development of clear roles, responsibilities and policy guidelines
- Adaptability



## **Communication**

- Open and frequent communication. Transparency is essential in building trust and facilitates open exchange of accurate information.
- Established informal and formal communication links: Communication is enhanced by setting up systems for information sharing, clarifying each agency's responsibilities, clearly expressing expectations, and listening.

## **Vision**

- Concrete, attainable goals and objectives
- Shared vision: with agreed upon mission, objectives and strategies. A shared vision builds trust and commitment.
- Unique purpose: overlapping but not duplicating the mission of the individual organisation.

## **Resources**

- Financial resources, staff, technology and information need to be present and both partners should be able and willing to use it.
- Human resources: a skilled convenor or coordinator, committed leaders, and the right mix of knowledge, skills, and abilities among individual members.

If these factors are not addressed in a sufficient way, failure may occur in the partnership. This section addressed the most important factors that are likely to influence success and failure in a partnership. In conclusion, some factors will be discussed which should be considered when engaging in partnerships between organizations from developed countries with organizations from developing countries. Alter and Hage (1993) claim that at the international level, there are probably more network failures than successes, despite the obvious need for nations to work together. UNDESA (2000) mention three failure factors in a partnership between developed and developing countries. Firstly, distrust. A deep suspicion based on ethnic, religious, political, ideological, geographical or exogenous factors, divides partners. Second, the widening gap between developed and developing nations: national disparities, regional disparities, disparities in capacity, resources and power structures among members of partnerships are serious threats to its success. Limitations of resources and skills make partnerships unparallel. Alter and Hage (1993) even argued that the great economic disparities among nations, and thus the

hierarchical control over international networks, certainly form the greatest barrier to better international relations. Brehm (2001) adds that capacity mismatch often occurs between partners of different sizes; partnership dialogue is therefore more feasible between organisations of a similar size and capacity. Thirdly, too high expectations are mentioned in the report of UNDESA. Clearly expressing one's expectations seems to be essential, as already has been noted by Mattesich and Monsey (1992). UNDESA add that especially the expectation that partnerships will solve all problems easily creates many more problems. Referring to this report, transparency is the most important requirement for sustaining a partnership. Transparency and open communication in partnerships helps remove many negative effects that a partnership itself may cause.

## **2.5 To end with**

This chapter dealt with partnerships. This specific form of cooperation between organisations is marked by the relative autonomy of the partners involved and an equitable distribution of power and authority. A partnership aims to create synergy based on the comparative advantages of the individual partners. However, in practice many partnerships fail or do not deliver the value that the partners had expected. This chapter revealed important factors to consider when building and sustaining a partnership. In particular attention has been paid to the dynamic nature of partnerships and its different stages of development. The last section already addressed some specific features of partnerships between organisations from developed countries with organisations from developing countries. The next chapter will elaborate upon this, but not until the concept of civil society has been discussed.

## **3 Civil society**

### **3.1 Concept of civil society**

“There are no solutions to social, economic and political problems in the 21<sup>st</sup> century that do not involve civil society in one or more of its interpretations” (Edwards, 2004). Indeed, civil society organisations (CSOs) play an increasingly vital role everywhere in the world (Beloe, Elkington, Hesler & Newell, 2003; Hulme & Edwards, 1997). They are growing exponentially in number, scale, reach, and influence. The access of CSOs to decision-makers in both developed and developing countries is greater than ever before, as their advocacy role continues to expand. Definitional problems, as we will see later, make estimations of the size of the sector problematic. According to Beloe et al., the not-for-profit sector is now worth over \$1 trillion a year globally. Therefore, it is a fact that the sector could now rank as the world’s eighth-largest economy.

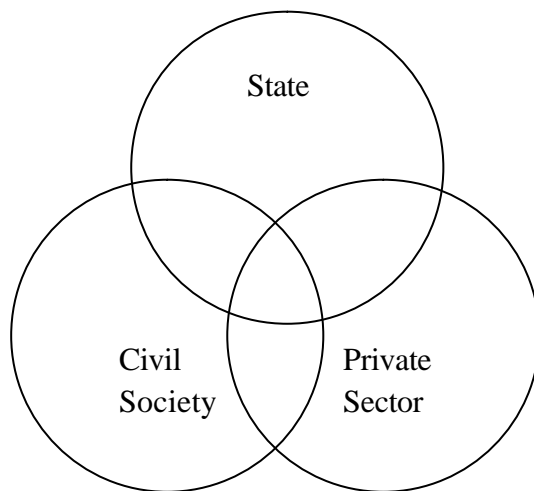
What, indeed, is civil society? According to the UNDP (2000/2001), the origin of the concept lies in the nineteenth century Western European political thought and is again widely used in discussions and writings on development in the last two decades. However, Edwards (2004) argues that civil society has already been a point of reference for philosophers since antiquity in their struggle to understand the great issues of the day. A discussion on the history of the concept of civil society is beyond the scope of this research. Yet, what is important here is to note that there is not much of consensus about the roots of the concept. Moreover, the concept has been understood very differently across time periods, places, theoretical perspectives and political persuasions (Edwards, 2004; Scholte, 1999; Schwedler et al., 1995; UNDP, 2000/2001). Edwards adds that the concept of civil society is often used to justify radically different ideological agendas, supported by deeply ambiguous evidence, and suffused with many questionable assumptions. Cited as solutions to social, economic and political dilemmas by politicians and thinkers from left, right and all perspectives in between, civil society is claimed by every part of the ideological spectrum as its own. For instance, civil society could fit in the ideology of reducing the role of politics in society by expanding free markets and individual liberty. Even

so one could argue that it is the missing link in the success of social democracy, civil society is a vehicle to correct the state and market failures. Others argue that civil society protects those who organize to challenge power and is the single most viable alternative to the authoritarian state and the tyrannical market.

Depending on whose version one follows, civil society is either a specific product of the nation state and capitalism, or a universal expression of the collective life of individuals, at work in all countries and stages of development but expressed in different ways according to history and context (Edwards, 2004). Maybe we should accept the fact that civil society does indeed mean different things to different people and plays different roles at different times.

Civil society is often referred to as the 'third sector' (Edwards, 2004; UNDP, 2000/2001), as is being showed in the figure below:

*Fig. 3.1 Civil society as 'third sector' (source: UNDP, 2000/2001)*



The graphic demonstrates the triangle among government, private sector and civil society. These boundaries could blur and overlap each other.

Civil society encompasses a broad scale of various groups, associations and organisations, such as clubs, guilds, syndicates, federations, unions and political parties. To be more specific, it includes academic institutes, business associations, community-based organisations, consumer protection bodies, criminal syndicates, development cooperation groups, environmental campaigns, ethnic lobbies, foundations, human rights advocates, labour unions, peace activists, religious institutions, religious-based hospitals and schools, youth campaigns and more.

In terms of organisational forms, civil society includes formally constituted and officially registered groups as well as informal associations that do not appear in any directory (Scholte, 1999). Yet, CSOs throughout the world have a number of common characteristics. According to the UNDP (2000/2001), the main characteristics ascribed to CSOs are:

**Voluntary formed:** and participation in it is voluntary

**Non-hereditary:** participation is an individual and voluntary choice and not through inheritance. Membership is achieved, not ascribed.

**Non-governmental:** CSOs are autonomous organisations, which are controlled and managed independently from the government; the organisation is of the civilians and by the civilians only; the government has no rule or function in the organisation.

**Not for profit:** or for private gain of those who control the organisation. Its revenues are used to further the aims of the organisation.

Civic groups have a wide range of constituencies, institutional forms, capacities, tactics and goals. In terms of objectives, civil society includes conformists, reformists and radicals (Scholte, 1999). *Conformists* are those civic groups that seek to uphold and reinforce existing norms. For example business lobbies and foundations. *Reformists* are those civic entities that wish to correct what they see as flaws in existing regimes, while leaving underlying social structures intact. For example, social-democratic groups challenge liberalist economic policies but accept the deeper structure of capitalism. *Radicals* are those civic associations that aim comprehensively to transform the social order. They are frequently termed social movements. They include anarchist, environmentalist, fascists, feminists, pacifists and religious revivalists. This general distinction could be useful, although one should realize that the lines can blur in practice.

Edwards (2004) made another distinction, about the different roles that civil society plays in society:

**Economic:** centres on securing livelihoods and providing services where states and markets are weak, and nurturing the social values, networks and institutions that underpin successful market economies, including trust and cooperation.

**Social:** civil society are seen as a reservoir of caring, cultural life and intellectual innovation, teaching people the skills of citizenship and nurturing a collection of positive social norms that foster stability, loosely connected under the rubric of social capital.

**Political:** civil society organisations are seen as a crucial counterweight to states and corporate power, and an essential pillar in promoting transparency and accountability. Civil society here means people power. Make their voices heard in government decision making, protect and promote their civil and political rights, and strengthen their skills as future political leaders.

At the level of national development performance, evidence shows that the synergy between a strong state and a strong society is one of the keys to sustained, poverty reducing growth (Edwards, 2004; Engel, 2003). The reason for this is that networks of intermediary associations act as a counterweight to vested interests, promote institutional accountability among states and markets, channel information to decision makers on what is happening at the sharp end, and negotiate social contract between government and citizens that development requires.

Now the general ideas about civil society have been outlined it is time to accept a definition. The following definition is found to be practical and can serve well as a working definition for the purpose of this research. The main points made earlier all can be found back in this definition:

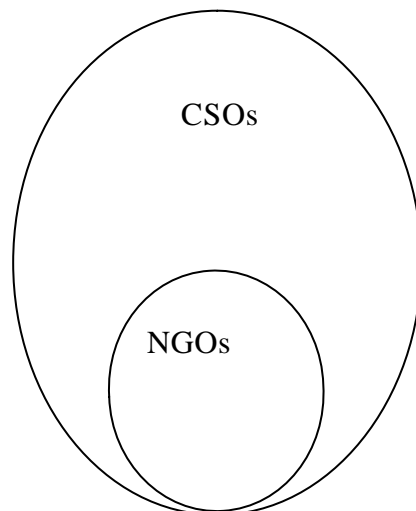
*“Civil society is the set of institutions, organisations and behaviour situated between the state, the market and the family. Specifically, this includes voluntary and non-governmental organisations of many different kinds, philanthropic institutions, social and political movements, other forms of social participation and engagement and the values and cultural patterns associated with them.” (Beloe et al., 2003)*

The primary focus of this research, as already has been noted in the introduction, is on NGOs. Therefore it is important to know what the difference is between the concept of civil society and that of NGO. Michael Edwards of the Ford Foundation (Beloe et al., 2003) stated it as follows:

*“If civil society were an iceberg, then NGOs would be among the more noticeable of the peaks above the waterline, leaving the great bulk of community groups, informal associations, political parties and social networks sitting silently (but not passively) below.”*

Figure 3.2 shows the distinction between CSOs and NGOs.

*Fig. 3.2 CSOs and NGOs*



Activist NGOs are the shock troops of civil society as Beloe et al. put it. But there are many other forms of NGO, focusing, among others on analysis, networking, behind-the-scenes lobbying or service delivery. A working definition for a NGO could be:

*“A NGO is a self-governing, private, not-for-profit organisation that is geared toward improving the quality of life of disadvantaged people.” (Beloe et al., 2003)*

The most widely used term for organisations that are neither run by government nor profit making has been NGO. Increasingly, however, the term CSO is also used. According to Beloe et al., CSOs embraces not only fixed address organisations with paid staffs, but also the range of groupings and associations that make up civil society. For example, a human right organisation with a physical address and which is officially registered could be regarded as a NGO or CSO. Activist groups that advocate human rights and which are informally organized and not officially registered are rather labelled a CSO. Another reason why increasingly the term CSO is used is that organizations that are primarily defined by their labelling as non-, such as non-governmental organizations, have a communication challenge to address. Beloe et al. argue that many people recognise the need to emphasise a more positive, pro-message. In short, a NGO is obviously always a CSO, while a CSO does not have to be a NGO necessarily. This distinction will be pursued in this study.

The associational cultures and contexts of CSOs vary greatly from country to country (Hulme & Edwards, 1997; Scholte, 1999). In addition Edwards (2004) assert that since nation states in the developing world are largely a colonial creation and the market economy has only a fragile hold, civil society in the developing countries are bound to differ from those in developed countries.

Therefore we focus now on civil society in the Middle-East, and discuss whether this concept has different features in this part of the world where this study has been conducted.

### **3.2 Civil society in the Middle-East**

Often public perception was, according to Schwedler (1995), that a region as mysterious and hostile as the Middle-East could not possibly be home to modern civil society. In a region where freedom is often circumscribed and hollow, where governments are suspicious of independent forms of association, civil society cannot be described as robust. However, this does not mean that civil society is absent. According to Schwedler, associational life is richer in the Middle-East than is



commonly assumed, although there are significant variations among states, as well as among classes. Another relevant question is whether it is appropriate to employ theoretical concepts that originated in Western political thought to non-Western societies. Schwedler argues that employing the concept of civil society could be particularly problematic when the history of social and political forces of the region in question is strikingly different than those under which the concept emerged. The developments in the Middle-East will not take place along the same lines as developments in the Western world as circumstances are totally different. Kandil (1995) claims that the third sector in the Arab region is referred to as the indigenous sector, indicating (in Arabic) its close links to the population and the society. However, Kandil argues that the concepts of civil society in the Arab countries are, to a great extent, similar to western concepts of this sector.

Conflicting views about civil society in the Middle-East do exist. There are those who view civil society as weak or non-existent and those who see civil society as the potential impetus for peaceful political reforms, as emerging or active (Schwedler, 1995). According to Schwedler, some scholars argue that a limited number of independent social and political organisations exist in the Middle-East, some of which indeed challenge state authority. These groups do not, however, make up a network that may be described as civil society, as they are not based on the shared idea of tolerance and pluralism. Marzouk (1997) adds that a further weakness of the Arab civil society development is the fact that it is so scattered. He argues that despite their increasing numbers, they do not meet the requirements of a movement. There is no driving intellectual or ideological force. Movement refers here to a collective dynamic in which members pursue common objectives and draw their motivations from more or less similar references. Marzouk asserts that poor coordination among NGOs is a major handicap in the face of the strength of political elites in the Arab world. NGOs lack the unity that would allow them to represent a real force in civil society, able to mobilize large segments of the population to exert pressure for change. Schwedler noted that many scholars argue that the Middle-East lacks a viable civil society, because the organisations that do exist have been co-opted by the state to such an extent that they are virtually useless. This state dominance has been characteristic of the Arab state throughout its history, and the absence of civil society is an equally visible feature of Arab society. Attempts to co-opt Arab NGOs

politically do not only come from the regime in power, but from other political actors as well, including the opposition. For these actors, NGOs are perceived as instruments that can be used to expand political support and influence (Marzouk, 1997). Furthermore, Marzouk asserts that when Arab NGOs are tolerated by their regime, it is because their aims do not oppose, or may even support, those of the state. They encourage a wide fringe of association under supervision which are subsidiary or complementary for the Administration. Schwedler argues that these strategies of inclusion should be viewed critically as efforts by the ruling elite to weaken oppositional movements by incorporating them into state-regulated processes. According to Marzouk, the most influential organisations remain those closely linked with governments.

On the other hand, many people argue that civil society in the Middle-East does exist and actually is quite vibrant as well (Schwedler, 1995). Everyday, from Iran to Egypt and from Yemen to Turkey, citizens meet formally and informally to discuss issues ranging from health and social services to economic policy and political reform. Some governments tolerate these gatherings, in other countries non-governmental associations are strictly forbidden and harshly repressed. Anyway, a high level of political awareness does exist. According to Schwedler, citizens are both willing and able to play a role and, in addition, they are actively pursuing more inclusive and participant political processes.

The roots of modern civil society in the Middle-East started in the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century (Kandil, 1995). Economic as well as political changes in the Arabic society were and still are highly connected to changes in the third sector. Although countries in the Middle-East differ widely in terms of their economic and social conditions as well as in their political orientation, some general factors could be identified which explain the emergent of civil society. Kandil claims that the weakness of the Arab states at the time and the deep and far reaching influence of colonialism played a prominent role in shaping this sector and in setting its priorities for action. Many CSOs replaced state organs in safeguarding nationalism and mobilizing national forces to defend national identity. In addition, Ibrahim (1995) adds that factors as armed conflicts have weakened the state. The gap created by

the withdrawal of the state initiated new demands on civil society to address part of the social and economic needs of the population in these fields.

Furthermore, the Islam played and is still playing a significant role in the work and the development of CSOs in all Arab countries. The creation and development of civil society is rooted in religious principles and moral thought (Kandil, 1995). The Arab region shares a common culture in which religion plays a central role. The Islam, the religion of the majority of the population in the Arab region, advocates charity and voluntarism which are among the very important pillars of the faith. An example of this could be found in that *Zakat* or tithing and *Sadaqa* or almsgiving, mentioned thirty times in the Quran, are intended to motivate Muslims to help their fellowmen with money, work and provide all other forms of support within an Islamic system of “social interdependence”. Kandil argued that this system propagates solidarity and support of the needy. Since the dawn of Islam, mosques assumed the role of links between the donors and recipients of charities. They were not only places of worship, but also educational, cultural and social institutions. In short, organisations which have a religious orientation have a significant role to play in civil society activities in the Middle-East (Kandil, 1995; Schwedler, 1995). Islamist opposition has been very successful in creating an array of organisations. They have been among the most effective political actors to challenge state authority in the Middle-East, more often through the provision of basic services than through armed struggle against the state or political terrorism. However, Kandil claims that CSOs changed their roles more and more from religious advocacy and charity to a more political role in addressing social and political challenges. Since the nineteenth century, many religious based CSOs have struggled to assert national identity in the face of colonialism, in implanting the concepts of citizenship, national independence and in providing services such as health, education and social welfare.

Although there is no doubt that the political elite intends to stay in power, the imperative of political reform is widely felt in ruling circles. The Middle East is not immune to the global trend toward democracy (Norton, 1993). The emergence of civil society is a necessary condition to establish democracy in the Middle-East (Schwedler, 1995). Arab societies, despite all the problems that hinder their

development, hold out sound opportunities for emancipation and the evolution of civil society (Marzouk, 1997).

It is not easy to answer the question to what extent civil society is present in the Middle East. According to Kandil (1995), civil society seems to expand and diversify in countries which have a relatively more democratic system. The nature of the political system determines the degree of freedom in society which allows for the establishment of CSOs (Kandil, 1995; Marzouk, 1997). In other words, the political system affects the pattern of operation and size of civil society as a whole. Consequently, when analysing the dynamics of civil society in a country one should consider its political environment first. For the purpose of this study therefore, in the next section political, social and economical features of Yemen will be discussed in order to understand the context of civil society in Yemen.

### **3.3 Yemen**

For at least two thousand years Yemen has been known as Arabia Felix, the most temperate, verdant, productive region of the Peninsula, exporting to Africa and Asia. Yet, in the late twentieth century the southwest corner of Arabia was a dependent, least developed country (Carapico, 1998). Yemen has a rich history but it is impossible to describe all the major events here in this section. Therefore only the most important developments and features of Yemen will be outlined below in order to provide a context for this study.

#### *3.3.1 Politics*

The republic of Yemen is the most density populated country on the Arab peninsula with its 19,3 million inhabitants (Hoff, 1995). Yemen has a democratic form of government, a parliament with 301 chosen representatives. It is the only country in the region with a multiparty system. The General People's Congress (GPC) is the ruling party, with president Salih as president (<http://www.minbuza.nl>).

Three generations of states have ruled parts of Yemen during the past century (Carapico, 1998). A mixture of semi-feudal and colonial systems has existed through the 1960's. During the 1970's and 1980's, there were two republics, namely the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) in the South and the Yemen Arab

Republic (YAR) in the North. Since 1990 both states have been united into the Republic of Yemen. The British attendance in South-Yemen and the Ottoman dominion of the North have led to the development of different identities of both areas (Hoff, 1995). The North has known conservative Islamic governance for centuries. Alternatively, the South has become a one party state in 1967 with a central plan economy, based on Marxist principles. These ideological differences have retarded unification between the North and the South for a long time. However, both countries were connected through strong family and tribal ties. Besides, one expected unification to bring political and economic advantages. According to Hoff the most important event in Yemen's political history has been the realized unification between North- and South-Yemen in 1990. However, great differences remained and the process of nation-building did not work very well. Besides, Yemen was punished with economic sanctions by the international community for its attitude during the 1<sup>st</sup> Gulf war. According to Hoff this weakened the political and economic stability of the country.

In 1994, the instable situation in Yemen resulted in a civil war. However the victory of the North has averted the intended separation of the South and unification was enforced. The North has a population that is 4 times that of the South and this resulted in a preponderance of the North in most of the power positions (Hoff, 1995). Referring to the multi-annual plan of the Royal Netherlands Embassy (2005), Yemen is still in the process of nation-building and the political process is a complex one with tribal, political, regional and religious interest groups all playing their part. Women are practically absent from the political arena. After a period in which Yemen gained praise for its relative openness, the freedom of the press now appears to be under threat and corruption is widespread. Furthermore, the report noted that the country suffers from a relatively high conflict load at various levels. The roots of conflict include tribal and state/tribal dynamics, North-South controversies, competition for scarce services and resources, the politicisation of religion and domestic responses to international pressures. The high number of small arms in the hands of the population easily propels conflicts to higher escalation levels. Besides, according to Hoff, there are tensions between the government and opposition parties who are not parliamentary represented.

The fact is that for all its troubles Yemen is today relatively open by Arab, especially Arabian Peninsula standards (Carapico, 1998). Yemen has a constitution that enunciates some basic rights and freedoms, an elected legislature, a certain degree of political and civic pluralism, courts that tend to protect the law. Among Arab countries it offers greater hope for democratization than most.

### 3.3.2 *Economy*

The economy in Yemen is primarily oriented towards oil and agriculture (<http://www.minbuza.nl>). There is oil in Yemen. However, according to the ministry, its oil revenues are declining and Yemen is lacking behind in the development and production of the oil-industry in comparison to its neighbour countries. More than one third of the working population is unemployed. According to the website of the Ministry the structure of the working population is the following: agriculture 61%, industry 17% and services 22%, however one should realize that a big informal industry exists in Yemen.

Although data are inconsistent, it appears to be that income poverty is on the increase (Royal Netherlands Embassy, 2005). Both the Gulf wars, the low oil prices during a couple of years and the civil war in 1994 had a negative effect on the economic development. In addition, local and international entrepreneurs find it difficult to do business in Yemen, due to inadequate financial and judicial systems, as well as corruption and harassment by those in positions of authority.

The government now aims for a decrease in the budget deficit and reforms in trade. Reforms here are referred to as the deregulation, privatisation and decentralization of the state apparatus (<http://www.minbuza.nl>).

### 3.3.3 *Society*

The Islam is, according to Hoff (1995), the most important binding force in society. The legislation in North-Yemen always has been based on the *Sharia*, the Islamic law. However, in the South, the Marxist regime did impose a secularisation, although the Islam was being accepted as the national religion.

In Yemen family and tribal ties play an important role in social life (Hoff, 1995; Carapico, 1998). About hundred different tribes exist in Yemen and most of them

have organized themselves in tribal associations. The armed power of the tribes is immense. Hoff asserts that all tribes taken together could be more powerful than the national army. These tribes always have been autonomous communities and still government influence in these areas is fairly limited as yet. Carapico claims that the basic units of solidarity and loyalty were community and tribe rather than nation and state. Indeed there was a form of voluntary civic activism among various social groups and classes that served the state-like function of providing essential safety and services, especially because state institutions were, and often still are very weak. An example of this could be found in the fact that tribalism and religion, each have a system of law capable of functioning in the absence of a state, and each contains customary mechanisms for creating public social capital. Carapico claimed that all regimes in the twentieth-century Yemen have struggled with tribes. Tribalism was an obstacle for the Imams, colonial authorities, and Socialists, all seeking to replace common law with a centralized judicial system. This indicates the impact of the tribal system in Yemen society.

### *3.3.4 Dutch development cooperation in Yemen*

Yemen is a Least Developed Country (LDC). The country ranks 148<sup>th</sup> out of 177 on the 2002 Human Development Index. Almost 16% of the population live below the poverty line of US\$1 a day and over 45% live on less than US\$2 a day (<http://www.minbuza.nl>). The Netherlands is the third largest donor after the World Bank, and Germany, followed by the United States, the United Kingdom, the European Commission and Japan. Dutch non-governmental organisations are not active in Yemen. Yemen is 1 of the 36 partner countries with whom The Netherlands maintain a sustainable development relation.

In 1978 this development relation with Yemen has been laid down in a treaty. Increasing stability in the region and strengthening dialogue with the Arab world are Dutch foreign policy priorities. Moreover, the Netherlands government aims to contribute to socio-economic development. Good Governance is one of the pillars of the Dutch development policy. Developments in the field of democratisation in Yemen still require government and donor attention. The Netherlands has agreed to concentrate assistance on three sectors: education, health and water. Besides,

special attention is paid to the environment and the position of the woman (<http://www/minbuza.nl>).

Yemen is a new state, still in the process of formation (Carapico, 1998). The gradual, uneven development of the contemporary Yemeni nation-state is the timeline and context against which the object of this study, civil society must be viewed.

### **3.4 Civil society in Yemen**

#### *3.4.1 Emergence and evolution*

CSOs in Yemen are a relatively recent phenomenon, having first appeared in the 1940s, and then only in British ruled Aden (Beatty, al-Madhaji & Detalle, 1996). Yemeni CSOs were diverse in type, having charitable, religious, development and political aims. After the revolutions of both North and South Yemen in the 1960s, the character of CSOs changed dramatically. In the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) in the South, independent popular organisations ceased to exist, and state organized cooperatives became the dominant form of cooperation among citizens. In the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) of the North in the 1970s, the cooperative movement came into being; this existed throughout the country, and became the most successful grass roots NGO movement in Yemen's history. Referring to the Yemen Human Development Report (UNDP, 2000/2001), 1990 represents the re-birth of civil society. After unification in 1990, increased democratisation led to an enormous increase in the number of CSOs. This stage is marked by the adoption of democracy, political pluralism and the acknowledgment through constitutional and legal stipulations of the society's right to organize itself into political, social, economic and cultural organisations. Yemen is still in this phase of democratisation. However, Beatty et al. argued already that since the 1994 civil war, the activities of political parties and the press have been restricted. There seems to be less democracy than before due to increased control from the government side.



### 3.4.2 Statistics

This stage (from 1990 to present) has witnessed an increased number of CSOs in Yemen that rose from 286 organisations in 1990 to 2786 in the year 2000 (UNDP, 2000/2001). A more recent study carried out for the European Commission (Schellart & Hoederdos, 2003), revealed that in 2002 the total number of registered CSOs was 4089 (see appendix B). The number of international NGOs (INGOs) operating in Yemen rose from eight in 1990 to about 37 in 2000 (see appendix C for more details). Despite the significant growth and increase in number of the CSOs in Yemen during the last decade, this number is considered limited compared with the size of the population. Appendix D shows the geographical distribution of the CSOs. Organisations specialized in community development are widespread in all governorates, whereas those engaged in specific fields, such as human rights or cultural development are found in some governorates. These organisations are usually located in the governorates capitals or in the cities that come next in size. Subsequently, the number decreases in towns and becomes rare in villages, though the activities of some organisations existing in the urban centres are directed to serve the communities in rural areas. The capital city of Sana'a has the highest number of CSOs as a result of the population density, its political position and its economic and commercial activities, and the cultural and scholarly role it plays. For more information regarding activities and the distribution of CSOs in accordance to the governorates is referred to appendix E.

There are some reasons why one should be very cautious in drawing any conclusions from these statistics. First of all, these statistics are not from 2005. It was not possible to obtain more up to date statistics for this study. Secondly, the fact that CSOs are officially registered does not say anything yet. An assessment report of the (former) Ministry of Securities and Social Affairs issued in 1995 (UNDP, 2000/2001), indicated that approximately 30% of the registered NGOs operate throughout the year. These NGOs are considered in the report as organisations with complete institutional structures. In contrast, 50% of the total registered organisations suffer from "institutional deficiencies", of which 15% work in seasonal activities during Ramadan and in religious festivals, 5% exercise activities that are not congruent with the goals of the organisations, and 30% operate within a very narrow space serving

its members only. The remaining 20% of the total registered NGOs lack any institutional set-up, whereby 15% are semi-frozen organisations that have suspended their activities, while the other 5% did not exercise any activity since their establishment. Although this study stems from 1995, the Yemen Human Development Report argues that the inactivity of many NGOs still seems to be typical for civil society in Yemen. In chapter 5 this point will be elaborated upon.

### *3.4.3 Characteristics*

CSOs in Yemen are still at an early stage of development, organisationally speaking (Beatty et al., 1996; UNDP, 2000/2001). Many are marked by a charity perspective, a low level of internal democratisation, control by one person within the organisation and a number have unwritten political objectives. The rural CSOs tend to be more development oriented and to be less politicized than the urban CSOs, although the type of development activities they are able to engage in are usually basic. CSOs have a limited absorptive capacity, and are at a stage where intensive capacity building is required in order that they can function more effectively in the future.

Sometimes relations between CSOs are characterized by full cooperation and coordination and other times struggle and competition (UNDP, 2000/2001). Relations between most of the organisations are seasonal. Competition is the most common feature in the relations between political parties, which at the times turns into struggle. Cooperation and coordination among CSOs are limited and volatile. CSOs lack adequate and sustainable funding sources and therefore compete to acquire local and foreign funding, furthermore most organisations lack the necessary institutional set up to develop other forms of cooperation, such as networking and exchanging information. According to the report such a situation is not limited to civil society in Yemen, but it is common amongst the CSOs in most Arab and developing countries.

Another issue, according to Beatty et al. (1996), where Yemen's history shows parallels to a general situation of CSOs in Arab states is the relation with the government. CSOs in Yemen are not as independent from government as the definition suggests (Beatty et al., 1996; UNDP, 2000/2001; Schellard & Hoenderdos,

2003). Many CSOs see the government as suspicious and trying to control all formal organisations in every field. The government, on its side, is worried that some CSOs may be fronts for political activities, that certain groups or individuals that now approach donors may not represent legitimate CSOs, and that the objectives of some CSOs and their geographical priority may be inconsistent with what government judges to be the priorities for Yemen. In particular, they see donor funds flowing towards relatively few CSOs. Beatty et al. claim that these concerns have led to a tightening of control over CSOs. However in Yemen, CSOs have more room for movement than CSOs in many other Arab states.

Many but not all individuals identify stronger with their tribes than with the government (UNDP, 2000/2001). The tribe represents on traditional structure that is affiliated to a period prior to the modern state and precedent to civil society. According to the report, the tribe is not considered to be a CSO but may exercise some of its functional roles. The degree of tribal impact on the CSOs varies from one to another. Its impact is strong on charity and cooperative organisations, and decreases in other organisations, such as those dealing with human rights. In addition to this strong tribal system of solidarity it is important to mention that volunteering has been one of the important religious and social values in the Yemeni society. The report shows that some religious groups are active through a number of civil associations in accordance with purely religious attitude for conducting social solidarity work. Another example is that influential political parties establish links with charity organisations.

### *3.4.3 Donors*

The larger part of the funding of charity organisations in Yemen comes from the private sector, either individuals or organisations in Yemen (UNDP, 2000/2001). In addition the report pointed that economic prosperity leads to increased support for CSOs activities. Much of the international donor interest in working with local CSOs is to get away from the long standing difficulties in working with the government, and find alternative development partners (Beatty et al., 1996). Besides, CSOs are distinguished in their closeness to the poor. According to Beatty et al., relatively little is written on Yemeni CSOs, and donors have expressed a need for better information

to guide their choice of CSO partners, as well as the type of projects they can involve CSOs in. Furthermore Beatty et al. claim that investments into any given CSO could be risky, for both local benefactor and foreign donor. CSOs serve as an arena for government and political parties to play their various roles. This leads to instability and change. Many are used more or less openly by local or national politicians as channels for funds to fuel their political interests. Their charity and development objectives have always existed side by side with their political objectives. Besides these difficulties for donors, Schellart and Hoenderdos (2003) assert that there is a certain degree of fragmentation in the international support provided to Yemen. Donors do not really coordinate activities with each other. Moreover Schellart and Hoenderdos claim that currently there is not a lot of support for civil society at all.

### **3.5 Donors in partnerships with CSOs**

The previous chapter dealt with partnerships. So far this chapter was about civil society, and besides the country context for this study has been described. Now this study will return to its core subject. In this concluding section attention will be paid to the specific features of a donor-recipient relation, with a focus on partnerships between donors (government) from developed countries and CSOs from developing countries. Simple generalizations about the nature of these relationships are not feasible. As already has been argued, there are different things happening in different places and institutional histories and national and local contexts shape events as much as more generalized or global factors (Hulme & Edwards, 1997; Brehm, 2001). However, there seems to be some common features inevitably connected to this special kind of relationship.

#### *3.5.1 Limitations of donor-recipient partnerships*

The creation of an equal relationship has proven to be difficult in practice (Baaz, 2005; Hudock, 1999). Very few donor-recipient relations are based on the types of equal exchange which are inherent to any partnership. Hudock even adds that the term partnership reflects an idealistic notion of what interaction between both parties should be like, rather than providing an accurate description of what they are actually

like. Brehm (2001) noted that some CSOs prefer to talk of partner cooperation instead of a partnership.

According to Hudock, altering these relationships is difficult, since the problems between them are essentially political, not organisational. One quite common position, that critics take, is that concepts such as participation and partnership function as political slogans to hide other motives. For instance, many critics argue that development is deemed to be cultural imperialism, a western idea that is not adjusted to, but instead imposed upon, the third world. Where colonialism has left off, development took over. However, as Baaz claims, while the partnership discourse must not be idealized as possessing an unambiguous intention to re-create power relations, it should not be seen as the pretext for a conspiracy, that a partnership was never intended. Rather, the concept of partnership could be seen as harbouring different conflicts and tensions. The terminology underplays the power inequalities inherent in the aid relationship and gives no hint of the gap between the partnership policy and the day to day practise. Here, one could think of the six determinants of Oliver (1990) as explained in chapter 2. Oliver showed that there are more reasons such as asymmetry, legitimacy etc. which could explain relationships between organizations.

The role of the donor is a major obstacle in achieving equality (Brehm, 2001). The imbalance in the relationship is created by the donors who tend to have resources which CSOs need for development activities. Local CSOs simply need funds to expand their activities. This skews the power balance (Hudock, 1999; Brehm, 2005). A CSO's funding source will in part determine the degree of autonomy it has in developing programmes and in working with target groups (Hudock, 1999; Hulme & Edwards, 1997; Brehm, 2005). The funding processes hijack the accountability mechanisms and re-orient them towards donors. Donors assume a control function, whilst CSOs risk becoming donor-driven and distanced from their grassroots constituencies. Some CSOs receive all of their funds from donors to carry out donors' programmes with the groups to which the donors have assigned highest priority. In these cases, the CSOs are essentially contractors and are little more than extensions of the donor agencies. When CSOs receive government funds they must follow rigid accounting and reporting requirements, which can constrain their ability to act flexibly and responsively. It is a gradual and less visible process. It begins with the

agreement to use aid monies. CSOs need funds so as to survive. Then there is the adoption of donor techniques for programming, implementing, monitoring and accounting for performance. Eventually the organisational culture is attuned to donors, and the local, indigenous and informal features that have underpinned CSO activity are lost. In short, the dependence of funds creates an unequal situation where CSOs need to adapt to donor methods and practices and lose their own identity in order to survive. Here, one could think of isomorphism, as explained by DiMaggio and Powell (1983). Their theory focuses on the mechanisms that explain similarity among organizations within the same field. For instance, powerful normative systems supporting the appropriate organizational practices or legal requirements that are enforced by the state, can create organizational fields that are highly homogeneous in their operating assumptions, formal structures, and day-to-day practices. Hulme and Edwards (1997) showed in their studies that while CSOs remain diverse, this diversity is being reduced by donor policies. An example of this is found in a widening gap between well-resourced service providers and poorly-funded social mobilisation agencies. This gap is exacerbated by Governments who are fearful of social movements and advocacy CSOs, yet willing to accommodate service providers for the material benefits and political advantages they bring.

When civil society is dominated by foreign donors, problems can arise between the government and the CSO, if the government feels that it is being squeezed out of the development decision making process (Hulme & Edwards, 1997). This may be the case in many Arab countries as already has been discussed in the previous section. Hulme and Edwards also claim that donor money could increase competition among CSOs. Competition for donor support seems unlikely to foster collaborative relationship which is important for strengthening civil society as a whole. Despite these negative consequences of donor relations with CSOs, one should not forget that CSOs could use their increasing closeness to donors to expand effective operations and influence official approaches and agendas.

The dangers of imposing foreign models (economic and/or political) on other societies have been well documented in the development literature (Hulme & Edwards, 1997; Hudock, 1997; Baaz, 2005). With increasing funding from governments from developed countries, CSOs are now in danger of being used in

precisely this way. The fact that interventions of various sorts have been legitimized through reference to an image of the West as a guardian of democracy and development aid, could be regarded as another danger in a partnership (Baaz, 2005). Democracy, equality and a concern for the weak in society derive from a specific Western tradition. In addition, a partner from developing countries tends to be discursively constructed as unreliable and underdeveloped in contrast to a reliable and developed Western counterpart. This mistrust and inequality works against the policy of partnership, which emphasises the need for transparency and mutual trust. This does imply, according to Baaz, that formal organisational changes tend to be undermined by informal structures and practices. In other words, inter-personal relations and expectations are, as already has been outlined in chapter 2, of great importance to failure and success in a partnership.

But there are more problems that occur particularly in a donor-CSO relation. In a partnership, the acquaintance process is often imbalanced, with the CSO having less access to information about the donor partner than vice versa. According to Brehm, donor-CSO accountability is weak overall, and donors are not as transparent as they expect their partners to be.

Finally, the capacity limits of donors themselves are a constraining fact. The number and depths of partnerships, lack of coordination between donors and high staff turnover are all limitations to effective partnerships (Brehm, 2001).

### *3.5.2 Strategies and methods for donor intervention*

Blair (1997) identified two basic strategies for donors in supporting civil society that can be pursued. They are described below:

- **System reform:** where donors can focus on the enabling environment or rules of the game for civil society by working to improve the conditions in which it can function effectively.
- **Sectoral agendas:** where donors can work within a given civil society environment by supporting specific CSOs.

Bebbington & Riddell (1997) argue that donors should work on improving the environment in which CSOs operate, also on facilitating interactions between CSOs, the state and other actors. The challenge embraces helping to nurture and create an enabling environment in which rights of association, civil liberties and rights of access to minimal-quality services are achieved and protected: an environment in which training, financial and political support is given, and in which the state and markets operate in ways that do not weaken civil society. International NGOs could play an important role here for donors, at least those who have more knowledge and experience of the local CSO world as the donors themselves.

Donors directly contribute resources (largely financial support and technical assistance) to strengthen civil society, generally in the form of foreign assistance projects. In chapter two, the importance of recognising the dynamic nature of partnerships and the development of different phases in a partnership already have been discussed. Blair (1997) made a distinction in different phases between a donor and a CSO. The first phase of effort is primarily an institution-building one, with donor support providing core overhead costs for CSOs, basic equipment, training for personnel, and the like. In the next phase of CSO activity, there is often still some direct donor support as technical assistance and tactical guidance, but the recipient organisation is largely on its own here. Then in the next phases things are largely beyond any direct donor influence. Donor work, in sum, is for the most part restricted to building and strengthening CSOs and then, with a little guidance, setting them on their own course. The network development theory as presented in chapter two shows considerable similarities with the approach by Blair in recognising different life stages in the relationship. Brehm (2001) even adds that recognising distinct phases in the development of a partnership between donors and CSOs is of great importance. Partnerships between donors and CSOs need to be developed. Important in this process is that CSOs need to be made autonomous by the donor.

Research suggests (Brehm, 2001), that donor-CSO partnerships can in fact lead to increased autonomy for some CSOs, depending on the approach of the donor. Brehm identified five key implications, see box 3.1.



### *Box 3.1 Key implications for donors*

- **Being realistic about partnerships:** 'authentic', mutual partnership depends on the partner organisations being similar in their size and organisational capacity. Donors need to develop greater clarity in identifying different types and phases of relationships with CSOs.
- **Agenda setting:** given their power as funders, donors should guard against the tendency to impose agendas on CSOs. This could be achieved through more equitable negotiation processes. In addition, donors should allow greater flexibility and creativity in terms of reporting formats (for example visits and visual reports).
- **Developing consistency in practice:** donors need to maximise their considerable experience of working with CSOs by developing a more systematic approach to 'good practice' in partnerships. Long time horizons with consistency and commitment are necessary. In addition donors should ensure where possible consistency in the staff relating to partners.
- **Assessments of partnerships:** there is a need for mutual assessment of the partnership relationship to be built into donors systems and procedures in order to facilitate reflection and learning from experience.
- **Strengthening policy dialogue:** systematic, structured consultation of CSOs in the strategy and policy processes of donors should be strengthened and consolidated, given that policy dialogue between donors and CSOs is a key strength of the partnership model. In addition donors should develop closer co-operation with other funders.

The suggestions made in box 3.1 seem to correspond to issues which have been dealt with in chapter 2. For instance, Huxham and Vangen (2000) claimed that inconsistencies in practice, in terms of sudden withdrawal of funding or changes in the government policy could be disruptive factors in a partnership. Brehm's suggestion regarding consistency in practice could be understood from this point of view. Furthermore, Huxham and Vangen described the importance of the negotiation process between partners. Brehm (2001) adds here that a more equitable negotiation process is necessary in order to make a donor-CSO partnership successful. In general, Brehm's implications put an interesting extra dimension along the literature

in the previous chapter. The reason for this is that the focus here is on donor-CSO partnerships in specific.

Benefits of donor-CSO partnerships could be seen in terms of improving local ownership, sustainability and poverty reach, as well as the mutual exchange of resources and ideas between organizations from developed and developing countries (Brehm, 2001; Hudock, 1999). Hudock asserts that it is essential that donors decrease the uncertainty around the provision of resources to CSOs. In addition Hudock claims that one should focus on the comparative advantages that both partners produce. Altering donor relationships with CSOs can benefit donors by increasing their development effectiveness. It can benefit CSOs by increasing their ability to work responsively and flexibly with development beneficiaries, rather than making them respond to the directives of donors. Eventually this will benefit the recipients of development assistance, since these activities will address their own needs as they have identified them. As a result, donors will be able to obtain money from their constituencies on the basis of their positive results.

### **3.6 To end with**

This chapter was about the concept of civil society and partnerships between donors and CSOs. Collaboration on an equal basis appears to be difficult in this specific relationship. The next statement seems to capture the problem inherent to the partnership discourse:

*“There is a contradiction between the discourse of partnership, which denotes and emphasises equality and disavows paternalism, and the discourse of (evolutionary) development according to which the partners are not equal, but instead are situated at a different stage of development and enlightenment.” (Baaz, 2005)*

Indeed, development aid is assumed to have created a culture of dependence in the recipient countries. This assumed dependence therefore should be combated through partnership. The introduction of a new terminology reflects the critique of Eurocentric development practices (Baaz, 2005). Partnership is a new definition of

the development worker role as advisor rather than manager as already has been discussed in chapter two. Hulme and Edwards (1997) claim that successful civil societies develop their own systems and structures, norms and sanctions, over hundreds of years: they take care of their own strengthening. Donors therefore should help one another directly according to their needs and aspirations as they themselves define them, in line with priorities that they themselves have set, and guided by their own agendas. The successful CSOs of the twenty-first century are likely to be those that maintain a clear and independent focus and specialisation, within networks and partnerships that work synergistically to achieve broad but common goals.

## 4 Methodology

### 4.1 Research design

The objective of this study is to explore civil society in Yemen and to give recommendations on how the Royal Netherlands Embassy could best engage with civil society organisations. According to Babbie (1995), the research objective is exploring when the project embraces large unknown areas. Hutjes and Bueren (1996) add that explorative research often begins with vague assumptions about reality, with blurred formulated hypotheses and no preceding fixed methods, in order to be as open as possible for reality. This study indeed does have an explorative nature. The main reason for this is that just a few studies have been conducted so far with regard to this subject in this context (see introduction).

This study has a qualitative character. Baker (1999) noted that the aim of qualitative research is to give meaning to the social environment. In other words, the aim is *verstehen*, understanding social reality. In qualitative research the research problem is considered to be holistic. In other words, the problem is regarded as a comprehensive and coherent whole. The problem has many different aspects that should be understood in an interrelated way. Baarda, Goede and Teunissen (2001) identified some reasons for qualitative research to be a very suitable approach. They argue that when the subject is complicated and complex or when the subject is very sensitive, a qualitative approach could be appropriate. Secondly, they claim that a qualitative study is necessary when respondents are cautious to give information because they are suspicious or insecure. Thirdly, they suggest using this type of research when intensive contact with the researcher is needed in order to build trust, so that the respondent is willing to share information.

These arguments all do apply in a certain extent to this study. In many Arab countries, for instance, politics is a sensitive issue to talk about. Building trust in a conversation seems to be essential for the researcher to gain information. In addition the cultural differences should be addressed here. Yemen is an exceptional country with a unique history and culture. It is very difficult, if not impossible, to compare the western culture with that of Yemen. Developments in Yemen did not take place along

the same lines of developments in the western world as circumstances are totally different. Therefore it is important to question to what extent the available literature, regarding partnerships and civil society, is applicable for this research. Qualitative research could help to solve these problems by trying to understand the world as the respondents do. This study could well serve as an illustration for partnerships in development cooperation in a special context. In addition the empirical results will be compared with the literature.

Increasingly, qualitative research is being used for applied and policy research (Baarda et al., 2001). According to Swanborn (1999) applied research is scientific research that aims to produce knowledge that is needed for the solution of practical problems. This study fits in this category. The findings and recommendations could be used for practical ends. However, designing complete interventions is beyond the scope of this research.

A combined strategy will be followed consisting of a theoretical- and an empirical part. Empirical data is necessary to answer the research question. The theoretical part will provide a context. Baarda et al. argued that in qualitative research, theoretical backgrounds should be dealt with caution, because one should enter the field with an open attitude.

## **4.2 Data collection**

Four methods have been used to collect the data for this study. They will be described below.

### *4.2.1 Interviews*

In this study, face to face open interviews have been conducted. Baarda and Goede (1996), claim that it is very obvious to use open interviews when one wants to find out ideas, perceptions and experiences from people with regard to a certain subject. In addition, they noted that open interviews should be used when the study is dealing with a new subject, where not much is known about. Both arguments do apply to this study. The reason to choose for open interviews is to be flexible and open for a diversity of relevant information. Given the cultural differences, an attempt will be

made by means of the open interviews to understand the perspective of the respondent and gain trust. Baker (1999) argued that qualitative interviews are closer to a conversation than to a question and answer session. As a result, the researcher is able to gather rich, complex and meaningful information.

The open- or topic interviews were semi-structured. This means that the questions and answers are not fixed, only the topics (Baarda & de Goede, 1996). The topics were designed in cooperation with the Royal Netherlands Embassy. The first part of the interviews dealt with civil society in Yemen in general. The second part was about partnerships between donors and CSOs. These core topics have been divided into subtopics. For more information and a detailed description of the topics is referred to appendix F.

Altogether 25 interviews have been conducted. All respondents were either managing directors or representatives of their organisation who held key positions with regard to civil society activities. The respondents can be considered as well informed people with respect to civil society issues. Actually, one should speak of elite- or expert interviews here. According to Baarda and Goede (1996), one could speak of this form of interview when influential, leading and well informed members of an organisation or local community are selected for their specific knowledge with regard to areas of interest to the study. The respondents were selected in cooperation with the Royal Netherlands Embassy. Basically, this was for practical reasons, as the Embassy already had the contacts and ability to make appointments with the respondents. The respondents were selected from the following stakeholder groups:

- 3 respondents from international NGOs in the Netherlands
- 3 respondents from the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Sana'a
- 7 respondents from Yemeni NGOs,
- 8 respondents from international NGOs in Yemen,
- 2 respondents from bilateral donors
- 2 respondents from multilateral organisations.

Prior to the field research in Yemen three interviews were conducted in The Netherlands with representatives from Dutch NGOs. These NGOs are three out of the six NGOs who are part of the co-financing program from the Dutch government. They support partner organisations in developing countries and in this way they are aiming to strengthen civil society there. Important to mention is that these three organisations are not active in Yemen. The aim of these 3 interviews was to explore the topic prior to departure to Yemen.

The majority of the interviews were conducted in the English language. The level of English proficiency of the respondents was fluently, with the exception of a very few respondents who were less proficient in the English language. In six interviews the language was Dutch. First they have been transcribed in Dutch, and immediately afterwards they were translated in English for the data analysis. Only one interview has been conducted with the help of an interpreter, the respondent was speaking Arabic. Fourteen of the respondents had the Yemeni nationality. For more details and personal information of the respondents and their organisation is referred to appendix G.

#### *4.2.2 Document study/desk research*

The second method in this study is document study or desk research. According to Hutjes and Bueren (1996) this is the study of existing written or other communication material. The choice for document study is mainly based on practical reasons. This method makes research possible in areas that are normally not easy accessible for research and besides the data are often easy to collect. Another advantage, according to Hutjes and Bueren, is that less bias will occur due to the non-reactivity of this method. However, this is only true when the documents are being placed in the right context. Moreover, according to Baarda et al. (2001) one should be aware that some information could be revised because it is second hand. Primarily this research has focused on brochures, newspapers, reports and scientific studies that have been conducted for other organisations. The documents are used to support the other findings.

### *4.2.3 Participatory observation*

Participatory observation is referred to when one observes in the field and participates in daily activities (Baarda et al., 2001). It is direct, physical observation. You interpret the gathered information from within the existing field context. The context could clarify the events in the field and make them more understandable. Participatory observations are especially important since this study has been conducted in Yemen. Due to the cultural differences, this method has been of great importance for the interpretation of the data. Dresch (2001) even argues that in field work, the agenda is largely set by one's hosts, the forms of interaction are under their control, and where this is not so, little useful comes of it. One would violate a local sense of context, of what could be properly said by whom. For instance, an interview might not be the proper way to collect data; in particular, problems may occur when one is recording the conversation. In this study participatory observations have been done in various situations. Participation in qat-chew sessions is an example (see box 4.1 and 4.2 for more information). The majority of the Yemen people, from all different classes and strata, participate in this daily social activity. They chew on qat for a couple of hours and discuss and share important topics of their lives. Participation in this activity is an ideal opportunity for researchers to build trust with people, understand the local culture and gather information. Besides the qat-chews, other observations were made. Visits to different governorates, attendance at a UNDP conference, a visit to a slum community and informal meetings with people are all part of this method. In appendix H, more information with respect to the location and time of these events are outlined.

Participatory observation is not the main component of the data collection. The aim of this method is to support the other methods and put the findings in the right context.

#### *Box 4.1 Qat (source: Dresch, 2001)*

Qat is a tree grown solely for its fresh leaves, which are chewed to produce a stimulant effect similar to pseudo-ephedrine. Qat provides the occasion for Yemenis to gather in the afternoon and discuss their political problems. Qat chew gatherings in present-day Yemen can be said to occasion the kind of deliberative practices identified with democratic public spheres. During some qat chews, actual policy



decisions get made. People make use of qat chews to share information about political events and to discuss their significance publicly. Moreover, a qat chew is a time and space to think about recent events and to make sense of their multiple meanings with others.

*Box 4.2 Personal experience with qat*

In order to understand Yemen, one needs to understand qat first. Indeed, the surest way to make friends with a Yemeni is to accept his or her offer of qat. Yemenis have a delight in watching a foreigner chew qat. Every city, town and village in Yemen has a qat market, as the plant cannot be preserved and must be purchased daily for that afternoon's chew. Sometimes these are organized markets, but most often they are spontaneous affairs. I was invited a couple of times to a qat-chew session. The session was held in a *Mafraj*, a special room in a Yemeni house where all the chewers were sitting and hanging on pillows, chewing qat, drinking water and some were smoking *Shisha* (waterpipe). The rest of the afternoon, everyone sticks a few leaves in their mouth, chew on it for a while, and as soon as the fluids of the leaves have been sucked out, the remains of the leaves will be put in one of the cheeks and new leaves will be introduced to chew on. This went on for hours. About 10 to 15 people participated in the qat sessions I attended. Lively discussions and conversations took place during the session. It was a very intimate and relax gathering and the chewers tend to be very open about personal and sensitive subjects. People really talk about all kinds of subjects. Business transactions are completed, marriages are arranged and news is exchanged during the first part of the qat chew, but by the early hours of evening, the chewers resort into their own world and become increasingly introverted and meditative. Qat is also a status symbol, the more expensive qat you chew, the higher your rank; the larger the qat ball in your cheek, the more admiration you may receive. Indeed, I am convinced if one wants to understand Yemen, one should understand qat first.

#### *4.2.4 Roundtable-discussion*

There seem to be some advantages of having a roundtable-discussion as a data collecting method. Baarda and Goede (1995) argued that one is able to speak to different people at the same time, which will save you a lot of effort. Besides, individuals can be inspired by the group to talk about the subject. On the other hand one should be aware that it is possible that people will be more reserved in a group. The roundtable-discussion was held at the end of the field research, when all interviews had been conducted. A lot of information was already collected and partially analysed, therefore the roundtable-discussion had the aim to check the existing data and to elaborate further upon certain points.

Altogether 17 representatives from various organisations participated in the discussion which was held at the Royal Netherlands Embassy. The participants were selected in cooperation with the Embassy. Donors, local NGOs and international NGOs were invited (for the list of participants see appendix J). The roundtable-discussion was facilitated by Irma van Dueren (RNE), and started with two presentations, one by the Civic Democratic Foundation (CDF) and one by Oxfam. The discussion was centred on four topic questions. The proceedings as well as the questions of the discussion are all documented in appendix J.

### **4.3 Data analysis**

A qualitative analysis has been conducted in this research. The process in qualitative research is cyclical and iterative (Baarda et al, 2001). For instance, the phases of data collection and data analysis are often integrated. In many cases, the analysis of the first collected data determines the next steps one need to take in the data collecting process. So there is an alternation of data collection and data analysis. This implies that data collection will not be done exactly the same way over and over again. Also in this study adjustments were made in collecting the data. For instance, in putting a slightly different emphasis on certain topics or elaborate further upon some areas with some respondents.

The data in qualitative research have a nominal or ordinal character. A nominal variable consist of a set of distinctive categories that imply no specific order.

Variables that have two or more categories with an inherent order among them are measured at an ordinal level (Baker, 1999). An important task for the qualitative researcher is to appoint and organize the data (Baarda et al, 2001). The qualitative analysis could be divided in three activities: data reduction, data display and drawing conclusions and verifying them (Miles & Huberman, 1994). These steps have been followed in this study. Data reduction is referred to when one is selecting, focussing, simplifying and transforming the data. The next step is data display, which means that the data is presented in an organized and compressed way. The final phase is drawing conclusions and verifying them. Important here is to seek for consistency, patterns, explanations, relations etc.

The majority of the interviews were recorded with a digital voice recorder, and later transferred to and registered on the computer. From the computer the interviews could be analysed. Just a few respondents preferred not to be recorded. In these cases written notes were taken instead. In the first place, the gathered information from the interviews was selected based on relevance. Secondly, the relevant parts were divided into fragments. Thirdly, these fragments have been labelled in order to arrange and reduce these fragments. Finally, the validity of the labels has been determined to be able to appoint core labels to the text fragments. These text fragments have been placed in a matrix. According to Miles and Huberman (1994) these meta matrices should basically include all relevant data.

During or just after the participatory observations field notes were made. The analysis of these notes followed basically the same procedure as the interviews. The matrix including the field note fragments is taken down in appendix I.

The roundtable-discussion has been registered by means of notes. Important to mention here is that there are two versions with the results from the discussion. One version has been made by the facilitator of the discussion and has been reviewed and agreed upon by all the participants (see appendix J). In addition to this another version has been made about the comments during the discussion. These have been analysed along the same steps as the previous methods. In appendix K the meta matrix is taken down.

## 4.4 Validity and reliability

According to Baker (1999), there will always be some error no matter how carefully the measurement procedures are carried out. Nevertheless, there are ways to reduce measurement error. In this last section the question is addressed to what extent the methodology contributes to the validity and reliability of this study.

### 4.4.1 Validity

Validity deals with the issue of measuring what you think you are measuring. It addresses the crucial relationship between concept and indicator (Baker, 1999).

Validity could be divided in *internal-* and *external* validity. Internal validity is defined as the degree to which the data reflects the existing situation (Baarda et al., 2001). In addition it is important to address the question if the collected data is the necessary data to answer the research question. Internal validity refers to the value of the data. According to Baarda et al., qualitative research is considered to be positive for the internal validity. The whole methodology of qualitative research is designed to represent the existing situation in a very precise way. The existing situation is the point of initiation of the study. In order not to disturb the situation the methodology should be adapted to it. Besides, the researcher tries to understand and interpret the world from the respondent's perspectives. The principles of holism and contextuality, as Baarda et al. put it, are specifically meant to make an attempt to represent reality as it appears. For instance, one reason to choose for participatory observation is that it improves the internal validity.

This study made use of method triangulation. This means that in order to collect the data, different methods are used next to one another (Baarda & Goede, 1995). Because one uses different sources of information and different methods to collect it, it is assumed one will have a better understanding of the situation and ones perception will be more valid.

External validity refers to the generalizability of the findings of one's research to a broader population. Baarda et al. (2001) claim, that it is not necessary that qualitative research should be generalizable.

The aim of this study is not to produce findings that are valid for a broader population, for instance for other developing countries. Although some characteristics of civil society in Yemen could be present in other Arab countries, one should realize that civil society in Yemen has a unique context. However, findings and recommendations with respect to the donor-recipient partnership might be applicable to other countries as well. Since the nature of a donor-recipient relation is more or less the same in every country, it is only the context that is different. Further research is needed to confirm this thought.

#### *4.4.2 Reliability*

Reliability addresses the consistency in measurement. It is defined as “the degree to which a procedure for measuring produces similar outcomes when it is repeated” (Baker, 1999). The use of data registration will improve the reliability. In this study a member check has been conducted when all the data were collected. This implies that the respondents were asked to give feedback to the interviews. In addition, staff from the Embassy was asked to give additional feedback during a presentation of the findings. Furthermore, supervision from the Embassy reviewed the different steps that were taken in the research process. Miles en Huberman (1994) claim that this *member check* and this *peer review* generally improves the reliability of the study. In conclusion, it is important to mention that the triangulation approach improved the reliability, due to the different sources of information and the different methods to collect the information.

## 5 Findings

This chapter presents the findings of this study. It is divided into two parts. The first part is about civil society in Yemen in general. Subsequently the emphasis will be put on partnerships with CSOs. As already noted, the focus here is on partnerships between donors, in particular the Royal Netherlands Embassy and CSOs in Yemen. The findings are derived from the interviews, observations, documents and the roundtable-discussion, and will be presented in accordance with the topic. Important to note is that the findings reflect the perceptions of the relevant stakeholders as mentioned before.

### 5.1 Civil society in Yemen

#### *5.1.1 Concept and role of civil society*

There appears to be ambiguity in Yemen over what constitutes a CSO. The concept of civil society for many Yemeni people refers only to fixed address organisations that operate in real time. In other words, the discourse of civil society has mainly concentrated on NGOs, while it should encompass more, for example the unions, community-based organisations, various associations, clubs etc. In addition, the findings do suggest that most CSOs do not know their role in society. One respondent phrased it as follows:

*“In general, there is no awareness about the concept of civil society in Yemen.”*

This does not only imply for CSOs. Policy makers also lack awareness regarding the role of civil society. Public opinion lacks a clear understanding of what civil society is, how important it could be and what role it could play. Some respondents noted that the concept of civil society in Yemen is subject to different interpretations. As such, there remains a need to clarify the role of civil society in Yemen. According to the majority of the respondents civil society is currently no political voice; it does not yet constitute real opposition. The next statement by a respondent illustrates this:

*“Civil society is no critical voice.”*

There seem to be many quasi CSOs, as a result of government involvement in their administration, or their political nature. Many CSOs are part of the government or they assist the government. Most of them are charity-based organisations and they are basically providing services, what the government is not doing. In short, in general there is a lack of awareness regarding the concept of civil society in Yemen. Furthermore, civil society in Yemen as a whole is regarded as rather weak in terms of being a counterweight to the government.

### *5.1.2 Emergence and evolution*

*“Development of civil society is a process.”*

Most interviewees emphasised that civil society is a new phenomenon. It actually started after unification in 1990, 15 years ago. Indeed, there were forms before 1990, but as one respondent put it, there was a belief that any organisation outside the government was unlikely. After unification, values of democracy started to evolve. There had never been a democracy. So in 1990, alongside democratization thousands of CSOs emerged. According to the majority of the respondents, civil society is still in an early phase and developments and change happen slowly in Yemen. Change happens slowly because of the traditions in society. Some respondents even argue that since the 1994 civil war, civil society has ceased to develop. In fact, developments are stagnating and there is even less democracy than before due to increased control from the government side. The window which had opened on democratic liberties seems to be closing again. On the other hand, some respondents seem to think that although developments are slow, civil society is gradually moving forward. Sometimes two steps forward and one step back. Yemen is still in the process of democratization.

### 5.1.3 General picture

The respondents from the interviews all mention different numbers of registered CSOs, ranging from 3000 to 5000. Many of them claimed that it is impossible to draw up any statistics about civil society. Below a statement from one of the respondents:

*“No database about NGOs in Yemen exists because everything changes rapidly; NGOs live and die within a short time.”*

The findings indicate that a large number of CSOs are registered by name but just a few of them are actually active. The following reasons are given for this inactivity:

- CSOs depend on donor money. Many CSOs did not survive because funding ceased.
- Many CSOs just receive money but are not actually active; creating an association is a mechanism to receive money.
- Some CSOs are created only for projects, as soon as the project is finished, the CSO is finished.
- Many CSOs work only in seasonal activities. For instance during Ramadan, some CSOs distribute food to the poor.

Another respondent said the following:

*“Now there are about 5000 CSOs in Yemen, most of them are not active, but Yemen should have about 10,000 active CSOs!”*

There seem to be many religious groups, such as Koran schools and Islamic charitable organizations. In addition there seem to be many welfare and charity-based organisations, providing primarily short term emergency services. Human rights organisations are still few in number. Most of them are urban based. It depends on the season as to which topics will be addressed by CSOs. For example, close to the elections many CSOs will deal with the elections. One respondent noted that donors often decide which topics are to be addressed.



#### 5.1.4 Main players

The respondents from the interviews were asked to identify the most influential organisations in civil society. The outcome is presented below:

- Al-Saleh Social Foundation for Development (SSFD)
- Charitable Society for Social Welfare (CSSW)
- Yemeni Women's Union (YWU)

The SSFD and CSSW were both considered to be the most influential CSOs in Yemen. Both focus on delivering services, for instance education, health care and relief to the poor. Also the Yemeni Women's Union, though to a lesser extent, was considered to be large and influential. This organisation aims to improve the situation of the Yemeni women. All above mentioned CSOs appear to be well organized and productive over the past years. They seem to be powerful, have a lot of resources, and operate in almost every governorate of Yemen, in urban and rural districts. Many respondents claim that these organisations have strong political connections. The Al-Saleh Social Foundation for Development, as the name suggest, is connected to the president and the ruling party. One respondent noted that the president's children are managing the foundation. CSSW has generally been closely associated with the opposition, the Islah Party and the Islamist movement. According to the respondents, there are also indications that the Yemeni Women's Union is linked to the government. This implies that these main players in civil society in Yemen could be regarded as quasi-CSOs.

#### 5.1.5 Capacity of CSOs

Respondents' answers all indicate that most CSOs have a lack of institutional capacity. This is affirmed by the documents, observations and roundtable-discussion. Institutional capacity here is referred to as organisational, technical and human resource capacity. Many CSOs do not function very well. One respondent said:

*“Many NGOs have a lot of operational problems, no clear mission, no clear strategic plan, no board, no network skills, no advocacy skills etc. “*

Many CSOs do not have a vision for future growth and lack creativity. Other CSOs lack resources, for instance computers, desks, cars etc. Also staff is lacking sufficient organisational knowledge and skills to efficiently manage an organisation. Besides, their also seem to be problems with the internal democratization of CSOs. One respondent noted that:

*“A NGO is often a one man show. “*

Many CSOs depend on one charismatic leader. Some respondents claim that there are some individuals with good ideas, but most of the times they stand on their own. Other CSOs face problems with this hierarchy because there is no real democratic structure within the NGO. Often there is even control by one person within the organisation. In short, most CSOs face institutional problems. They need training and support in order to become professional organisations.

It should be mentioned that there seem to be large differences between CSOs. These differences could be seen in terms of their political nature and old North-South or tribal backgrounds. Government interference seems to create inequality. Some CSOs receive large amounts of funding from the government, others do not. The roundtable-discussion indicated that so much diversity in civil society could be a comparative advantage. CSOs value their identity. They represent different groups in society and therefore are able to cover the whole country, reach grassroots networks and various constituencies. In this way, people seem to affiliate more with CSOs than with the government for instance. Besides, different perspectives on how to tackle problems in Yemen could be an advantage if CSOs have the same goals. During the interviews, however, some respondents claimed that these differences sometimes cause severe problems. For example, cooperation between different parties is sometimes difficult to achieve due to the different backgrounds of the CSOs.

#### *5.1.6 Relationships between CSOs*

The interviews, observations, documents and roundtable-discussion all indicate that networking and partnerships among national CSOs is a problem and therefore hardly

exists. Most respondents emphasised that there is a lot of conflict and friction between the CSOs. Others mentioned competition.

A number of reasons were mentioned why cooperation between CSOs is so difficult:

- Capacity gaps make it hard to have equal parties. It is always the large organisations who dominate the decision making in a partnership.
- Political differences between CSOs
- Distrust among CSOs. Especially because there is lot of corruption within CSOs. Sometimes CSOs are used as vehicles for the private financial or other type of personal gain of directors of these organizations.
- The resources to engage in a partnership and deal with it are very underdeveloped.
- No awareness exists as to the positive effect of cooperation.
- Government does not enable cooperation.
- CSOs fight for international support (donor money), so they see each other as competitors.

Some respondents commented on the culture in Yemen. Traditionally, there have been many forms of partnership and cooperation in Yemen society. Partnership began in the tribal system, family structures and the idea of taking care for each other which is deeply rooted in Islamic belief. However, cooperation never existed in terms of public interest, only for limited interest for instance on village or tribal level. Tribes wanted to be independent from the state. One respondent phrased:

*“The tribal system is not understood very well, it is a social system. The way people act could be explained by the tribal system. Tribes evolved into civic organisations.”*

Yemen has a history of conflict. Cooperation has always been limited. Understanding the cultural and historical context of Yemen seems to be essential if one hopes to explain why cooperation is so difficult for CSOs.

Furthermore it was mentioned that networking works only when it is facilitated by donors. In the past there have been various initiatives to build networks but they failed in the end. Various networks currently exist and some organisations are planning to establish a network/support centre where CSOs can exchange information, see box 5.1.

*Box 5.1 Existing networks and plans to establish network/support centres*

(The directory in box 5.1 is not meant to be exhaustive, rather illustrative.)

**Yemeni Women's Union (YWU):** National NGO aimed at improving the situation of the Yemeni women, economically, socially and culturally. YWU has various branches all over the country. In addition, many small local CSOs are members of the union and form a network.

**Civic Democratic Foundation (CDF):** National NGO aimed at strengthening democratic and civic initiatives in the Yemen society through democratic values, human rights and equal opportunities. CDF has five specialized centres and an extensive volunteer's network.

**Yemeni Development Foundation (YDF):** British registered intermediary support organisation. YDF is now serving a wide range of "less visible" ethnic and refugee community groups, in total 120 organisations. YDF has a support centre with a library, internet room and a meeting room. They provide training, build coalitions and share information and resources. YDF is funded by the EU.

**The National Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (NOD):** National NGO aimed at promoting the work of human rights defenders. NOD is holding weekly democratic forums attended by political parties' leaders and a number of prominent figures as well as donors. Together with the Cultural Bridges Forum they produce the monthly newspaper *Civil Society News*.

**Amideast:** American NGO aimed at strengthening mutual understanding and cooperation between Americans and the peoples of the Middle East and North Africa. Amideast has a grant for NGOs, to develop their capacity. They plan to establish a support center for capacity building for civil society in Yemen.

**Charitable Society for Social Welfare (CSSW):** National society. Focuses its activities on social, educational, health, relief and development issues. The society established a number of branches and committees that reached up to 19 branches and 4 committees in all governorates of the republic. In addition, the Society established more than 200 centres in neighbourhoods and various villages, which operate under the supervision of the branches. This study revealed that CSSW plans to establish a civil society support centre for capacity building.

**Al-Saleh Social Foundation for Development (SSFD):** National foundation. Focuses on educational, health and development issues. Although SSFD was not represented at the roundtable-discussion, participants from other organisations noted that SSFD plans to establish a support/network centre.

### 5.1.7 Legal framework

Most NGOs are now registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs. NGOs used to be registered with different ministries, which was problematic. Still, some NGOs are registered with the Ministry of Culture. The respondents' answers indicate that it is easy to form a NGO. One can become a NGO if one wants to. However, there seem to be some impediments in the law. For instance, the law is designed for charity organisations only, but there are many other different kinds of NGOs in Yemen. Besides, one needs to register, get a permit and renew it every year.

One respondent stated:

*“Sometimes a renewal is not granted. That is a way of controlling the NGOs.”*

Government can stop providing permits if something went wrong that year. What is more, there is a section in the law which sets out codes of conduct with rules and penalties. One respondent noted concerning the rules and penalties:

*“They are threats, constraints in freedom.”*

However, another respondent put it as follows:

*“Freedom is relative; there is a code of conduct like in any country one should respect.”*

Obviously different viewpoints are expressed here. However, the majority of the respondents noted that the legal framework for civil society is not conducive, particularly because there is a lot of corruption. If one needs anything from the government, such as permits, one often needs to pay baksheesh. More details with respect to these informal systems of influence and control are outlined in the next section.

### 5.1.8 Enabling environment

The majority of the respondents indicate that the government as well as some cultural values are often constraints for CSOs to work and expand their activities. This is affirmed by the observations and documents. The respondents seem to express themselves in slightly different ways. Below are some statements from the interviews:

*“There are some ‘red light areas’; areas where the government feels threatened by policy or cooperation between NGOs. “*

*“Do not talk about the president; do not target the big power centre, for the rest you can talk about everything.”*

*“In some areas you cannot do anything. For example, what is written in the Sharia or the Koran regarding women’s issues you cannot change.”*

All respondents agree that working for instance in health care, or building a school is fine. But some areas seem to be very sensitive, for example women’s issues, religion and some political issues. One needs to be very careful in these areas.

However, there is more. The findings even suggest a recent step up of government control regarding everything that happens in civil society. Respondents noted that the government makes their own CSOs in different fields and/or put their own people in CSOs. Other examples are withdrawal of permits of CSOs, harassments and interference with the content of a project, and problems with freedom of expression.

The government is keeping an eye on what is happening in civil society. In general the government seems to be very suspicious. An example of this could be found in that, when local CSOs receive considerable foreign funding they are sometimes charged with spying for other countries.

Some respondents even say that civil society has become an extra arm of the government and that the government has taken over civil society. The observations do suggest that the Sada’a conflict in the North and a growing dissatisfaction among

former South-Yemeni people about the unification could be reasons why the government restricts freedom and is trying to tighten its control.

Informal systems of influence and control exist alongside formal government laws and procedures. The existence of these systems has resulted in decision making based sometimes on personal loyalties and political agendas rather than on formal adherence to rules and regulations. In order to succeed one needs to know the right people. One respondent phrased it as follows:

*“You need to manoeuvre and zigzag to achieve what you want to achieve. Utilise personal contacts and networks.”*

The CSOs with political connections seem to benefit from this situation. They know the right way, the right people and they have the right protection.

In conclusion, it is important to note that most respondents while criticising the role of the government, at the same time argue that Yemen is a more open society than the rest of the region. There is the right to assemble and CSOs are allowed to work. In Yemen there is a better opportunity than the surrounding countries, such as Saudi Arabia and Oman, for civil society to develop.

## **5.2 Partnerships with CSOs in Yemen**

### *5.2.1 Partnership concept*

The findings show that there are many problems with respect to the concept of partnership. Below a statement from one of the respondents:

*“Partnership is an empty concept; partners are never equal, money remains important in the relationship.”*

This sentence seems to capture the essence of the criticism from most of the respondents. An example of this is found in the fact that one donor organisation is no longer using the concept of partnership. Rather they use more neutral terminology

like *counterparts* or *allies*. Most respondents complain that the term partnership often refers only to a financial relationship. Working together on an equal basis seems to be difficult in a donor-recipient relationship, since there are big differences in resources between donors and CSOs in Yemen. Moreover, the partner remains dependent on money and in this way inequality is created. According to the respondents' answers, the reason why donors engage in partnerships is that local partners have the local knowledge. In this way a win-win situation could be created. Furthermore it was mentioned that in Yemen, awareness is needed about the concept of partnership. It seems that most people do not have a clear idea about cooperation and the mutual benefits it may produce.

In section 5.2.7, more comments and suggestions with respect to the concept of partnership will be elaborated upon.

### 5.2.2 Donor role

Regarding the role of the donor in civil society in Yemen, two main points came out of the roundtable-discussion. They are presented below:

- Donor role is limited; they serve only a few CSOs.
- Donor coordination is needed.

These points have been affirmed by the observations and the interviews. Some respondents indicate that only a few elite organisations are receiving all the support from the donors. The reason for this is that only a very few CSOs in Yemen are independent, have English-speaking staff and have a certain degree of organisational capacity. It is in the interest of the donors to find such partners. In short, donors are competing to gain the expertise of a small group of CSOs. As a result, donors outreach is limited in terms of supporting a variety of different CSOs. Another important issue in this context is the language barrier. Many people in Yemen do not speak English and therefore have problems communicating with the donors. Some respondents argued that only the CSOs with English-speaking staff are able to approach the donor and could apply for support. Consequently, just a few CSOs will receive donor support. Later, in section 5.2.7, this point will be elaborated upon.



All donors seem to wish to support civil society, however nobody knows exactly how. Therefore, the respondents recommend that donors should cooperate with each other, coordinate their activities and share their knowledge. Donors are seen as important for the development of civil society. The respondents' answers indicate that without donor support not a lot is happening in civil society. On the other hand, they are convinced that civil society should not rely too much on donor support because that is seen as unsustainable. Currently there is not a lot of support to civil society at all. For more information with respect to initiatives by donors see appendix L.

In addition, there were various comments about the possible negative influence of donors in general. Some respondents argue that donors only do what they want to do. Donors and locals have different values and sometimes donors follow their own ideas instead of listening to the locals. Other respondents claim that the influx of money by donors is encouraging corruption. The improper use of CSOs as vehicles for private financial or for other personal gain is an example. Large amounts of money do encourage some CSOs to play games, and to seduce donors to give more.

The majority of the interviewees indicate that there is trust in donors. However, at the same time it was mentioned that this is probably for self-interest. In the end, the donor is regarded as a moneylender. The Royal Netherlands Embassy is seen as a reliable partner and Yemeni's are ready to interact with it.

### *5.2.3 Partner selection*

Finding a good a partner is of great importance to the donor. The choice of a partner depends to a great extent on the subjects the donors want to address. Every donor seems to have their own preferences of what constitutes a good partner. Therefore every organisation has its own criteria for selecting a partner. However, the following recommendations were suggested by the majority of the respondents and supported by the observations:

- Work with International NGOs (INGOs) and local intermediary/network NGOs

- Work with partners that already have a certain degree of organisational capacity
- Take time for the selection process

The reason for working with INGOs and local intermediary/network organisations is that they could function as mentors. They have more experience and knowledge of the local context, and they have often already built relationships of trust within the local community. In addition there is an efficiency reason. Donors often want to support small grassroots initiatives. However, small organisations are often not able to absorb such amounts of money. Besides, donors do not have enough capacity to engage in many relationships. INGOs and local network NGOs do have the capacity to deal with different grassroots organisations at the same time. Hence, donors could engage in fruitful relationships with them.

Respondents from the interviews noted that in order to succeed in a partnership it is important that the partner already has a certain degree of institutional capacity. This is seen as an important criterion in selecting a partner. Finally, many respondents recommend that one should take time to select a partner. Partner assessments, time for preparation and investigation of your partners and personal visits are seen as important.

#### *5.2.4 Suggestions for possible partners*

The interviews and the observations indicate that it is not easy to find suitable local partners in civil society in Yemen because there are so few of them. The following organisations were frequently mentioned:

- Sisters Arab Forum (SAF)
- Democracy School
- Civic Democratic Foundation (CDF)
- Human Rights and Information Training Centre (HRITC)
- Journalist syndicate
- Hood

- Soul

These organisations were considered to be reliable, independent and having grassroots networks. This list differs from the list of the main players in that these CSOs are not necessarily large and influential. However, the Yemeni Women's Union and CSSW were mentioned a few times as suitable partners. Neither organisation could be regarded as very 'independent' as already discussed in section 5.1.4. Box 5.2 shows more information regarding above-mentioned list of CSOs.

*Box 5.2 Suggestions for possible partners*

**Sisters Arab Forum (SAF):** National CSO. Aims to promote intellectual, cultural, social, political and legal rights with the full participation of women, in order to reach gender equality.

**Democracy School:** National CSO. Aims to create awareness and to develop knowledge of democratic rights and values for children. The Democracy School organizes different activities, for example lectures, workshops, meetings and the establishment of information centres.

**Civic Democratic Foundation (CDF):** National CSO. Aimed at strengthening democratic and civic initiatives in the Yemen society. CDF has five specialized centres.

**Human Rights and Information Training Centre (HRITC):** National CSO. Is a scientific, intellectual organisation, aiming at enhancing human rights and values in Yemen. The centre is specialized in spreading awareness of human rights through different activities such as workshops, forums, keeping a library and archives and publishing periodical bulletins.

**Journalist syndicate:** National association of journalists, editors etc. The syndicate is considered to have a network, lobby and advocacy function.

**Hood:** National organisation for defending rights and freedoms. Most of its activities are marked by defending in court and offering legal aid. In addition Hood is participating in and preparing for local campaigns that focus on specific issues.

**Soul:** National NGO that is dedicated to the advancement of the education, health and welfare conditions of Yemeni women and children.

*5.2.5 Important sectors to address in future*

The interviews and the roundtable discussion indicated that two points are of great importance for the future. The findings suggest that donors should:

- Focus on advocacy and policy building CSOs
- Focus more on the rural areas of Yemen

In particular, issues dealing with human rights, good governance, legal reform and anti-corruption should be addressed more in future. Many respondents argue that only service providing or charity will not be sustainable. Most activities of CSOs in Yemen are now concentrated on service delivery, social welfare and charity. The respondents argue that these activities may improve conditions of the targeted groups in the short term but do not contribute to changing conditions or lead to empowerment. People need to learn how to fight (peacefully) for their rights. Civil society needs to become a counterweight to the state and CSOs need to make their voice heard in government decision making.

In addition, the respondents noted that the main focus is now on Sana'a. Outside Sana'a the conditions seem to be worse. The rural areas are not benefiting from the existing projects. Therefore one should not forget the different governorates.

Other subjects that were mentioned, although to a much lesser extent, were education and women's issues. Education is necessary due to the high percentage of illiterate people in Yemen. Women's issues already seem to be attracting considerable attention. However, more support is needed in order to improve the position of the woman in Yemen society.

#### *5.2.6 Possible interventions*

The following suggestions were made during the interviews and the roundtable-discussion, and were supported by the observations and documents.

First, it is important to emphasise that civil society is indeed in need of support.

Different things have been mentioned by the respondents. The following seem to be the most important needs:

- Building institutional capacity of CSOs
- Networking among CSOs
- Information about civil society
- Awareness of the role of civil society

The majority of the CSOs are lacking institutional capacity. To be more specific, there is a need for technical, organisational and human resource development. CSOs should be taught how to perform. They need donors who strengthen their skills, in particular the organisations in rural areas. Secondly, there is a need for partnerships and cooperation among CSOs, especially in terms of sharing experiences and information. Thirdly, more research should be conducted. The respondents noted that information and analyses of civil society are needed. Besides, a database should be set up with information on civil society which should be updated every year. Lack of databases on civil society represents an obstacle for each organisation in acquiring knowledge and information about the nature of activities, potential, and concerns of other organisations. Availability of data and information has become a fundamental prerequisite for any activity.

The last point that was mentioned is awareness. Awareness is needed about the role of civil society. The majority of the respondents claim that a vision needs to be developed concerning the role of civil society in society.

The following recommendations were given by the respondents with regard to support from the donor side:

- Help to establish independent support centres at national, governorate and village level
- Bring foreign experts to Yemen
- Create an enabling environment
- Stimulate discussion

### Support centres

The findings indicate that donors could help to establish independent support centres at national, governorate and village level. It seems to be the right time to start such an initiative. First, these centres should aim to build the capacity of the local CSO. They could function as meeting points where CSOs can receive guidance, training and technical support. Secondly, the support centres could be places where CSOs can network with each other and share information and experiences. A library,

internet facilities and a meeting room should be included in such a centre. What seems to be important though, is that these centres should be neutral and accessible for everyone. Therefore it is important that various parties should help to establish such a centre.

In addition it was mentioned during the roundtable-discussion and the interviews that a council of CSOs should be established. First, one central vocal point is needed in order to give civil society a voice. The council could serve as a meeting and communication point for the government and the donors. Second this council could have a coordinating function for different activities in civil society. The support centres could be established together with the council or separately and independent from each other.

It is important to consider some issues when starting these initiatives. Some respondents made a few critical remarks. There is a fear that such a coordinating initiative will create too much control and homogeneity. CSOs foster their identity and value diversity in civil society. Second, some respondents seem to be afraid that a kind of monopoly is going to be created. A monopoly where only few CSOs will benefit and the rest will be excluded from all the support. Coverage and access are therefore important issues to consider.

### Foreign experts

Another point that was made by the respondents was that it is necessary to bring foreign experts to Yemen. They should work together with Yemenis on operational and management issues, in order to build the capacity of civil society. Embassies, for example, often have a lot of money but they do not have the capacity for developing civil society. They need partners for implementation. These experts should be independent and work together with Yemen people who know the Yemen culture. This is important because foreign people do not understand the local situation. On the other hand, local experience on its own is not developed enough at present to take on this role. Some respondents suggested the option bringing well experienced Dutch NGOs to Yemen. SNV (Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers) and Novib were mentioned a few times. These organisations have experience in strengthening civil

society in other countries and could therefore help build the capacity of local CSOs in Yemen.

### Enabling environment

An enabling environment is required for the development of civil society, for instance in terms of an enabling legal framework. Lobby efforts from donors could help to create a conducive environment for CSOs to expand their activities. In addition donors are recommended to maintain dialogue with the government regarding the role of civil society. Furthermore, the respondents suggest that the relationships between public, private and civil society sectors should be strengthened. The private sector for instance could be an interesting partner for civil society. It is important that the private sector supports activities of NGOs.

### Stimulate discussion

This point is considered to be very important. Donors should not be the ones who do it all. Initiatives should come from the civil society itself. Rather the Embassy and other donors could stimulate the discussion. By means of conferences, meetings, workshops, roundtable-discussions and even media coverage they could contribute to a discussion and a growing awareness. The Embassy could organize this, play a facilitating role, challenge and support the process.

#### *5.2.7 Successful partnerships*

There is no one best way, no blueprint for building the most successful partnership. However, the findings indicate that different issues are of great importance when building partnerships between donors and CSOs in Yemen.

The majority of the respondents noted that it is hard to have partnerships in a situation where there is such an inequality between the partners. Inequality in terms of institutional capacity, resources and financial means. That is the reason why capacity building is so important. Capacity building appears to be an essential prerequisite for conducting a partnership. Below some statements of the respondents:

*“Important in a partnership is that the partner needs to be made autonomous, not dependent.”*

*“In a partnership it is important to develop your partner to an equal level.”*

Capacity building should be the main reason for the partnership. The goal of any capacity building initiative is then to create equal partners. Another respondent even claimed the following:

*“If you really want to make structural changes in the world, then you need to do endless capacity building, so that organisations are able to become a factor of importance in their society.”*

Organisational development and empowerment seems to be the key for a successful partnership. But there is more. The findings of this study identified two other key factors important to consider. These factors will be discussed below.

#### Bottom-up approach

All respondents indicate that a bottom-up approach is required. The role of donors should be limited and shift to a role of consultation. They should not influence the agenda's of CSOs or impose their ideas on them. Donors should not create new CSOs. Foreign inspired initiatives will not be sustainable in the end. It will disappear when the donors disappear. Besides, there is already too much fragmentation in Yemen society, so one will create more problems by establishing something new that is not embedded institutionally in existing organisations. Rather, initiatives need to come out of civil society itself. Yemeni's need to feel that it is their initiative. Donors should listen to their partners. CSOs know what should be done. They have the knowledge and experience. However, a problem is that not a lot is happening without the donors. Hence, donors could stimulate the discussion and provide funding for institutional capacity of CSOs, so that CSOs can grow its own way. Civil society in Yemen will then be truly strengthened.



### Process-oriented

One respondent noted the following:

*“Partnerships need to be developed, that is a long road. It is a process; building partnerships can be a goal.”*

Many respondents indicate that building a relationship costs time. There are different phases in a partnership. It is a process of exploring; step by step the relationship is evolving and improving. The respondents indicate that it is a time-consuming process and a lot of patience is required. Monitoring, checks and evaluations are considered to be very important in this process. The whole process should be accompanied, from design to implementation and evaluation. Continuous learning is seen as important. One time assistance or only donor money is not enough. Joint work is a partnership.

The following factors were mentioned to a much lesser extent than the points mentioned earlier. Nevertheless, they were also seen as important factors to consider for successful partnerships.

### Awareness of context

Knowledge of the country/context is important. Respondents noted that one should be aware and deal with the Yemen style and culture. Customs and traditions are very important in Yemen. A blue print does not work. Yemen is too context specific. Yemen cannot really be compared with the surrounding countries due to its unique history and culture. Circumstances are totally different in Yemen.

### Transparency

Openness is considered to be very important. Expectations from both sides should be made clear in a partnership. Establish a foundation for trust and respect.

### Awareness concept of partnership

Understanding the concept of partnership is considered to be essential to success. Many people in Yemen do not have a clear idea about cooperation. Awareness is needed about the meaning of the concept of partnerships.

### Objectives and goals should be linked

According to the respondents, partners need to fit in each other's policy and plans. A change in vision or a shift in position could be failure factors in a partnership.

### Capacity donor side

Not only are CSOs in need of institutional capacity, the findings indicate that donors also need to build their capacity in order to be able to cope successfully with partnerships. Engagement means spending time with people. The respondents suggest that in the Embassy there should be one or two people who work continuously with civil society. Another problem is that the staff of donors changes in a couple of years. It will take time to rebuild the interpersonal relationship between the representatives from the different parties.

### Communication

The language barrier seems to be a problem. Miscommunication is likely to occur. Partners often fail to fulfil the agreement with the donor because of the language. Sometimes CSOs are not able to apply for funds because they do not speak the donor language. One respondent did suggest that at the donor side one should have more Arabic speakers. Important to note here is that the Netherlands Embassy does have interpreters and even Arabic speaking staff. However, it is recommended that donors should increase their number of Arabic speakers and/or make better use of the existing Arabic speaking staff. This is in order to avoid unnecessary miscommunication and to make it easier for both parties to interact with one another. Furthermore it was mentioned that face-to-face contact and personal visits are appreciated. In addition, linking and learning meetings were recommended, all in order to improve the communication in a partnership.

### Funding

Commitment is necessary from donor to recipient for long-term funding. Initial funds are given for one year. After one year, if the donor is still satisfied, an agreement could be signed. Withdrawal of funds or a sudden decrease in funding may cause severe problems in the partnership. In addition, respondents indicated that it is very

important that donors match funding to the capacity of the partner. Over-funding or too much support for the partner could be another disruptive factor.

#### Mutual supervision and equal participation in the partnership

Although some respondents noted that it will be difficult to achieve, mutual supervision and equal participation are regarded as important success factors in a partnership.

## 6 Conclusion and recommendations

### 6.1 Answer to the research question

This section is not intended to recapitulate the findings of the previous chapter. Rather, this section will address the central research question of this study, which has been formulated as follows:

*What perceptions do the relevant stakeholders from the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Sana'a have regarding the opportunities that the Embassy has to engage in partnerships with civil society organisations in Yemen and the way in which these partnerships should be handled in order to make them successful?*

The stakeholders indicated that given the nature of civil society in Yemen, it is not easy to identify opportunities for the Embassy. Yemen is a relatively new state, still in a process of formation. Democratic developments are gradual, uneven and slow. The process of state formation and democratization is the timeline and context against which developments of civil society must be viewed. Civil society in Yemen is still in a premature phase. The sector as a whole is regarded as weak in terms of being a counterweight to the state. The majority of CSOs are religious groups, charities and service delivery organisations. Human right organisations are still few in number. Many CSOs are at a very early stage of development organisationally speaking. A lack of institutional capacity, a low level of internal democratisation, weak collaboration linkages among CSOs and government interference and control are all characteristic of CSOs and civil society. All in all, support is needed in order to develop and strengthen civil society in Yemen.

Donors have expressed an interest in working with CSOs in their development programmes. However, most of them do not really know how to support civil society and besides there is a lack of coordination among donors. It appears to be very difficult for donors to find independent, reliable and mature partners in civil society. The absence of proper databases and statistics, the high number of registered inactive CSOs and the many active CSOs which are lacking institutional capacity are

all reasons for this. In addition, government interference with CSOs and the political nature of many CSOs bring with them another level of difficulty for donors to find suitable and independent partners to work with.

According to the stakeholders there are not many opportunities for the Royal Netherlands Embassy to engage in partnerships with CSOs in Yemen. The main reason for this is that a certain degree of organisational capacity at the partners' organisation is required in order to make a partnership successful. Besides, donors should consider the constituencies and coverage of the CSO; in other words, who is benefiting from their support. Except for the major politically linked NGOs, and a very few independent CSOs already mentioned in the previous chapter, there do not seem to be many real potential partners in civil society that meet these requirements. Therefore it is recommended to engage in partnerships with local intermediary CSOs and INGOs, such as CDF, YDF, Amideast, Oxfam, etc. Intermediary CSOs and INGOs provide a valuable link between donors and local CSOs which are not yet fully mature. Firstly, these organisations tend to have sufficient staff to work with local CSOs, especially given the present need for capacity building. Secondly, they have the knowledge and experience in working with local CSOs.

This study has revealed that besides building partnership, there is more that the Dutch Embassy could do to support civil society. It could help to establish support centres and bring foreign experts to Yemen, both in order to build the capacity of local CSOs. Instead of donors competing to gain the expertise of a small pool of CSOs, it would be worthwhile to develop the skills of others. By means of capacity building and management training one will get organisations of full value and suitable partners to work with. In addition, the Embassy could support the government in creating an enabling environment for CSOs, for instance by encouraging adjustments in the legal framework, and stimulating discussion with respect to the role of civil society. Furthermore, there is a need to expand donor support from a primarily urban focus to one which is both urban and rural. Advocacy and human rights issues also need to get more attention in the future.

In short, based on the stakeholders' perceptions, the six most important areas for the Embassy to support civil society are the following:

- Institutional strengthening and capacity building of local CSOs, for instance by means of support centres and/or bringing foreign experts to Yemen
- More support for rural CSOs
- More support for advocacy and human right CSOs
- Dialogue with, and possibly support to the government in creating an appropriate environment for CSOs to expand their activities.
- Partnerships with intermediary NGOs and INGOs
- Donor coordination

According to the stakeholders, there is no absolute blueprint for building the most successful partnership. Although the Embassy is seen as a reliable partner, it seems to be difficult in the donor-recipient relation to build a successful partnership. Inequality between the partners in terms of capacity, financial means and resources appears to be the major bottleneck.

The stakeholders indicated that capacity building is a prerequisite for having a partnership. Capacity building is an essential phase in the partnership building process. CSOs need training and support in order to become more equal partners for the donors. Apart from that, donors need partners with a certain degree of organisational capacity in order to make partnerships a success. Hence, capacity building seems to be mutually beneficial and cost-effective in the long run.

Furthermore the stakeholders revealed that the role of donors should be changed and should shift to a role of consultation. However, the problem is that not a lot is happening without the donors. Data indicated that one time assistance or only donor money is not sufficient. The whole process should be accompanied, from design to implementation. Partnerships need to be developed and that seems to be a long way to go. The role of the donor is very important in this process. The Embassy should not impose ideas or agendas on CSOs in a partnership. Rather, they should support CSOs according to their needs as they themselves define them. Donors could stimulate the process and provide funding for institutional capacity of CSOs so that CSOs themselves can develop in their own way. Partners need to be made

autonomous, not dependent. In this way the Embassy would really strengthen civil society in Yemen, and in the end, that is what development cooperation is all about.

## 6.2 Literature reflection

This section will consider the literature mentioned before and its relation to the empirical findings. It has been difficult to find appropriate academic literature for this study. Little empirical research has been conducted so far on how donors should implement partnerships with CSOs in practice, and the challenges they face in developing and managing them. What is more, literature dealing with civil society in the Arab region is scarce. Due to the explorative and qualitative nature of this study, the theoretical part has been dealt with caution in order to be able to enter the field with an open attitude. The literature, therefore, could best be regarded as a background and context rather than a rigid framework for analysis. Nevertheless, there appear to be some interesting similarities and differences between the empirical findings and the literature, worth noting here.

The six general determinants of Oliver (1990) have been used as a basis for this study in order to explain why inter-organisational relations are established. Literature on partnership as well as partnership policy suggests that the terminology of partnership, as a specific form of cooperation is very much related to concepts such as equality, harmony, synergy and mutual benefits. Hence, the concept of partnership seems to correspond to the *reciprocity* determinant of Oliver.

According to Hudock (1999), however, there appears to be a gap between the partnership theory and the day to day practice. The term partnership reflects an idealistic notion of what interaction between donors and CSOs should be like, rather than providing an accurate description of what they are actually like. Very few donor-recipient relations are based on the types of equal exchange which are inherent to any partnership (Baaz, 2005; Hudock, 1999; Brehm, 2001; Hulme & Edwards, 1997).

The imbalance in the relationship is created by the donors who tend to have resources which CSOs need for development activities. Referring to the determinants of Oliver (1990) again, other motivations could be identified as to why donors and

CSOs engage in relations with each other. For instance, the *necessity* determinant might explain why CSOs engage in relations with donors; they simply need resources. In that case, the terminology of partnership is often abused and applied inappropriately. This chain of reasoning is affirmed by the findings of this study. It seems to be very difficult to establish a partnership between the Embassy and CSOs, based on reciprocity and equality. Nevertheless, one should recognise that the focus on partnerships is inevitably connected with a paradigm shift in the development sector. It is a new definition of the role of development organisations. There also seems to be a moral dimension in partnership. The policy of partnerships could be an impetus for changing the relation between the donor and recipient. A gradual process could change the attitudes and practises in the development sector.

At this point the literature with respect to the dynamic nature of partnerships becomes relevant. Partnerships should not be regarded as static entities. Rather they should be viewed as dynamic relationships, evolving over time and having different stages. Building a partnership is a process, a step by step development of a relationship. This study has revealed that capacity building is an essential step in this process. Disparities in capacity, resources and power structures among members of partnerships make them unparallel, and therefore are serious threats to its success. This issue has already been addressed by certain social scientists (Mattesich & Monsey, 1992; Brehm, 2001; UNDESA, 2000).

The findings of the present study indicate that capacity building is a means to an end. Helping develop the possibilities of your partner is necessary to avoid a capacity mismatch and make the partnership successful. Blair (1996) asserts that donor work is for the most part restricted to building and strengthening CSOs and then, with a little guidance, setting them on their own course. Indeed, the findings suggest that donors should support CSOs according to their needs and aspirations as they themselves define them and accordingly setting them on their own course. However, this study also showed that this will be a long process. The contradiction appears to be that donor support is needed so as to help make CSOs mature and independent. Different phases therefore should be recognised in this process. The first phases should be marked by intensive capacity building. As a result, in later stages both



partners will be able to focus on their comparative advantage, and work synergistically within networks and partnerships to achieve common goals.

There are a few points that need to be discussed with respect to the theory of civil society. The theoretical part of this study has already revealed that the concept of civil society has been understood very differently across time periods, places, theoretical perspectives and political persuasions (Edwards, 2004; Scholte, 1999; Schwedler et al., 1995; UNDP, 2000/2001). Also in Yemen there seems to be ambiguity over what constitutes civil society. The findings indicate that the concept of civil society in Yemen is subject to different interpretations.

In order to be able to have a clear picture of civil society in Yemen and to avoid confusion caused by vague concepts, one could examine the *role* of civil society in Yemen instead of its *meaning*. The distinction made by Edwards (2004) between economic, social and political roles, as mentioned in chapter 3, could very well serve the purpose of examining the role of civil society in Yemen. This study showed that civil society in Yemen has not yet fully developed its political role. In other words, civil society can not be regarded as a counterweight to the state. CSOs in Yemen do not make their voices heard in government decision making, and are not yet able to protect and promote civil and political rights. In addition, one could argue that its social role is important. For instance the large number of religious groups seems to have a great influence in the society. However, many of the social skills, social norms and social capital are facilitated by the family and/or the tribe, which have a very important role in Yemen society. The tribe is not considered to be a CSO but may exercise some of its functional roles. In Yemen CSOs seem to have an economic function as well. They provide services where state and markets are weak. This could be indicated by the great number of service delivery type of CSOs and the relatively few advocacy CSOs.

Another important point that must be mentioned is that the ideal triangle among government, private sector and civil society, as presented in figure 3.1, does not reflect the situation in Yemen. The graph suggests that all sectors are more or less independent from each other and further, that they keep each other in equilibrium. This does not seem to be the case in Yemen. The government is the most influential

sector and it has control over the other sectors. Besides, the lines between the sectors could be very thin in practice.

In conclusion it is worth noting that the nature of civil society in Yemen shows parallels to the general situation of civil society in other Arab states. Poor coordination among CSOs, lack of unity, many religious groups and government interferences are all characteristics of civil society in the Arab world in general and also in Yemen in particular. However, CSOs in Yemen tend to have more freedom to expand their activities than CSOs in many other Arab states and so there might be more opportunities for civil society to develop in Yemen.

### **6.3 Limitations of the study**

In order to understand the value of this study, its limitations need to be considered. They will be discussed below.

- This study might contain biases due to cultural and language differences between Yemen and the Netherlands. In addition, one should realise that during the data collection and data analysis, information might have gone lost due to problems of communication and interpretation. However, the research design of this study is likely to decrease any possible biases, as already argued in chapter four.
- One could wonder to what extent the findings of this study can be generalized to other settings and subjects. This limitation is common to most empirical studies and can only be improved by replication research in different settings and time periods. The aim of this study is to explore the subject and to give recommendations to the Embassy. It was not meant to generalize findings to other settings. Civil society in other developing countries, particularly in other Arab states, might have some similar characteristics to civil society in Yemen. However, it is important to recognise the unique nature of civil society in Yemen. Furthermore, embassies in other countries might face the same problems and difficulties with respect to the donor-recipient relation. Further research is needed to confirm this.

- Three months is considered to be very short if one needs to understand specific characteristics of a country as a foreigner. On the other hand, it could be advantageous to conduct research as an outsider because a foreigner might be able to see things that locals do not.
- For practical reasons it was not very easy to do research without the support of the Embassy. Personal contacts and information from the Embassy were the points of initiation of this study. This might have biased the sample of respondents and/or the access and choices for information sources.
- The fact that the respondents knew that this study was carried out with the backing of the Embassy can be considered as a limitation. Some respondents could have given socially desirable answers because they hoped to receive donor money from the Embassy.

#### **6.4 Recommendations for further research**

The subject of partnerships between donors and CSOs in Yemen has not yet been studied extensively. Therefore it could be very interesting to continue studying this particular topic further. The findings of this study have opened new avenues for further research. A number of possible suggestions for further research will be discussed below.

- One recommendation is to study other cases of donor-CSO partnerships in other countries and different settings. In this way a comparison can be made with the findings of this study. Replication and extensions of this study are likely to improve the external validity of its findings.
- This study has revealed the importance of the tribal system in Yemen society. The tribe is not considered as being part of civil society but may exercise some of its functional roles as mentioned before. Future research could focus on the tribal system and its relation and impact on civil society in Yemen. In addition, implications could be investigated for donor relations and support to

civil society. The same seems to be true for the social system of solidarity, rooted in the Islamic belief. Elaboration on these topics could provide donors with valuable insights in the dynamics of civil society in Yemen. And it might help in designing appropriate support.

- Another major topic for future research could be to investigate the relations between private and civil society sectors and possibilities for donors to strengthen those relations. This might be interesting since a considerable part of the funding of charity organisations in civil society comes from the private sector.
- This study has focused on civil society in general, and on NGOs in particular. The findings of the study suggest that the subject being considered, civil society as a whole, is extremely broad. Further research should focus in more depth on other segments of civil society, for instance the unions, religious groups, community based organisations, and syndicates.
- The data indicated that in order to be successful in partnerships one should be aware and able to deal with the life style and culture in Yemen. An interesting approach for future research would be to examine the cultural differences that the Embassy faces in partnerships with and support to CSOs in Yemen. Given the cultural and historical context of Yemen it might be possible that local CSOs have different perceptions in comparison to western donors regarding cooperation and partnerships.

In conclusion, this study has revealed that in order to better understand civil society in Yemen in general more information and research is needed. Availability of data and information is a fundamental prerequisite for any activity, both for donors and CSOs.

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## List of abbreviations

<b>CDF</b>	<b>Civic Democratic Foundations</b>
<b>CSO</b>	<b>Civil society organisation</b>
<b>CSSW</b>	<b>Charitable Society for Social Welfare</b>
<b>GPC</b>	<b>General People’s Congress</b>
<b>HRITC</b>	<b>Human Rights and Information Training Centre</b>
<b>IMF</b>	<b>International Monetary Fund</b>
<b>INGO</b>	<b>International Non-governmental organisation</b>
<b>IOR</b>	<b>Inter-organisational relation</b>
<b>LDC</b>	<b>Least Developed Country</b>
<b>MDG</b>	<b>Millennium Development Goal</b>
<b>NGO</b>	<b>Non-governmental organisation</b>
<b>PDRY</b>	<b>People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen</b>
<b>RNE</b>	<b>Royal Netherlands Embassy</b>
<b>SAF</b>	<b>Sisters Arab Forum</b>
<b>SNF</b>	<b>Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers</b>
<b>SSFD</b>	<b>Al-Saleh Social Foundations for Development</b>
<b>UNDP</b>	<b>United Nations Development Programme</b>
<b>YAR</b>	<b>Yemen Arab Republic</b>
<b>YDF</b>	<b>Yemeni Development Foundation</b>
<b>YWU</b>	<b>Yemeni Women Union</b>

## Appendix A

### Main policy priorities (source: <http://www.minbuza.nl>)

#### *Concentration*

The Netherlands will continue to allocate 0.8% of its Gross National Product (GNP) to development cooperation. It will concentrate on the following themes: education (15% of the development budget), environment and water (0.1% of GNP), AIDS prevention and reproductive health care. Given the need for better utilisation of capacity, manpower and resources, the number of bilateral partner countries will be reduced from 49 to 36. The number of sectors in each country will be limited to two or three at most. Quality and effectiveness will be the watchwords.

#### *Results-driven*

Results and accountability will be the forces behind Dutch development cooperation. From January 2004, a new appraisal system and assessment framework will be introduced for country and sector policies. The Netherlands will specify in advance how much it intends to spend on achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for education, environment and water, AIDS prevention and reproductive health care by 2015. In conjunction with the Ministries of Housing, Spatial Planning & the Environment and Agriculture, Nature & Food Quality, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will examine how progress made with sustainable development both at home and abroad can best be reported on.

#### *Partnership*

Partnerships will be sought with citizens, private enterprises, knowledge and research institutes, civil society organisations and government authorities. Substance and harmonisation are the key words, with respect for each partner's responsibilities and close monitoring of quality, effectiveness, efficiency and accountability. More scholarships, exchanges and placements will encourage young people to become more involved in development cooperation. New initiatives will be developed to promote cooperation with the private sector, with a view to public-private partnerships.

#### *Bilateral policy*

The existing country lists will be merged to create a single list of 36 partner countries with which the Netherlands will enter into long-term bilateral relationships. In these countries, the private sector and civil society organisations will be more closely involved in sectoral policy, which will continue to be the principle on which bilateral cooperation is organised within partner countries' own poverty reduction strategies. The aim is to work on a programme basis, where possible through budget support. Promotion of good governance and respect for human rights, with capacity development and institution building, apply in all partner countries. In as many partner countries as possible, we will contribute to a better business and investment climate by fighting corruption, strengthening the financial sector and trade capacity and improving the macroeconomic position.

#### *Regional policy*

At least 50% of the Netherlands' bilateral development budget will be used to reduce

poverty and promote economic growth in Africa. Environmental and water programmes will be stepped up. The government has opted for a regional approach in the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region, focusing on conflict management, security building and peace brokering. African initiatives for peace and development such as NEPAD, ECOWAS, IGAD and SADC will be given active support. In the Balkans, the Netherlands will focus on sustainable stability and economic development, in partnership with the region's leading donors and the European Union.

#### *Integrated policy*

An integrated policy combining diplomacy, political dialogue and pressure, security policy, trade, market access and development cooperation will be pursued, both in The Hague and at the embassies.

#### *Stability Fund*

A Stability Fund will be established and managed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Development Cooperation. This will enable rapid decisions on releasing money for activities to promote peace, security and development in developing countries.

#### *Coherence*

The government will take steps to maintain the Netherlands' leading position in the international development policy coherence index and to enhance its performance. The government will work to improve coherence in its own policies, for which all the ministries are responsible, and in European and international development policies. The post-Cancún agenda calls for a stronger multilateral trade and investment system, which takes account of disparities in levels of development between developing countries. The Netherlands will actively pursue this objective, and will support developing countries and private enterprises in operating competitively on regional and international markets.

#### *AIDS/Reproductive health*

The Netherlands will work with new partners, among them the business sector and the United States, to fight AIDS effectively. Political commitment will be strengthened at all levels and the use of existing resources for treatment and prevention will be improved. The Netherlands will do more to alleviate the social consequences of AIDS, such as the loss of capacity in key sectors like agriculture, health care and education, and to provide care for AIDS orphans. Measures to improve reproductive health will be stepped up without neglecting primary health care services, which remain essential. Support will be given to partner countries with reproductive health policies based on the principles agreed at the Cairo Conference on Population and Development. That means providing information on HIV/AIDS and having readily available contraceptives.

#### *Multilateral organisations*

The Netherlands will maintain its position as a key donor to those UN agencies and international financial institutions that are seen to be making a tangible contribution to its policy goals (focus on the MDGs, quality and effectiveness and results). It will also urge the European Commission to improve efficiency and effectiveness, and to work towards closer cooperation and harmonisation. In 2004, the House of

Representatives will be sent a policy paper discussing the quality and relevance of these organisations in more depth.

## Appendix B

Number of registered CSOs according to registry and type (source: Schellard & Hoenderdos, 2003).

<b>TOTAL NO. OF REGISTERED ORGANISATIONS</b>	<b>4,126</b>
<b>International NGOs</b>	<b>37</b>
<b><i>Ministry of Planning and Development</i></b>	<b>37</b>
Social	30
Water/Sanitation	2
Human Rights/Democracy	3
Other	2
<b>Yemeni registered CSO's</b>	<b>4,089</b>
<b><i>Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor*</i></b>	<b>3,969</b>
<b>Cooperatives and associations</b>	<b>1,102</b>
<b><i>Cooperative Unions</i></b>	<b>18</b>
<b><i>Cooperatives</i></b>	<b>1,084</b>
General	6
Farming	601
Consumer	87
Housing	229
Fisheries	128
Handicrafts	33
<b>Other organizations</b>	<b>2,867</b>
<b><i>Unions (of organizations)</i></b>	<b>137</b>
<b><i>Syndicates</i></b>	<b>71</b>
<b><i>Clubs</i></b>	<b>219</b>
<b><i>Forums</i></b>	<b>5</b>
<b><i>Associations/Foundations</i></b>	<b>2,435</b>
Charity	1,835
Social	410
Civil institutions	32
Cultural	43
Professional Org's	44
Scientific	47
Friendship	19
Fraternity	5
<b><i>Ministry of Culture**</i></b>	<b>98</b>
<b><i>Associations/Foundations</i></b>	
Cultural	59
Democracy / Human Rights	19
Religious	10
Scientific	9
Other	1
<b><i>Ministry of Legal Affairs</i></b>	<b>22</b>
<b><i>Political Parties</i></b>	<b>22</b>

\* as of Dec.31st, 2002

\*\* as of March, 2001



## Appendix C

International non-government organisations in Yemen (source: UNDP, 2000/2001)

Nr.	Organisation	Nationality	Fields of Activity	Started
1	Oxfam	British	Handicaps, Health Care, Education	1983
2	Care International	Swedish	Social Care, Handicaps, Refugees	1992
3	Triangle	French	Water and Sanitation, Refugees	1998
4	Mercy International	Global-Swiss	Relief, Humanitarian services	1998
5	Adra	American	Relief, Water supplies, Community groups, Reunification mines, Accidents handicaps	1995
6	Dia	French	Developing Youth abilities and skills	1998
7	Handicap International	Belgium	Public Health, Handicaps	1995
8	Movi Mondo-Molise	Italian	Improving Economic and Social Life Standards	1998
9	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung	German	Social and political awareness	1999
10	Makkah Al-Mukarrama Charity	Saudi	Constructing educational centres and orphanages	1999
11	SOS	Global-Cairo	Building Orphan Villages	1997
12	Benevolence International Foundation	Global-Khartoum	Health, Social and charity affairs	1995
13	International Cooperation for Development (ICD)	British	Primary Health Care	1975
14	Baptist Development and Relief	American	Health	1964
15	Radda Barnen Swedish Save the Children	Swedish	Child rights and protection	1996
16	The emirates Joint Charity Committee	Emirates	Health, Education and Social Affairs	1996
17	Medicins Sans Frontieres	French	Health care, Environment development, Training and rehabilitation	1987
18	Partner Aid International	German, Swedish	Primary Health care and environment development	1998
19	World Wide Service	British	Health Services, women development and caring for the poor	1972
20	Marie Stopes International	British	Maternal, Childhood and Family planning	1998
21	Coopera Zione Italiane	Italian	Health, Social development	1998

	Nord Sud			
22	World Assembly od Muslim Youth	Global-Riyadh	Education, Building and renovating mosques	1999
23	Al-Basar International Foundation	Global-Riyadh	Public health, Ophthalmology	1998
24	Dar Al-Ber	Emirates	Public health, education and social affairs	1999
25	The Swedish Free Mission	Swedish	Training, skill acquisition and home economics	1995
26	Millennium	American	Relief, Development services	1999
27	International Community Services	American	Improving cultural and occupational levels of the Yemeni Society	1999
28	Coopi (Una)	Italian	Public Health	2000
29	Africa70 (Una)	Italian	Water Projects	2000
30	Bird Life International	Global-London	Environment and Bird protection	2000
31	International Council for Muslim Women Scholars	Global-Khartoum	Advancing cultural and intellectual levels of Muslim women	2000
32	Yemeni Development Foundation	British	Supporting deprived communities in education, training and charitable services	2000
33	Glara	German	Public Health	2000
34	Mine Clearance Planning Agency	Afghani	Surveying Affected communities of mines and staff training	2000
35	Ricecae Cooperazione	Italian	Research and Studies	2001
36	Al-Haramain Islamic Foundation	Saudi	Caring for orphans	2001
37	Mercy Corps	American	Relief and development	2001

## Appendix D

Geographical distribution of CSOs (source: UNDP, 2000/2001)

Governorate	Nr. of Organisations	Population	Percentage per 10,000
Secretariat + Sana'a	596	2,840,297	2.1
Aden	325	503,794	6.5
Taiz	326	2,295,990	1.4
Hodeidah	183	1,942,251	0.9
Lahaj	138	650,044	2.1
Ibb	84	1,353,667	0.6
Abyan	132	414,000	3.2
Dhamar	83	1,199,998	0.7
Shabwah	91	454,786	2.0
Hajjah	28	1,361,083	0.2
Al-Baida	11	562,851	0.2
Hadramout	148	873,119	1.7
Sadah	31	596,334	0.5
Al-Mahweet	45	451,625	1.0
Al-Maharah	44	69,259	6.4
Marib	23	324,940	0.7
Al-Jawf	4	696,727	0.1
Amran	29	955,977	0.3
Al-Dhali'	21	403,488	0.5
Not specified	444	...	...
Total	2,786	18,261,000	1.5

## Appendix E

Distribution of CSOs according to governorate (source: UNDP, 2000/2001)

Activities	Governorate																			Total	
	Sana'a	Aden	Taiz	Al-Hudeida	Hardamout	Abyan	Lahej	Shabwah	Al-Mahra	Dhamar	Hajjah	Albaida	Al-Mahweet	Saadah	Mareh	Ajowf	Ibb	Amran	Al-Dhalee		Not stated
<b>Local community development</b>	303	69	221	95	62	89	90	61	33	41	13	9	27	19	12	2	55	19	20	2	1242
General care and development	3	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Occupational associations	26	19	9	8	8	2	1	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	1	-	80
Labor and Trade Unions	21	8	7	7	5	7	3	-	-	4	-	1	3	1	3	-	4	1	-	-	75
Family and women development	26	14	10	6	7	2	8	1	1	5	2	-	2	1	-	-	8	1	-	2	96
Psychological health	10	4	8	6	2	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35
Historic sites and environmental protection	11	3	3	-	6	1	1	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	31
Yemeni and foreign friendship societies	17	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	20
Caring for those with special needs	7	5	5	5	4	2	2	-	-	4	1	-	-	-	1	-	4	3	-	-	43
Culture	73	6	7	1	7	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	1	1	-	2	-	-	1	102
Student societies and unions	3	4	-	1	-	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	-	-	2	20
Information, sports and sport clubs	16	7	10	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	238	272
Arts societies (Art/Cinema)	5	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
Child rights and education	6	3	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
Teaching the holy Quran	1	1	-	4	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
Defending human rights and liberties	12	3	3	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20
Education and training	1	2	3	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
Cooperatives	44	171	37	43	37	27	31	21	9	23	9	-	9	8	3	2	6	4	-	177	661
Assisting returning emigrants	2	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Arab students clubs and communities	3	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
Housing	5	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	9
Special services	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Political parties	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>596</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>2786</b>

## Appendix F

### Topic list

#### Civil society in Yemen

##### **Concept/role of civil society:**

This item deals with the meaning of the concept of civil society for Yemeni people. Besides, the role of civil society in Yemen society has been examined.

##### **Emergence and evolution:**

Questions and comments with respect to change over time, phases, dynamics and history of civil society fit in this category.

##### **General picture:**

This item deals with the characteristics of CSOs and fields where they are working in. Besides, comments with regard to any statistics belong to this topic.

##### **Main players:**

The respondents were asked to identify the main players in civil society. Main players are referred to as CSOs which are having considerable influence, resources/capacity and coverage and networks all over the country.

##### **Capacity of CSOs:**

This item deals with the institutional capacity of CSOs. Institutional capacity is defined as the organisational, technical and human resource capacity of an organisation.

##### **Relationships between CSOs:**

Questions and comments with respect to networking, cooperation or competition among local CSOs fit in this category.

##### **Legal framework:**

This item is about the legal framework for CSOs. The emphasis is put on the personal experiences and opinions of the respondents rather than the technical aspects of the law.

##### **Enabling environment:**

This topic addresses the question whether there is an enabling environment for CSOs to expand their activities. In addition, all comments with regard to the political, social and cultural environment of CSOs do belong to this item.

#### Partnerships with CSOs in Yemen

##### **Partnership concept:**

Questions and comments with respect to the partnership approach belong to this item. The motivations of partnering and the practical- as well as the theoretical problems of this form of cooperation have been examined.

##### **Donor role:**

This topic addresses the role of the donor in Yemen. Donor performance, trust in donors and donor influence in general have been examined.

##### **Partner selection:**

Suggestions for donors in the partner selection process belong to this item.

##### **Suggestions for possible partners:**

Names of organisations and groups who are considered to be 'good' partners are mentioned in this category. 'Good' is defined as reliable, independent and having grass roots networks in the view of the respondents.

**Important sectors to address in future:**

This item deals with the fields, issues, sectors and geographical areas that need to be addressed more in future by CSOs and donors.

**Possible interventions:**

This topic deals with the needs of civil society as well as suggestions for possible interventions by donors to support civil society.

**Successful partnerships:**

Questions and comments with respect to success and failure in a partnership belong to this item.

## Appendix G

### List of respondents who have been interviewed:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Date</b>
<i>Marjolein Brouwer</i>	<i>Policy advisor R&amp;D</i>	<i>Novib</i>	<i>28-04-2005</i>
<i>Ron van Huizen</i>	<i>Director</i>	<i>Terres des Hommes</i>	<i>28-04-2005</i>
<i>Marjolijn Wilmink</i>	<i>Policy advisor</i>	<i>Cordaid</i>	<i>28-04-2005</i>
<i>Irma van Dueren</i>	<i>First secretary gender/woman development</i>	<i>Royal Netherlands Embassy</i>	<i>18-05-2005</i>
<i>Janet Alberda</i>	<i>First secretary political, press and cultural affairs</i>	<i>Royal Netherlands Embassy</i>	<i>23-05-2005</i>
<i>Saad Khalis</i>	<i>Interpreter</i>	<i>Royal Netherlands Embassy</i>	<i>31-05-2005</i>
<i>Dominic O'Neill</i>	<i>Country representative</i>	<i>DFID</i>	<i>12-06-2005</i>
<i>Mary Horvers</i>	<i>Senior project monitor</i>	<i>European Commission</i>	<i>07-06-2005</i>
<i>Abdul Saif</i>	<i>Director</i>	<i>UNDP</i>	<i>30-05-2005</i>
<i>Jean Lambert</i>	<i>Director</i>	<i>CEFAS</i>	<i>07-06-2005</i>
<i>Kaid Hussein</i>	<i>Project manager</i>	<i>CARE</i>	<i>28-05-2005</i>
<i>Hatem Bamehriz</i>	<i>Deputy director</i>	<i>National Democratic Institute</i>	<i>25-05-2005</i>
<i>Ayman Omer Ali</i>	<i>Project Manager</i>	<i>Oxfam</i>	<i>23-05-2005</i>
<i>Sabrina Faber</i>	<i>Country director</i>	<i>Amideast</i>	<i>07-05-2005</i>
<i>Ilham Fhadel</i>	<i>Policy advisor</i>	<i>Amideast</i>	<i>07-05-2005</i>
<i>Sabine Wenz</i>	<i>Principal advisor</i>	<i>GTZ</i>	<i>30-05-2005</i>
<i>Bahria Shamsheer</i>	<i>Policy advisor</i>	<i>GTZ</i>	<i>30-05-2005</i>
<i>Mageed Ali Ghanem</i>	<i>Head of board of trustees</i>	<i>Al Ghanem Organisation for Civil Society Development</i>	<i>01-06-2005</i>
<i>Isam al Hussein</i>	<i>International relations</i>	<i>CSSW</i>	<i>31-05-2005</i>
<i>Jamal Adeemy</i>	<i>Director</i>	<i>Forum for Civil Society</i>	<i>24-05-2005</i>
<i>Majid Al-Fahed</i>	<i>Executive director</i>	<i>Civic Democratic Foundation</i>	<i>03-05-2005</i>
<i>Mohammad Al-Masyabi</i>	<i>Founder and chief executive</i>	<i>Yemeni Development Foundation</i>	<i>03-05-2005</i>
<i>Gamal Al-Shami</i>	<i>Director</i>	<i>Democracy school</i>	<i>12-06-2005</i>
<i>Belgis ali Al-Lahbi</i>	<i>Programme and activated manager</i>	<i>Democracy school</i>	<i>12-06-2005</i>
<i>Jamal al-Awadhi</i>	<i>Secretary general and Chairman</i>	<i>Cultural Bridges Foundation/NOD</i>	<i>02-05-2005</i>

## Appendix H

### Participatory observations:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Attendance at the conference on the role of civil society in promoting the MDGs. Organized by UNDP.</b>	<b>Sana'a</b>	<b>29-5-2005</b>
<b>Visit slum community and qat-chew with community leaders. Project supported by CARE.</b>	<b>Bani Hushaish, Sana'a</b>	<b>30-5-2005</b>
<b>Qat-chew session</b>	<b>Mafraj Chris Eden, Sana'a</b>	<b>10-6-2005</b>
<b>Qat-chew session</b>	<b>Mafraj Kyle Newling, Sana'a</b>	<b>16-6-2005</b>
<b>Visit projects Coopi</b>	<b>Aden</b>	<b>12-7-2005</b>



# Appendix I

## Meta matrix participatory observations

Topic/Activity	Visit slum community	Conference UNDP	Qat-session 1	Qat-session 2	Visit projects CoopI
<i>Concept/role of civil society</i>	-	<i>Problem with concept NGO.</i>	<i>Concept of CS means urban society, difficult to translate.</i>	-	-
<i>Emergence and evolution</i>	-	-	<i>From 1990 CS started and there was hope, from 1994 civil war, democracy was questioned, government started to control CS.</i>	<i>Very slow improvements in CS.</i>	<i>Change works slow in Yemen. If you want to achieve something you have to be patient.</i>
<i>General picture</i>	-	-	<i>Lot of NGOs are not active or they only try to get money from donors.</i>	-	-
<i>Main players</i>	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Capacity of CSOs</i>	-	<i>Some NGOs have a lack of operational skills and need technical assistance.</i>	<i>NGOs are very, very weak, there capacity is zero.</i>	<i>Lack of capacity at NGOs.</i>	-
<i>Relationships among CSOs</i>	-	<i>There is a lot of competition between the NGOs, also for donor money. Lack of communication at NGOs</i>	-	-	-
<i>Legal framework</i>	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Enabling environment</i>	-	-	<i>Government controls civil society Problem with freedom of expression. Sada'a conflict reason why government restricts freedom, the state is getting weaker and weaker, that is why the government is now so oppressive. Also in the south of Yemen people are not satisfied and that is why the government wants to tighten their control. There are opportunities in</i>	<i>Government controls CS.</i>	<i>North-south relations important. South doesn't want to be united with the north, underground opposition existing. Most power privileges are divided among the north.</i>

			<i>the future because the state is weak.</i>		
<b>Partnership concept</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Donor role</b>	-	<i>NGOs should stop depending on the donors. Donors talk a lot but the NGOs do not see a lot about it. Ministry of planning plays a role between donors and NGOs. Only rely on the donors is not sustainable. Without int. donors there is no pressure on the government. It is impossible to support all 4000 NGOs.</i>	-	<i>Donors should cooperate with each other and also share their knowledge.</i>	<i>Also corruption at international NGOs</i>
<b>Partner selection</b>	<i>Intermediary org. better than direct help to the communities. Intm. They now the people and they already build trust. They stand more close to the people. They know how things work there.</i>	-	<i>There are just a few good NGOs.</i>	<i>There are not a lot of good partners to cooperate with so...develop your partners!</i>	<i>INGOs have more knowledge about local circumstances .</i>
<b>Suggestions for possible partners</b>	-	-	<i>Journalists syndicate some very good people.</i>	-	-
<b>Important sectors to address in future</b>	-	-	-	<i>Education is needed, a lot of illiteracy now among the people. Donors should help with education.</i>	-
<b>Possible interventions</b>	-	<i>Need of a database for information. Coordination and cooperation is important among CSOs. CSOs sometimes work alone; they should work together</i>	<i>Research or support centre is needed, to build capacity of NGOs.</i>	<i>Donors should cooperate with government to strengthen CS. Experts are needed, foreign experts; they should cooperate with Yemen people who know the Yemen culture. Continuously</i>	-

		<p>and have a general goal. There are needs, technical assistance. Also partnerships and cooperation between CSOs, the government and donors and among NGOs. Also the private sector could cooperate with the CS. Joint action everywhere is important.</p>		<p>there should be research conducted by donors about CS. Continuously learning. More research is needed.</p>	
<p><b>Successful partnerships</b></p>	<p>-“A bad man you know, you know him better than a new man you do not know”. Local wisdom. Trust very important. Time to get to know people. People want to see you keep your promises, always keep your promises. Building a relationship cost time, do not make promises, only when you are 1 million % sure.</p>	-	-	<p>At the embassy their should be one or two people who continuously work only with CS.</p>	<p>More bottom-up approach necessary; implementation should be done by the local NGOs. Role of INGOs and donors should be limited; in future they will be unnecessary. Listen to the locals, you are here as guest.</p>

# Appendix J

## Information and proceedings of the roundtable-discussion

### Roundtable on civil society support initiatives

Date: Monday 27<sup>th</sup> June, 9:00-13:00 hrs.

Location: Royal Netherlands Embassy

Facilitator: Irma van Dueren (RNE)

#### Participants:

Majid al Fahed (CDF), Ayman Omer Ali (Oxfam), Magda al Sanousi (Oxfam), Jamal Al Awadhi (CBF), Ilham Abdullah Fadel (consultant Amideast), Samra Shaibani (Worldbank), Rana Ghanem (Sisters Arab Forum), Dr. Issam Eldin Al Hussein (CSSW), Adam Taylor Awny (CARE), Mary Horvers (EC), Ramzia Aleryani (Yemeni Women Union), Jeehan N. Abdul Ghaffar (DFID), Fatma Awadh (Danish-Yemeni Partnership Program), Gaetan Ducroux (French Embassy), Hans Blankenberg (Ambassador RNE), Thom Sprenger (RNE).

#### Goal of roundtable:

The roundtable-discussion had the aim to address the following four questions with regard to capacity building initiatives for civil society:

- 1 What is there?
- 2 What else is needed?
- 3 How to get there?
- 4 Role of the donors?

Furthermore it is important to emphasise that this was just the first step of a process where donors and NGOs come together to discuss civil society support initiatives.

#### Proceedings:

- 1 What is there:

Different initiatives and plans are existing regarding a research/support centre. Amideast, CSSW, YDF, SSFD are examples.

- 2 What else is needed:

- information/resources/database
- situation analysis NGOs
- skill development, (technical/organisational/human resources)
- changing of attitudes/organisational culture/ practices
- voice for civil society
- vision on role
- creating enabling environment
- support centre on national, governorate and village level

### 3 How to get there:

- coordinated initiatives at different levels
- council/networks by national NGOs for sharing mutual support
- support/service centre, especially for technical support

### 4 Role donors:

- donors role is limited, can only be reached by few
- donors serve only few elite organisations, only national not grassroots
- donors should share their lessons learned
- donor coordination is needed

### Way forward:

- more communication between initiatives
- 'outreach' towards village level
- organise learning from (regional) experiences
- establish centres in main cities/areas
- existing networks reach out governorates, so use them
- knowledge sharing
- establish independent centre for technical services

In 45 days a follow up meeting will be organized.

Mr. Majid al Fahed (CDF) will coordinate this meeting.

Important to note that next time of course also other NGOs and donors are welcome.

# Appendix K

## Meta matrix roundtable discussion

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Comments roundtable-discussion</b>
<b>Concept/role of civil society</b>	-No history of NGOs in Yemen like in the western concept, as being independent from the government. -CS is not only NGOs, but in Yemen many people think it is.
<b>Emergence and evolution</b>	-
<b>General picture</b>	-NGOs often charity groups.
<b>Main players</b>	-
<b>Capacity of CSOs</b>	-Lack of creativity at NGOs. Also lack of vision; main reason of lack of capacity. -1 weak org. + technical capacities. 2 internal governance 3 degree of representation of the poor. 4 weak collaboration linkages among CBOs. -Comparative advantage that there is so much diversity in CS.
<b>Relationships between CSOs</b>	-Problem is networking, sharing of information. -There are NGOs, there are a lot of good NGOs, that is why networking is needed, that is missing. -NGOs are often competitors. -There are networks existing: WU, CDF, and YDF. -Many bodies already created in the past output was weak. -Not enough examples of good networking, unless donor is facilitating this.
<b>Legal framework</b>	-There is one law for charity org., not designed for different kind of organisations.
<b>Enabling environment</b>	-Why is the ministry not here? Response: CS should be independent from the government.
<b>Partnership concept</b>	-Money from donor is important in relation. -Why partnerships: national knowledge that is the reason. Not always equal partnerships. -Differences in resources between donors and CSOs.
<b>Donor role</b>	-The ones who can speak English can reach the donors. -Donors are not coordinating their actions. -Donors role is limited; donors can only reached by few. -Donor coordination is needed.
<b>Partner selection</b>	-Challenges: hard to find institutions that can provide whole packages
<b>Suggestions for possible partners</b>	-
<b>Important sectors to address in future</b>	-Move to governorate level; listen to their voice, widening it. -Many projects already existing, rural areas not benefiting. -New trend, from service delivery to national policy level. -Also focus on rural areas. -Should be nation wide. -Charity alone is not sustainable.
<b>Possible interventions</b>	-Connect NGOs together, also in different subjects. -Do not create new NGOs. -Capacity needed for sectoral, local and national level. -Umbrella: fear, you harmonise to much, create homogeneity. If you are not part than you will be excluded from everything. -Local community should play role. -Umbrella concept problem. Facilitation centre should be neutral, no colour. -Database is a good idea. -Networks for sharing information, including 100 NGOs. -Use experience from network PRSP group. -Capacity building is a means to an end. -Coordination is necessary. Coordination and competition at the same time is possible. -Create community based organisations.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-And create an enabling environment for more grassroots org.</li> <li>-Coordinated initiatives at different levels necessary. Councils and networks.</li> <li>-coordination council recommended, political commitment important.</li> <li>-Need of coordination to pool each other activities together.</li> <li>Coordination is not about monopoly, not to block others, only for guidance.</li> <li>Centre should not be to control.</li> <li>-Albania experience, 5 offices in 5 districts. Library and meeting place.</li> <li>Technocratic meeting point. One window. Diversity is important.</li> <li>For donors it is difficult to look who to support, which initiatives.</li> <li>-Examples not fitting to Yemen, less communication in Yemen.</li> <li>-Networks: fishnet metaphor. Existing networks reach out to governorates.</li> <li>-Situation analysis on CS is needed.</li> <li>-NGOs should be more pro active themselves.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Successful partnership</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Monitoring necessary, process-oriented.</li> <li>-Role of donors: more consultation</li> <li>-Donors should not create network. Should be NGOs themselves who are doing that. Networking is good but should not be initiated by donors.</li> <li>-Not influencing the agenda of NGOs by donors</li> <li>-Do we reach all communities? Outreach towards village level</li> <li>-Should be more communication between initiatives.</li> <li>-organize learning from regional experiences.</li> <li>-Establish sub centres in main cities/areas.</li> <li>-Council by NGOs for NGOs.</li> <li>-Knowledge sharing and independent.</li> <li>-In Yemen capacity building is an essential prerequisite for partnerships</li> <li>-Capacity building is cost effective in the long run.</li> </ul>

## Appendix L

### Donor initiatives regarding civil society support

This directory is not meant to be exhaustive, rather illustrative. As such, it does not cover all relevant organisations. Some organisations were not able or not willing to provide information. This table only deals with organisations which have been mentioned in this study. For more information with regard to donor support or activities of local NGOs is referred to Beatty et al. (1996) or Schellart and Hoenderdos (2003). The information shown below is basically derived from the interviews, observations and document study in this research.

**CARE International:** Australian NGO aims to improve the lives of women in Yemen by supporting their participation in development and addressing their needs throughout CARE's programmes. Assist in the capacity building of women's organisations. CARE is also working with Akhdam communities in Sana'a to create and develop community based organisations, which provide water and literacy services to their communities. CARE is cooperating with the Yemeni Women's Union on a variety of projects. Funded by EU, DFID, RNE and French embassy. Also business men from the USA are funding CARE.

**CEFAS:** French Centre for Archeology and Social Sciences. CEFAS is preparing a research project to investigate the dynamics of civil society in Yemen.

**Department For International Development (DFID):** UK government department responsible for promoting development and the reduction of poverty. DFID is now not doing something directly with civil society, only indirect via Social Funds for Development and money to Oxfam, might support election in the future.

**European Commission (EC):** Conducted identification and formulation studies with regard to civil society support initiatives. Established in cooperation with the Yemeni Development Foundation a support centre for capacity building for local CSOs. EC intend to engage in partnerships with international NGOs. In addition the EC has a micro grand project for CSOs, in particular focusing on advocacy CSO.

**French Embassy:** They work with a FSD programme, French social fund for development. FSD aims to strengthen civil society, with a focus on capacity building for women CSOs. CSOs can apply for this program.

**National Democratic Institute (NDI):** American NGO, focuses on political parties, local government and woman participation in elections. Provide trainings, work with woman departments and with the parliament. Provide access to research materials in a physical library and on-line resources.

**Oxfam:** International British NGO, has partnerships with the local communities and civil society partners. Oxfam has a wide range of civil society partners in different fields.

**United Nations Development Programme (UNDP):** Cooperates with 55 local NGOs. Aims to build institutional capacity of CSOs and empower these institutions in their Community-Based Regional Development Programme. UNDP works together with many different bilateral donors and also with Oxfam.

**Yemeni-Danish Partnership Programme:** Plan to support civil society in the near future, especially with a focus on human rights and women issues.