

A message from NDC Director

Mr. Ghassan Kasabreh



It is my pleasure to present you with our first newsletter from the NGO Development Center (NDC). This for us is a new beginning that we are very excited and humbled to be a part of.

The NDC has been officially operating since November 2006. NDC is the successor of the Welfare Association Consortium (WAC), which implemented Phases I and II of the Palestinian NGO Project. NDC inherited the outstanding reputation and legacy of the PNGO Project and gained donors' trust and recognition, which led the World Bank to allocate USD 10 million to support the center for the third time, and the French Agency for Development to fund a second phase of the Emergency Job Creation Project in Gaza and the West Bank for a total amount of Euros 6 million.

Following a decision from its Supervisory Board in 2005, NDC was registered in March 2006. NDC held a series of Broad Based Consultation meetings in June 2006 on the establishment of the center, in which more than 250 participants from a variety of local and international NGOs, the government, universities, the private sector, and municipalities /councils participated and provided their valuable feedback, validating the need for such a center.

We are now starting to see our vision for this center being materialized and we are truly positive about what has been achieved so far. This has been possible through the support of our friends, a dedicated and highly professional staff and lastly but not least, those of us in the NDC's leadership and Board of Directors who with honor place our names, reputations and time behind NDC.

NDC in this newsletter is not aiming at scoring points or highlighting achievements. Its main concern is to help the people of Palestine join the community of free peace-loving nations. A strong democratically oriented civil society based upon political pluralism, respect for human rights, and the rule of law is conducive to the making of a free Palestine that lives in dignity, safety and peace.



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As a result of the successes achieved by PNGO I and II



The World Bank launches the Palestinian NGO Project III with a total amount of USD 10 million



President, Mahmoud Abbas (middle), Dr. Attalah Kuttab, WA, (left setting) and Mr. Juan Jose Daboub, WB, (right setting) during the World Bank USD 10 million grant signing ceremony

On 5 February 2007, the World Bank launched the Palestinian NGO Project III to be implemented by NDC throughout 2007-2010, and on 9 February 2007, the World Bank signed the Trust Fund Grant Agreement with the Welfare Association and NDC signed the Trust Fund Project Agreement with the World Bank. This project will be a key support segment for NDC over the next three years. The World Bank's commitment to Phase III is USD 10 million and is designated to institutionalize the achievements and success of the PNGO I and II projects in the establishment of the NDC. We should also extend our thanks to the Welfare Association, our mother organization, who has signed a financing agreement with the World Bank, delegating the management of PNGO III to us.

After having met all the operational and procedural requirements, the Palestinian NGO Project III became effective on 27 February 2007. Today, we believe that this new project is an important endorsement of NDC by our close partners at the World Bank. We are deeply honored by the commitment that the World Bank has made to our work and we look forward to our ongoing partnership and close collaboration. Our deepest appreciation goes to the World Bank.

NDC holds first meeting of its General Assembly and elects its first Board of Directors

On 29 March 2007, the General Assembly (GA) of the NGO Development Center held its first meeting. The GA proceeded to elect the first Board of Directors consisting of thirteen members who will serve for a two-year term. Since the establishment of the Center, the Founding Committee of NDC served as both the General Assembly and Board of Directors.

The members elected to the new Board of Directors are:

1. Mr. Zahi Khouri, Chairman of the Board
2. Mr. Abdel Kareem Ashour, Vice Chair
3. Dr. Mohammed Shadid, Treasurer

4. Dr. Suleiman Al-Khalil, Secretary
5. Mrs. Nahla Assali, Member
6. Dr. Allam Jarrar, Member
7. Dr. Atalah Kuttab, Member
8. Mr. Sufian Mushasha', Member
9. Mr. Mohammed Monzer Al Rayyes, Member
10. Mr. Darwish Abu Sharkh, Member
11. Mr. Fahmi Al Shalaldehy, Member
12. Mrs. Rawya Shawa, Member
13. Mr. Hisham Qaddumi, Member

Along with Dr. El Zabri, as an honorary member.

The new Board of Directors is looking forward to assisting the management team in developing the work of the NDC.

A word from Mr. Zahi Khouri - the NDC Board Chair

We at NDC are pleased to introduce you to our work through this first newsletter. We believe that with the establishment of NDC the standards for transparency, accountability, professionalism and working to address the needs of those in the most marginalized sectors have been raised. At NDC we are working to bring a level of partnership through all segments of our work from our relationships with our partners and supporters all the way down to the end beneficiaries. We hope that this newsletter will increase your awareness and knowledge about who we are and what we do. Our work first and foremost is about caring for and helping to meet the needs of Palestine's most vulnerable people. We hope that as you get to know us, you will want to be involved in what we are doing. In this regard, we welcome you and say: "Ahlan wa Sahlan to NDC."



"Diamonds are made under pressure, and in Palestine we have a mine of diamonds."

*Mr. Zahi Khouri –
NDC - Board Chair .*

A conversation with AFD's Deputy Director Mr. Gerald Vuillemin



The French Agency for Development funds a second phase of the job creation project in the WB and Gaza



Mr. Philippe Lecrinier, AFD Director (right), and MR. Gerlad Vuillemin, AFD Deputy Director (left).

"We are very satisfied from the outcomes and successes WAC accomplished from the implementation of Phase I of the Job Creation Projects in Gaza".

*AFD's Deputy Director,
Mr. Gerald Vuillemin*

Q: For how long has the AFD been working in Palestine?

A: Since 1998 when we opened our office in Jerusalem

Q: What is the role of AFD in Palestine?

A: We finance development projects in the West Bank and Gaza covering several sectors such as: water and sanitation, electricity, education, municipal development, and NGOs (through job creation projects) sectors. We newly started targeting the health sector, and our first project is to renovate mental health clinics.

Q: What is the future strategy of AFD in Palestine?

A: To finance sustainable projects reinforcing capacity building with Palestinian partners. AFD has a committed annual budget between Euros 10 to 12 million to fund projects for a maximum

of three sectors and according to priorities. Priorities are identified in cooperation with the Palestinian Authority especially with the Ministry of Planning, AFD's counter part.

Q: Who are AFD's Palestinian Partners?

A: 1) The Palestinian Authority's different ministries, such as Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education. 2) The Palestinian Water Authority and The Palestinian Energy and Natural Resources Authority. 3) Municipal Development Fund. 4) PECDAR. 5) Welfare Association and NGO Development Center. Also we coordinate work with other donors such as: World Bank, European Commission, Italian Cooperation, and German Cooperation (KfW).

Q: What is AFD's criteria for selecting its partners?

A: Our selection criterion is based on efficiency, transparency, experience and independence in

addition to reputation, track record, and having solid accounting systems.

Q: Why did you choose the Welfare Association Consortium (WAC) for implementing Phase I of the Emergency projects in Gaza?

A: The WAC fulfills our requirements and selection criteria for implementing the NGO sector projects and has a long experience in implementing micro projects in different areas in Palestine and in cooperation with multiple Palestinian NGOs.

Q: How would you rate your experience with WAC in the implementation of Phase I of the Emergency projects in Gaza?

A: We have a rating scale from A (best) to D (worst). WAC's implementation of the Job Creation Project in Gaza was rated A and we are very satisfied from the outcomes and successes WAC accomplished. That is why we also chose the NDC, the successor of WAC, to implement Phase II.

Q: What challenges did AFD face in the implementation of the Gaza Emergency projects?

A: The first challenge was to create jobs that will eventually contribute to the financial sustainability of the people living in Gaza. The second challenge is to build community sustainable facilities that cover the basic needs of the people. It is important to use the local resources, contractors, workers...etc to inject money into the economy and to support it. Despite the difficulties encountered in the field, AFD was able to disburse Euros 11.5 million on Emergency projects in the Gaza Strip. For example, the first phase implemented by WAC financed 43 micro projects proposed by local NGOs within two years.

Q: What successes were achieved in the implementation of the Gaza Emergency projects?

A: The main success is building a solid infrastructure which improved the living conditions of Gaza's population. In addition, the centers and buildings we built are operational



Rehabilitation and development of Palestinian Home Society, Gaza, AFD Project

and are providing community services. We also succeeded in creating jobs even though they were short term ones, but they helped improve the living conditions of hundreds of Gaza's families.

Q: What do you think about the transfer from WAC to the NGO Development Center?

A: The idea of having an independent center like the NGO Development Center is a very good idea. We support it, and we don't feel that there is much difference between WAC and NDC, the building is the same and the staff and systems of WAC were transferred to the NDC. NDC for us is a way to associate more formally with different national NGOs for the implementation of our projects.

Q: What encouraged AFD to fund a second phase of the Emergency project?

A: The achieved successes of Phase I and the continuous need for such projects in Palestine.

Q: What are your expectations from the implementation of the second phase?

A: We are sure that Phase II will be another success story.

Thank you for taking your time to share a little bit of what you are doing here in Palestine and to talk about our cooperative relationship.

NDC Calls for Proposals for the five available grant types

Following the commencement of the Palestinian NGO III Project, NDC issued a call for proposals for its five available grant programs. These are:

- Empowerment Grants
- Mentoring Partnership Grants
- Grants to Specialized Health Service Providers
- Emergency Grants
- NGO-Local Government Partnership Grants

The response to calls for the first three grants was significant. A total of 367 proposals were received for consideration and evaluation. First, NDC received 310 proposals from Palestinian NGOs applying for the Empowerment Grants. These grants are designed to support experienced NGOs in providing innovative social services to the community. Programs are to be designed on a demand-driven basis reflecting community needs using participatory approaches. With such a massive need for social services in all sectors among the Palestinian people today, the response to this Call for Proposals was expected. NDC anticipates that 15 grants will be issued with a maximum award not to exceed USD 150,000. These projects will be implemented over a 18-24 month period.

In addition, NDC also received 30 applications from more experienced NGOs applying for Mentoring Partnership Grants. These grants are designed to create partnerships between community-based NGOs (partner NGOs) of limited experience (2 years) with leading experienced NGOs operating on a national scale (at least 8-years). These partner NGOs will be able to improve the quality and effectiveness of their services by learning from the professionalized mentor NGO in areas such as project management and program design. NDC anticipates up to six mentoring awards with a maximum grant of USD 400,000 USD per project for up to 24 months.

As for the Specialized Health Services Grants, 27 NGOs submitted applications. These grants target NGOs that own hospitals providing specialized health care and seeking to enhance their health

services to vulnerable communities. During the month of July 2007, NDC approved 8 grants for a total amount of USD 1,600,000 to the following Palestinian NGOs:

West Bank

1. Patients Friends Society- Jenin
2. Children's Relief Bethlehem - Caritas Baby Hospital (CBH)
3. Saint Luke's Hospital, Nablus
4. Makassed Islamic Charitable Hospital, Jerusalem
5. The Red Crescent Society Hospital, Jerusalem

Gaza

1. Public Aid Society
2. El-Wafa Medical Rehab. Hospital
3. Union of Health Work Committees, Gaza

On July 30, 2007, NDC called for proposals for the Emergency Grants funded by the Agence Francaise de Développement for a total amount of Euros 6 million (USD 7.6 million), these grants will finance temporary employment generation projects through the development of NGO-operated community assets. They target the poorest households with temporary employment under minimum-wage labour conditions.

NDC also called for proposals for the NGO-Local Government Partnership Grants on July 12, 2007. These grants encourage partnerships between municipalities and locally based NGOs to improve services to the poorest governorates in the WB and Gaza. NGOs and municipalities will carry out joint activities that address community priorities in areas such as early childhood development, adult learning, vocational training, youth development and environmental activities.

NDC participates at World Bank MENA Workshop

NDC's Director Mr. Ghassan Kasabreh, and Grants' Programs Manager Mr. Khalid Khatib, participated in the World Bank Community Driven Development (CDD) Workshop for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region in Cairo from May 22-23. Mr. Kasabreh gave a presentation about Palestinian NGO Project III in which he introduced and discussed the main components of the project. He also reviewed the World Bank's commitment to the project and its duration. The main objective of the event was to provide a forum to exchange knowledge and experience on MENA-based CDD projects with MENA staff and World Bank employees.



Mr. Ghassan Kasabreh (first row, second person to the right) and Mr. Khalid Khatib (next left), during the MENA Workshop.

NDC conducts an M&E training for its staff

On May 2-3, 2007, NDC conducted a training session for its staff in Ramallah about the newly-developed Monitoring and Evaluation System (M&E). Mrs. Annick Lachance, an international consultant with expertise in designing such systems, was recruited to assist in this task.

During the training session Mrs. Lachance presented the objective, scope and key features of NDC's newly developed M&E system and discussed the major components of the system. This new system aims to help the staff acquire a shared vision of what NDC's organizational tools are, build awareness on what a result-based management is, help them acquire organizational and participation skills, experiment with facilitation tools, agree on key terminology and fixed elements of the M&E system's components, establish NDC's baseline and participatory assessment tools for evaluation, and finally incorporate all gathered staff feedback to prepare a first progress report.

We at NDC believe that this training session was a productive step forward in the development of a solid M & E system. NDC will transfer its M & E system to its partner NGOs with the necessary adaptations to meet their individual requirements.

A busy time ahead for NDC

Now that the organization has been formed and all of the basic foundation for our work has begun, we are getting busy at doing what we do best: making and administering grants designed to benefit those needy and marginalized sectors here in Palestine. Since our work in this area began in 1997, we have been able to disperse over USD 50 million to over 500 different NGOs in Palestine.

Moving forward promoting Good Governance in the NGO sector through the implementation of the NGO Code of Conduct

The NGO Code of Conduct is the main program of the Sector Development Unit. NDC is coordinating with four leading Palestinian NGO networks and unions to prepare and implement an NGO Code of Conduct to guide the work of the NGO sector. The NGO Code of Conduct sets ethical guidelines and management standards that embody the values and principles that are at the heart of the Palestinian civil society. These values were identified through consultations with over two hundred Palestinian NGOs and incorporated in the NGO Code of Conduct. NGOs will receive technical assistance (coaching, mentoring and training) to bring about organizational and behavioral change.

For the past two months NDC has been meeting with representatives from the four umbrella NGO Networks in order to establish the coalition that will implement and promote the Code of Conduct. NDC will also work with AMAN, Coalition for Accountability and Integrity, to ensure that the Code of Conduct includes the values and principles of transparency and accountability. AMAN will also conduct a number of training sessions for Palestinian NGOs to promote the standards of transparency and mechanisms of accountability.

The Sector Development Program is working on designing a Resource Kit which will serve as a tool for NGOs and will provide them with detailed procedures' manuals in the areas of board governance, finance and administration, and strategic planning. In addition, it will provide NGOs with guidelines on participatory monitoring and evaluation, adherence to laws and covenants, dedication to socioeconomic development and needs assessment, participation, networking and coordination, and non discrimination. The Kit will include an Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool that will help determine the capacity gaps for the NGOs and will be also used as a monitoring tool in measuring improvements in capacity. Implementing the principles, procedures and guidelines detailed in the Resource Kit will help NGOs to be in compliance with the Code of Conduct. In addition, the Sector Development Unit is also working on preparing a promotional campaign for the Code of Conduct, targeting the Palestinian community in general and the NGO sector in specific.

Building NDC for the future – Focusing on Sustainability

Now that NDC has commenced its work, we are working from a three year strategic plan that was formulated throughout the process of founding the organization. This plan has always had, as a key element, an outreach to touch the individual who would like to join with us in helping see this organization develop, flourish and provide benefits to the Palestinian people for years to come.

To do this, we believe that thinking strategically is the key to our success. We are currently developing international partnerships that will allow for a more use-friendly interaction with those of you who would like to join us in supporting NDC.

One of our main goals at this time is to recruit a Resource Development and Communications Manager. While all of the organizations key positions have been filled, this exceedingly important one remains vacant. For more information on this vital and challenging position, please visit our website at www.ndc.ps.

In the interim, we would like to let you know that we welcome those of you who can support the NDC in any capacity they might have. Many ways exist for you to support NDC. Gifts of all kinds are welcome. We also accept restricted gifts that have a long term endowment building focus as we are looking to expand an endowment fund to help the organization be sustainable over the long term and with that comes more independence and opportunities to respond to the long term needs here in Palestine.

How You Can Help – join us and become a part of a bright future in Palestine

There are many ways to join us in this effort. This list is suggestive and by no means comprehensive. Please visit our website: www.ndc.ps to learn more about our Gift Acceptance Policy or contact us on info@ndc.ps.

1. Gifts could include: donations of cash assets; stocks or bonds; or appreciated property.
2. Planned gifts are also appreciated with more information being available through the NDC Director.
3. Gifts to fund specific projects are welcomed on a one time or recurring basis.
4. Volunteerism is encouraged and we welcome those who would like to become regional coordinators in their home regions to help mobilize support for NDC through individual or collective fund raising efforts. We would be happy to coordinate our efforts to ensure effectiveness of your interventions.
5. Businesses who would like to sponsor NDC are welcomed to contact our Director for more details.

NDC's current donors

1. The World Bank 
2. The French Agency for Development (AFD) 
3. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) 