ARAB NGO NETWORK FOR DEVELOPMENT

**THE ARAB NGO NETWORK FOR DEVELOPMENT
(ANND)**

ANNUAL
REPORT
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Mission:

ANND is an independent, democratic, and civic network that aims at strengthening civil society and enhancing the values of democracy and respect of human rights and sustainable development in the Arab region. It works towards its aim through programs of advocacy and lobbying on regional and national policy-making in three main areas; development, trade, and democracy. ANND is committed to the international convention on Human Rights, the respect of the individual freedom and diversity, the equality of resource division, the protection of cultural heritage in the region, and the developmental priorities of the local societies.

Vision:

ANND envisions democratic, active, and effective civil societies in the Arab Region. These societies would be able to affect public policies, and would be open and interactive with other cultures and societies. They respect and protect the dignity and freedom of the individual and their political, social, economic, civic, and cultural rights, within a state of law and institutions, where peace, security, and stability are prosperous.

The internal vision of the Network is based on responding to the challenges and changes on the regional and global levels, whereby it aims at establishing a special presence and effective and active positions regarding the decision-making processes locally, regionally, and globally. ANND works to preserve a democratic, flexible, growing, and developing body that encompasses Arab non-governmental organizations working in the fields of social and human development, democracy, human rights, gender, and environment. ANND is committed towards implementing the values of good governance and the development of best-practices models for capacity building and institutional structuring.

Letter from ANND Coordination Committee

**The Experience of the Arab NGO Network for Development
A Social Vision and Continuous Achievement**

The Arab NGO Network for Development is honored to present it 2005 Progress Report to its readers and to Arab and international civil society organizations. The report includes ANND's main activities in the past year.

Since its establishment, ANND has continuously presented to Arab and international organizations its major strategies and activities in order to strengthen transparency, accountability, and the principles of good governance. Through the report, ANND aims to encourage a serious debate on major national, regional, and international issues and the role of Arab CSOs in this important stage. We hope that this report will be received as a tool for constructive dialogue to reach affective strategies to strengthen the role of Arab CSOs in development and democratic transition.

This report comes during a volatile and complicated regional and international situation. The US and its allies continue a war declared on an unidentified terrorism, with all its implications on development processes, democratic transition, and national liberation in the region. On the hand, totalitarian military regimes continue to suppress freedoms, violate human rights, and implement policies to marginalize and segregate large social segments, based on a narrow and piecemeal vision of social and democratic transition. In addition, foreign occupation, especially Israeli, of Arab countries continues to raise the level of regional and international instability, reflecting negatively on international peace and security.

In this context, ANND attempted through its vision, mission, strategy, and programs to answer some of the challenges to Arab civil society work in this delicate stage, focusing on the following issues:

1. **Human development in the Arab region and the role of CSOs especially in following-up on the Millennium Declaration and human development indicators**: In this context, ANND's involvement in the international facilitation group of the Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) and in Social Watch allowed the network to play a vital and influential role on this level, through a broader vision of fighting poverty and sustainable human development.
2. **Reform issues and democratic transition in the Arab world**: ANND has worked on suggesting a regional process for reform and

democratic transition based on a regional vision stemming from the priorities, needs, and interests of Arab communities. ANND proposed a number of strategies, approaches, and programs to contribute to reform processes and democratic transition in the Arab region. In the same context, ANND reacted positively to all regional reform initiatives including the Greater Middle East Initiative, European dialogue initiatives, UN initiatives, and all public and civil society initiatives in the region. ANND believes that ignoring these initiatives is an act of running forward instead of critically engaging with them through its own vision. Dialogue among all players will leave positive consequences on achieving the goals of ANND in democratic transition, the respect of human rights, sustainable development, and social justice. Dialogue, coordination, and cooperation among all these initiatives pushed ANND into a unique leadership position, gaining the respect of all influential stakeholders.

3. **Trade**: This issue was not considered of priority or importance for Arab CSOs, in spite of its extreme importance and tight linkage to issues of comprehensive development and socioeconomic progress. Through its different programs on mobilization, advocacy, and capacity building on trade agreements related to the WTO, ANND focused attention to this important subject, especially its impact and reflections on economic and social development in the Arab world. It also succeeded in tightly linking the issues of regional and international trade to human development. ANND organized many activities on the subject and connected with many networks and international coalitions opposed to the policies of the WTO. ANND also achieved a unique position, becoming the regional focal point on these issues.

4. **Participating in building the capacities of Iraqi and Palestinian NGOs focusing on the legal framework, visions, roles, and strategies**: ANND organized various events on the issue, based on our belief in the importance of building an active, competent, independent, and democratic civil society in countries living conditions of conflict and occupation as Iraq and Palestine.

5. **Wide interest in institutional, administrative, and programmatic development of ANND**: This is one of ANND's priorities, since the organization will not be capable of achieving its mission and responsibilities in the best possible manner without a professional program to develop its professional capacities to ensure the application of the principles of good governance and strengthening its links with members and other civil society organizations. This institutional direction does not mean the creation of heavy bureaucratic structures, but the assurance of professional performance in a democratic and effective organizational atmosphere.

Based on the above, we can notice that ANND adopted different approaches and strategies to implement its programs and strengthen dialogue, coordination, and cooperation among its members on one hand, and between them and other Arab CSOs on the other. In this context, ANND's strategy of mobilization, lobbying, and advocacy was essential to ensure the proposing of local, national, and regional policies suitable to the priorities, needs, and interests of Arab local communities. ANND developed an effective model for communication and networking encompassing all local, national, regional, and international levels. Linking the national agenda and coordinating it with regional and international agendas, and vice versa, had always been one of the network's main concerns. This is in addition to ANND's direct work on strengthening the capacities of Arab CSOs on the above issues and on the level of mobilization and advocacy skills and mechanisms.

We hope that this report is of interest and that it becomes a real tool for dialogue, coordination, and networking among the various stakeholders, especially CSOs in the Arab world, to achieve our common goals of democratic transition, social justice, and the respect of human rights.

Izzat Abdel Hadi

Foreword by ANND Executive Director

The Arab region is witnessing a turning point on all levels. Changes are taking place in many countries, and in some, they are dramatically affecting the entire political, economic, and social systems.

No one believes that the struggle is a clash of civilizations, although sometimes its expression leads to that assumption. In reality, the whole geopolitics of the region is in transformation due to the interlinked effect of lacking peace and security, absent adequate development policies and spreading poverty, and disrespect of human rights, including political and civic as well as economic, social, and cultural rights.

A quick historical observation indicates the complications of this situation. After the end of First World War (WWI) and the collapse of the Othman Empire, the whole region witnessed new geographical partitions, under the so called "colonial era". During this period, new nation states were created. By the end of the Second World War (WW II), the region witnessed new dynamics entitled "national liberation". These dynamics were a response to two main challenges; (1) the creation of the "State of Israel", the first state established with a UN resolution without clear borders, resulting in the occupation of Palestine and more than five million refugees, and (2) the struggle to end the colonial era seeking independence and sovereignty and in avenging the humiliation suffered from the former problem.

The end of the Cold War led to a new World Order characterized by hegemonic unilateralism. This was accompanied by the tendency to impose new market-based regulations with the objectives of exploiting the natural resources of the region, particularly oil and gas.

Throughout these three stages, the Arab region did not reach peace and stability, democracy, respect of human rights, development, or prosperity. According to the Arab Human Development Report issued by the Untied Nations Development Program in 2003, human development indicators showed the worst figures compared to other regions of the world. The report emphasized three main challenges with respect to underdevelopment: (1) lack of democracy and freedoms, (2) lack of knowledge and the digital gap, and (3) inequality and lack of gender equity, in addition to insecurity and the lack of peace.

This situation imposes on civil society a condensed agenda with four main sets of challenges. The first is to end all forms of foreign occupations and neo-colonial hegemonies and to build independent and sovereign states. The second challenge is to introduce radical political human rights-based reforms leading to democracy and the rule of law. The third

challenge is to implement core economic and social reforms leading to social justice and the respect of human rights. The fourth challenge is to achieve cultural reforms leading to a new cultural discourse and to the respect of diversity.

These challenges will not be reached unless civil society becomes a complete partner in all means. The comprehensive understanding of partnership needs a legal framework guarantying the freedom to establish CSOs that can freely act and work; The role of CSOs is essential at various levels; (a) provision of service and basic needs; (b) capacity building and raising awareness in order to enlarge choices; (c) monitoring, lobbying, and advocating for more fair national strategies and policies, as well as (d) struggling for democracy and for the respect of human rights..

It is worth noting that during the last century, civil society in most Arab countries witnessed systematic repression by dictatorships, totalitarian regimes, military coup d'états, and monarchies lacking peaceful mechanisms for the transition of power. This is applicable to political and social movements including trade unions, students and youth, women, and non-governmental organizations, in addition to the private sector.

The Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND) adopted the strategy of advocacy with its different sub-strategies and programs. ANND gives priority to the tools of networking and exchange of experiences. Its programs mainly focus on development and the social and economic impact of the following: (a) sub regional, regional, bilateral, plurilateral, and multilateral free trade agreements, (b) democratization and reform, particularly socio-economic reforms, and (c) development, with a special focus on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). ANND is also active in peace and security-related issues, through providing solidarity to people under occupation, particularly Palestinians and Iraqis.

ANND focuses on regional and global networking with the aim of improving its performance and learning from other experiences. At the same time, ANND seeks to reflect the challenges that Arab countries face in international fora.

During the last few years, the role of ANND became very important among Arab civil society organizations (CSOs). However, it faces many challenges and difficulties. Some of these challenges are objective (external); such as the lack of peace, stability and security, the legal environment where its members are working, the lack of democracy, and the implications of the overall situation in the region. Other challenges are subjective (internal); such as the constraints of networking and the difference in priorities from country to country, the limited human and

financial capacities of its members, and the challenges deriving from their weak internal governance.

The strategy and programs adopted by ANND were selected to face the above-mentioned challenges. Moreover, ANND is aiming to enhance and promote the use of information and communication technologies among its members and other CSOs in order to improve networking and exchange.

In the following progress report, we will be highlighting the main activities implemented by ANND during the past year. The report talks about achievements, but it also tries to show the difficulties and the constraints in the aim of improving our performance in the future.

Ziad Abdel Samad

During 2005, ANND continued its work in three main areas; Democracy and Reforms, Trade and Globalization, and Development. As a result of the strategic planning for the years 2004-2006, these areas were identified by ANND members as priority in the Arab region. In this context, ANND implemented two main programs entitled "The Socio-Economic Impact of Trade Liberalization on the Arab Region" and "The Millennium Development Goals; Role of Civil Society Stakeholders". ANND also developed its vision in the area of democracy and human rights, under a program called "Democratic Reforms in the Arab Region; Focus on the Socio-Economic Challenges". In addition to its core programs, ANND undertook several activities in the three areas it works on, through which it enhanced its regional and global networking as well as its active participation in civil society and governmental foras.

Under these programs, ANND worked towards enhancing its role as a regional network. Through its programs, it worked on reaching out to more civil society groups in various Arab countries. ANND focused on raising the awareness and building the capacities of its members and other civil society groups in the three main focus areas. It also worked towards enhancing the presence of Arab civil society voices in regional and international fora[1], and fostering the interaction

Box A. THE WORLD SOCIAL FORUM (WSF) 2005- AN ANNUAL OPPORTUNITY TO ENHANCE GLOBAL MOBILIZATION AND NETWORKING

Since the second WSF in 2002, ANND had supported the participation of delegates from the Arab region in the Forum. ANND aims at enhancing the Arab participation in the Forum and at bringing the issues of the Arab region to the arenas of international debate and exchange. Accordingly, ANND followed on this activity in 2005, through supporting the participation of thirteen participants from various Arab countries including Lebanon, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan, Yemen, Sudan, Palestine, and Iraq, in addition to an Arab migrant from Paris.

Most of ANND delegation participated as speakers in various panels during the Forum, including a panel on "Controlled Democracy" organized by a German organization called More Democracy, a panel on "Development and Security- Results and Implications of the Report of the UN High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change", which was organized by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, in addition to a panel on democratization and change in the Arab region organized by the Democratic Left Movement, which is a new political party in Lebanon.

Moreover, ANND organized three main activities including a panel on "Reforms and Democratization Initiatives; Focus on the Arab Region", a workshop on "The Future of Social Movements in the Arab Region; Media, Gender, and Youth Issues, and a workshop on "Youth and Social Movements; Challenges and Opportunities".

(1) Please refer to Box A for more information on ANND's participation in the World Social Forum 2005.

of Arab civil society groups with international groups and institutions with the aim of strengthening their impact.

ANND integrated the research aspect in the three programs it operates. It also introduced the national activities as a core part of each program, which complements the regional activities being implemented. Several tools were developed for information dissemination and outreach including weekly newsletter about activities organized by ANND and other civil society groups in the Arab region. Another trade newsletter was periodically prepared. ANND worked towards strengthening its cooperation with key partners, including Social Watch, Civicus World Alliance, the United Nations Development Program, and the Third World Network.

Following is a description of the progress in ANND programs, which was achieved in 2005.

The Socio-Economic Impact of Trade Liberalization in the Arab Region

Perspectives from Civil Society Stakeholders

Working on trade issues in 2005, ANND concentrated on key areas where there is a significant gap in the Arab region. The trade program for 2005-2006 focuses on enhancing the awareness and involvement of Arab civil society organizations regarding trade-related issues, especially the World Trade Organization, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, and the bilateral free trade agreements being developed with the United States and the European Union, and the socio-economic impact of these issues on the Region. It also looks upon the mechanisms through which civil society groups can play a bigger role in advocacy campaigns in this regards. Involving civil society groups as major stakeholders in trade issues, finding opportunities for informed CSOs to take part in this process, as well as trying to institutionalize the participation of CSOs in negotiations on trade issues, are means through which ANND aims at promoting more transparency, participation, and legitimacy in the process of negotiations on trade issues.

For ANND, 2005 was a critical year for working on trade issues. ANND took opportunity in the numerous regional and global trade related events that took place in order to situate itself in the process of influencing trade policy in the Arab region. The Network focused on building a good relation with the groups at the forefront of the negotiations process of trade agreements. Through the various trade-related events it participated in, ANND was keen to build a trust relation with trade negotiators, especially those involved with leading the WTO-related negotiations.

ANND organized two national roundtables on the socio-economic impact of trade liberalization in Bahrain (10-11-2005) and Egypt (22-12-2005). These will be followed up by roundtables in Lebanon, Morocco, Sudan, Jordan, and Yemen. The consultations gathered representatives from non-governmental organizations, academicians, researchers, and representatives of official bodies. They were a good opportunity to bring to the attention of civil society groups in Bahrain and Egypt the current debatable issues in trade policy. They improved the understanding of the impact of the WTO and other related trade agreements on socio-economic conditions and raised the awareness of participating CSOs of the varying point of views on this subject. ANND had commissioned two profile papers on trade liberalization in each of Bahrain and Egypt, which were used as main discussion papers during the consultations.

ANND participated with the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the League of Arab States, the World Bank, the International Development and Research Center in organizing the second regional Arab Ministerial Meeting in preparation for the 6th WTO Ministerial Conference. After participation in the first regional preparatory meeting during September 2005 in Jordan, ANND moved towards enhancing civil society participation and voice in these meetings. Accordingly, ANND supported the participation of five civil society experts to take part in the meeting including; Dr. Martin Khor from the Third World Network, Ms. Iara Pietrovesky from the Institute for Social and Economic Studies in Brazil, Dr. Ivan Martin from the University of Madrid, Mr. Izzat Abdel Hadi from the Bisan Research Center in Palestine and an ANND board member, and Dr. Mohamad Benayad from the Center of International Trade and who is an expert on trade issues and the Secretary General of the National Council on International Trade in Morocco. These steps presented a preparation for ANND's participation in the 6th WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong, where the network aimed at enhancing its presence and voice in the trade-related decision-making foras.

Dissemination of trade-related information was a major track that ANND worked on during 2005. An e-list of organizations either working on trade issues or interested in receiving trade-related updates was started. It contains non-governmental organizations, individual researchers and experts, ANND members, media personnel, research centers, and some government official, both from the Arab countries and other regions. Moreover, ANND worked on enhancing the information available on its website regarding trade issues and it launched a monthly trade-related update. The updates are available in English and Arabic, and they include five main headings; about the World Trade Organization, about the Euro-Mediterranean agreement, about the Arab trade agreements, about the bi-lateral trade agreements, various trade related briefs, and interesting websites. Furthermore, the program included the solicitation of profile papers on trade liberalization in several countries including Bahrain, Egypt, Morocco, Lebanon, Yemen, Sudan, Jordan, and Palestine.

The year included fostering key relations with international and regional partners working on trade issues, including the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the United Nations Development Program, and the Third World Network.

In the area of trade and globalization, ANND was involved as well in the process of the Euro-Mediterranean NGO Platform following the Euro-Mediterranean Policies and the New Neighborhood Policy[2].

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(2) For more information, please refer to Box B.

Box B. THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN NON-GOVENRMENTAL PLATFORM; A TOOL FOR REINFORCING CIVIL SOCIETY'S ROLE AND PLACE

The Platform aims at increasing the role and involvement of civil society actors in the Euro-Mediterranean Policies and the New Neighborhood Policy. In this context, it works towards strengthening relationships between civil society actors and creating transversal synergies between thematical, regional, and local networks which can collectively work to integrate civil society proposals in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

ANND is an elected member of the regional steering committee of the Platform. ANND concentrates on enhancing the presence of civil society groups from the Southern Mediterranean Partner countries in the Platform. It also pushes towards the advancement of national Euro-Med NGO platforms in these countries.

Since the last Euro-Med Civil Forum in Luxemburg, the Platform has been the acknowledged operator of the Euro-Mediterranean Civil Foras, whereby it works with local partners to ensure a continuous process of information exchange, debate, consultation, and mobilization between the dates of the yearly forums. The Platform is currently working on engaging in negotiations with the European Commission and Partnership institutions to implement the recommendations of the Luxemburg Forum. It also works on consolidating the Platform's working process and institutions, through ensuring short and middle run viability, enhancing communication mechanisms and processes, evaluating the potential of the platform's members, reinforcing local existing dynamics and generating new ones, and supporting new group's creation at thematical, regional, and sub-regional levels.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
Role of Civil Society Stakeholders

Since 2003, ANND have worked on enhancing the process of integrating MDGs and related mechanisms in national development policies of the Arab countries. ANND believes that there is a strong interlink between achieving sustainable development, enhancing democratic processes, and strengthening the role of civil society. Accordingly, there is an essential need for a constructive collaboration and potential partnership between governmental institutions and Arab civil society groups. This process is vital for developing a strong and coherent understanding of and position from the development challenges that are facing the Arab region and thus allowing the initiation of effective and efficient means and models to deal with these challenges. Even though the MDGs do not address several of the challenges that are core to development policies in the Arab region, yet given the commitment of all Arab governments to the MDGs, the goals could be used as tools to enhance the role of CSOs in advocating for sustainable development policies.

ANND has been serving as the regional focal point for the MDGs Global Campaign since 2003. In April 2003, ANND convened a regional strategic planning meeting for civil society organizations from various

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Box C. ANND; REGIONAL FOCAL POINT FOR THE GLOBAL CALL TO ACTION AGAINST POVERTY (GCAP) www.whiteband.org

During 2005, ANND was involved in the GCAP, a global coalition of over 1500 organizations, asking work leaders to stand up to their commitments and work on eradicating world poverty. ANND served as a regional focal point for the global call. The network launched the Call in the Arab region during a regional preparatory meeting held in Cairo in June 2005. The meeting succeeded to gather participants coming from 13 out of 22 Arab countries, and representing different types of CSOs, including groups with religious affiliations. The result of this meeting was a declaration reflecting the vision and the position of Arab civil society organizations on the GCAP and a decision to create national coalitions in various countries. Throughout 2005, ANND followed-up with active groups in several Arab countries, including Palestine, Lebanon, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Sudan, Yemen, Jordan, Morocco, Syria, and Bahrain to form active coalitions working on issues of the GCAP, specifically aid, trade, and debt.

National GCAP coalitions in these countries reached-out to various factions of society with the GCAP messages. They organized workshops, sit-ins, marches, debates, petitions, and worked with the media on the regional and local levels. It is worth noting that all these coalitions and activities were an initiation from local groups in the various involved countries. Despite their modesty, they reflected upon a sincere expression of internal mobilization and willingness from Arab civil society groups to join international movements and groups from worldwide for a common message against poverty.

Arab countries, together with national and regional UNDP offices. The meeting was the first initiative that ANND took to introduce the MDGs to CSOs from the Arab countries and to look into means for working on the MDGs and advancing CSOs' perspectives of development challenges in the region. Throughout 2003-2004, ANND organized a series of national and regional consultations on development policies and the role of CSOs in addressing and using the MDGs in each of Sudan, Yemen, Egypt, and Morocco. In addition, ANND organized a regional youth workshop on the MDGs, which gathered young activists from 10 different Arab countries.

Box D. ANND PARTNERSHIP IN LEBANON- A PROJECT ENTITLED "Development in Lebanon: Poverty Eradication, Gender Equity, and Youth Participation; the Role of NGOs, Civil Society, and Other Actors"

In partnership between Oxfam Quebec and the Canadian Fund for Social Development, ANND started the implementation of a two-year program in Lebanon tackling poverty reduction strategies. The program is led by a steering committee including representatives from ANND and its member organizations- the Collective of NGOs in Lebanon, the Lebanese Women's Network, and the Social Movement Group- as well as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) represented by the Program of Capacity Building for Poverty Eradication in the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), and Oxfam Quebec that represents the Canadian Fund. The project aims at contributing to constructing a national strategy for eradicating poverty, accomplishing gender equity, and increasing youth participation, as well as providing substantial assistance in the domain of capacity building for non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The project was launched during the month of March 2005. It is structured along three main thematic focuses- poverty eradication, gender equity, and youth participation, and three main tracks- national awareness raising seminars, regional strategic planning roundtables, and a capacity building and training component. The program is limited to Lebanon and during 2005 the three main national seminars on poverty, gender and poverty, and youth and poverty, were executed with a wide participation of civil society groups, involved UN agencies, and related governmental institutions.

Box E. ANNUAL SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

ANND together with its member organization, the Forum of Organizations Working with the Palestinian Communities in Lebanon, in addition to the Italian Manifesto Magazine, and the Lebanese As-Safir Newspaper, organizes the annual commemoration of the Sabra and Shatila massacre. This activity is organized annually, whereby it aims at sustaining the memory of the violations against the rights of the Palestinian people, and enhancing regional and global solidarity with their cause. In 2005, several international delegations from Italy, Spain, and the United States visited the Palestinian Camps in Lebanon, expressing their solidarity with the Palestinian communities, especially regarding their right of return to their land in Palestine. The week of activities usually includes several artistic and musical events by Palestinian, Lebanese, and foreign groups. The 2005 activities included a musical concert by an Italian band, in addition to exhibitions of photography and hand-made products.

During 2005, ANND continued its work on the MDGs through four main tracks; awareness raising, capacity building, networking and coalition building, and monitoring. The Network aims at increasing the number of Arab civil society organizations following the MDGs in the Arab region and enhancing coordination and networking among them. In addition, ANND looks to contribute to increasing CSOs contribution to and analysis of the official MDGRs, which are practical tools for mobilization and follow-up. In 2005, ANND continued working on the national level, through preparing for and implementing national consultations on the MDGs in each of Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, and a regional consultation in Algeria, which included participants and speakers from Morocco and Tunisia. The result of the national process is a publication that addresses the role of civil society organizations from the Arab region in mobilizing for and working on the MDGs.

Box F. THE WORLD SUMMIT ON INFORMATION SOCIETY (WSIS); MOBILIZATION BY ARAB CIVIL SOCIETY GROUPS

In September 2004, ANND took part in the first regional meeting for civil society groups from the Arab region, which was convened in Jordan in preparation for the second phase of the WSIS (Tunisia 2005). ANND took the decision to actively follow the process of preparation for the WSIS after the weak participation of civil society groups from the Arab region in the first phase of the Summit that took place in 2003 in Geneva.

Accordingly, ANND played an active role in the Arab Caucus of civil society groups following the Summit, and which resulted from the meeting in Jordan. The network has consistently worked on elaborating the concept of information and communication technologies (ICT) for development in various official and other preparatory meetings for the Summit. ANND organized the second regional meeting for civil society organizations following the WSIS process, which took place in July 2005 in Beirut. During the WSIS third Prep-Com that took place in Geneva, ANND organized a workshop on Freedom of Expression and Media Reforms, which tackled a proposition regarding a platform for action on media reforms in the Arab region. During the Summit, ANND, together with the Arab caucus, organized two workshops; one on freedom of expression in the Arab region and another on practical uses and practices of ICTs for development.

ANND believes that in the preparations' processes for the WSIS in both phases, the majority of the efforts were on "theoretical" input, ignoring the fact that there are dozens of groups who had started, years ago, practicing what is being advocated today. These experiences are building the infrastructure for the information society in the region. There is much to be learned from such initiatives that are coming out of civil society. Accordingly, there is a need to integrate these efforts in the development thinking and process in the region. For those purposes, it is necessary to focus on the every-day obstacles related to governance, government oppression, challenges of literacy and access to technology, and censorship, in addition to technical challenges such as Arabization of content and structures, indexing, accessibility and connectivity problems, monopoly of commercial software, and others, as part of building a development policy.

ANND perceives the MDGRs as tools to engage various stakeholders, including civil society organizations in the process of setting sustainable development policies. The Network worked throughout 2005 on engaging CSOs in the process of discussing the MDGRs through the national consultations it organized. ANND will build on this process to prepare, in partnership with Social Watch, a regional report on the progress of achieving the MDGs in the Arab region, written from a civil society perspective. In addition, ANND will engage with the United Nations Development Program in a "training for trainers" workshop, which prepares civil society activists to use the MDGRs as monitoring tools.

In the area of development, ANND was also engaged with five other initiatives including the Global Call to Action against Poverty, the national project on development in Lebanon, the annual solidarity activities with the Palestinian people, the World Summit on Information Society, and the International Forum on Rehabilitation of the Occupied Territories[3].

Box G. THE INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON REHABILITATION OF THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES; WORKING TO STRENGTHEN ARAB-PALESTINIAN PARTNERHSIP FOR DEVELOPMENT
www.psgateway.org/pdgnode/120148

The Forum was held in Beirut in October 2004. It underlined the necessity of promoting Arab-Palestinian partnership on the basis of development needs and priorities determined by the Palestinians themselves. In addition, it stressed the promotion of development goals common to various Arab and Palestinian sectors, including civil society institutions. This is based on the understanding that such efforts would be concomitant with the efforts to find a just solution to the Palestinian problem that would lead to the establishment of an independent viable Palestinian state.

One of the main initiatives launched during the Forum was establishing the Civil Society Coalition to support development and rehabilitation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). The purpose of founding the coalition was to establish a permanent structure that would contribute towards promoting cooperation and coordination among Arab and Palestinian civil society institutions with the objective of supporting rehabilitation and development efforts in the OPT.

In follow-up of this initiative, ANND and the Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO), in coordination with the United Nations Social and Economic Council for West Asia (ESCWA) and UNESCO, organized a follow up meeting of the coalition. The meeting was held in Beirut on the 24th and 25th of November 2005, with the aim at discussing and endorsing the objectives, term of reference and membership criteria of the coalition, and to formulate a clear and definitive work plan for the activities of the coalition. The participants considered this founding meeting a landmark in the work of civil society organizations, given it has paved the way for the actual establishment of a regional coalition in service of development in Palestine.

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(3) For more information, please refer to Box C, Box D, Box E, and Box G.

Reforms and Democracy in the Arab region

A focus on the socio-economic challenges in the region

During 2005, ANND went through a revision of its work in the area of democracy and human rights. ANND had been involved with the International Institute on Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) in a project entitled "Democracy in the Arab World" throughout 2003-2005. ANND also worked with IDEA, the International Federation for Electoral Systems (IFES), and UNDP on the Election Process Inform ation Collection, which covered ten Arab countries including Jordan, Egypt, Sudan, Bahrain, Yemen, Palestine, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, and Lebanon.

Box H. ANND SERVES AS THE REGIONAL SECRETARIAT FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM FOR DEMOCRACY (ICSFD)-2006 QATAR www.icsfd.org/index.html

The ICSFD is a global network of civil society representatives, which promotes effective democratic governance reforms by strengthening civil society collaboration nationally, regionally, and internationally. The ICSFD was established to implement the Program of Action agreed at the International Civil Society Forum held September 2003 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia at the time of the Fifth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies (ICNRD 5). ICSFD is an ongoing process and its annual meetings are organized in parallel to the governmental ICNRD.

The ICNRD was established at the initiative of developing countries in order to share experiences on democratization and to identify the means by which to promote democracy and good governance and address the challenges of democratic transitions. Since the first Conference held in 1988 in Manila, the Philippines, with the participation of 13 countries, the ICNRD has grown into a global event bringing together more than 100 countries from around the world. Subsequent International Conferences have been organized, with the support from the United Nations Development Program, in Managua, Nicaragua, 1994; Bucharest, Romania, 1997; and Cotonou, Benin, 2000. The Fifth ICNRD in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia attracted a record number of 119 states, with over 400 participants, some 30 of them at the ministerial or equivalent level.

ANND have been keen to take part in the ICSFD process due to the overlap in the aims of the proceedings of ICSFD process and the aims of ANND. The two seek to spread democratic values and build the capacities of civil society organizations in an effort to have them assume stronger positions in their countries and hence be able to press for democratic change and cope with it as well. Through involvement with the ICSFD process, especially that it is going to convene in Qatar in 2006, ANND will strengthen its efforts in pushing the debate on democracy in the Region and enhance its role in this regards. As the organizing secretariat of the ICSFD 2006, ANND will coordinate with the international steering committee, which includes the World Federalist Movement, representatives from UNDP, and representatives from the previous secretariat in Mongolia.

Preparations are underway for the ICSFD conference which will be held during the month of October 2006 in Qatar, in parallel to the official ICNRD conference.

Box I. THE CONFERENCE FOR GLOBAL DEMOCRACY 2005; CIVIL SOCIETY VISIONS AND STRATEGIES (G05) www.G05.org

ANND took part in the G05 which was hosted by the International Forum of Montreal and was held between the 29th of May and 1st of June 2005 in the University of McGill, Canada. The G05 aimed at tackling issues of global democracy from the perspective of civil society, while bridging between civil society and private and governmental actors, and was divided in six main tracks tackling:

   1. Civil society engagement: Changing territorial priorities?
   2. International treaties/International law: A hierarchy of values?
   3. Global security: Undermining democracy?
   4. Civil society participation: Opportunities and responsibilities
   5. How to democratically regulate the global economy?
   6. Maintaining cultural diversity in global solidarity?

The workings of this forum were directly related to the debates and initiatives regarding democratic reforms and good governance that are increasingly used as tools for global interference, whether in the Arab region or other regions of the world. Close to 400 participants from 45 countries gathered in the G05 to share civil society perspectives on the key issues that determine the state of global democracy - more precisely, lack thereof. As a unique gathering of governments, private entities, intergovernmental organizations and, mainly, civil society representatives, G05 provided a stage for cross-sectoral dialogue on how to democratize the international system of governance. Participants developed proposals to tackle the democratic deficit plaguing global governance, visions and strategies, which will guide discussions and action leading up to the Millennium +5 Summit at the United Nations in September and beyond.

ANND was responsible for organizing the conference related to civil society engagement in light of changing territorial priorities, focusing on three main dimensions of global democracy; regional blocks (social, economic, political, security…), the role of the government, and the changing role of civil society organizations. The track discussions aimed at identifying various actors (Civil society, governments, international institutions, companies, mafias, etc...) and analyzing their different roles and impacts within the context of global democracy dynamics.

Based on its previous experience, and that of its member organizations which are active and well-established human rights organizations that have worked extensively on issues of political reforms and respect of human rights, ANND reassessed the value-added it could contribute to the processes of reforms and democratic changes that are spurring throughout the Arab region. ANND stresses that the Arab region includes a variety of societies and economies as well as cultural traditions and backgrounds. Accordingly, the Arab region cannot be looked upon as one entity when it comes to reforms and change. It is clear that the Arab countries vary in their commitment to and implementation of political and civic rights as well as economic, social, and cultural ones. Much efforts and advocacy have been invested in these areas and several changes have started taking place in various Arab countries. Civil society organizations from the Arab region, especially human

rights organizations, have concentrated their efforts on these areas and advocated for the respect of political and civic rights. However, sustainable reform cannot be achieved without tackling economic, social, as well as cultural realities. It is worth noting that civil society organizations still lack enough consideration of these rights. Organizations often concentrate on the political rights and the reforms needed in this area while not highlighting the needed economic and social reform and their core link to the success of reform in general.

Accordingly, ANND will dedicate its efforts to highlighting and working on raising awareness and mobilizing CSOs regarding the economic, social, and cultural rights.

It perceives added value in contributing to mainstreaming the monitoring of social and economic national policies in civil society activities. ANND aims at energizing and strengthening democratic development and momentum in the Arab Region, through enhancing a genuine, concrete, and transparent dialogue on needed reforms between various stakeholders (i.e. state institutions and civil society organizations) on the national and regional levels. It also aims at shedding a light on the needed factors of socio-economic change as part of a successful democratization and reform process and a complementary track to political and cultural change. In this context, ANND will advance towards creating a network of informed and involved civil society organizations from the Arab region, which are concerned with reforms processes, regional democracy, and linkages between regional and global democracy processes

By providing them with a platform for dialogue and exchange, participants will have a chance to be proactive regarding issues of regional reform and its ties with processes of global and regional democracy. Accordingly, it will bring these actors together to work towards identifying roles, common approaches, and positions on the needs and opportunities for democratic reforms in the Arab countries, stemming from the needs and priorities of the Arab local communities. The project will aim as well at opening dialogue between governments and various civil society actors.

Throughout 2005, ANND have been working to build partnerships around this project and map the various stakeholders involved in projects tackling reforms in the region, both official and non-governmental.

Under the area of democracy and reforms, ANND was engaged in 2005 in the process of preparation for the International Civil Society Forum for Democracy that will be held in Qatar in 2006, the conference for Global Democracy 2005, and the civil society process organized in parallel to the Forum for the Future that was held in Bahrain[4].

(4) For more information, please refer to Box H, Box I, and Box J.

Box J. ARAB CIVIL SOCIETY ORAGNZIATIONS FOLLOW THE PROCESS OF THE 2005 FORUM FOR THE FUTURE IN BAHRAIN

After meeting in Rabat in December 2004, the Forum of the Future, which is a partnership initiative between the G8 countries and the Broader Middle East and North Africa countries, the trade and finance ministers of those countries met in Bahrain on the 11th and 12th of November. The forum is considered an extension to the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) initiated by the US as part of the Greater Middle East proposal.

The meeting looked upon the accomplishments achieved during 2004 in the areas that have been agreed, and which included; democracy assistance dialogue through providing electoral assistance, improving women's role, and advancing relations between governments and civil society; literacy; international finance and the work of the established International Finance Corporation's Private Enterprise Partnership; entrepreneurship and the progress of the centers established in each of Morocco and Bahrain; microfinance and the work of the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor and microfinance training center in Jordan; and investment and the work of the Investment Task Force.

In preparations for the forum that was held in Bahrain, a civil society meeting was convened during the same week of the official forum, between the 6th and 8th of November 2005. The meeting gathered civil society groups from the Middle East and North African region as well as experts and representatives of groups from North America, Europe, and other G8 countries. The conveners built on the process that was launched in 2004 in order to advance the dialogue with the official groups participating in the Forum for the Future. The Forum was being held on an annual basis, whereby during 2006 the meeting will take place in Jordan.

Based on its conviction that proper and sustained reform process depend on the participation and dialogue between various stakeholders, ANND and its member organizations in Bahrain participated in the preparation and implementation of the parallel process. Through this activity, ANND tried to advance civil society's vision of sustainable development and reform in the Arab region.

ANND Communication and Media Strategy

ANND's Information and Media Department; eANND [5]

Freedom of expression is a fundamental right and a basis for democracy. Free, open, and pluralistic media is a vital component of good governance. This is in addition to the relationship of these rights with the achievement of sustainable development and more specific developmental goals such as the Millennium Development Goals.

In the 10 years of its existence, ANND has accumulated a wide range of information in its different projects (ANND reports, program reports, Social Watch), position papers, workshops, and interviews and newspaper articles related to ANND's mandate. ANND's webpage includes some of this information in English. ANND also coordinates the Arabic version of the Global Call to Action against Poverty website. This is in addition to the high volume of translations of articles related to ANND's work and the activities of its members.

ANND is currently working on developing several information and media tools including:

Box K. eANND STRATEGIC GOALS

Based on the above and the participation of ANND in the process of the World Summit on Information Society, the network will build its strategic goals on 5 interconnecting components:

Censorship and Repression of the Media: Supporting actions opposing censorship and calling for the freedom of the press, the media, and all information; disseminating information on the situation of freedoms in the Arab region; and empowering alternative media.

Access to Information: Encouraging local and regional initiatives to increase beneficiaries of ICT in a context of ICT4D. This should not merely mean the distribution of personal computers and connecting them to the internet, but raising awareness of all social segments about the diverse tools and media available to access information related to day to day activities and for enhancing political participation.

Right to Technology: Considering that freedom of expression includes the freedom to use modern technology to publish and exchange information, and using a rights-based approach, through pressure to enhance IPR agreements to ensure the non-monopoly of technology by corporations, and through pressure on Arab governments to encourage local initiatives on ICT; encouraging the use of free and open source software.

Localization and Digitization: Promoting localization and digitization initiatives in the region (all local languages); promoting the exchange of studies, research, and other publications related to ANND and its programs (development, trade, gender, youth, democracy, human rights, etc.) through creating an open publishing portal for CSOs, researchers, and activists; and including digitization and documentation as a basic component in CSO work in the region.

Information Workers: Supporting initiatives to unionize and organize information workers in the Arab region and building their capacities.

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(5) For more information on E-ANND strategic goals, please refer to Box K.

Periodicals: ANND publishes two bilingual newsletters (Arabic and English), distributed for free to 600 subscribers, in addition to the Arabic version of the Global Call to Action against Poverty newsletter. The first ANND newsletter focuses on the latest local, regional, and international developments on ANND's strategic goals in development and human rights, in addition to covering local, regional, and international conferences and organizations. The second newsletter focuses on trade related issues.

Information Pool: ANND's executive office is an information pool for ANND's members, Arab civil society groups, and regional and international forums, specifically on issues of trade, development, human rights, and democratic transition, in addition to exchanging experiences on networking, advocacy campaigns, and capacity building.

Digital Workspace: Currently, ANND runs a static webpage in English (with some information in Arabic). It provides vital information on working programs for partners, donors, and other interested parties. In addition to the language, its main weakness is that the page is not dynamic, thus hindering usability and relevance. The department has drafted a program to develop the page and ANND's work on information and communication technologies for development (ICT4D), encompassing the following:

a. Open source Content Management System with Arabic capabilities;
b. Research on Arab civil society internet sites, using content management systems in development and human rights, the right to access information, and a blueprint that can be utilized by other organizations;
c. Training an information team (from each of the countries where ANND members are active) to develop the capacities of the organizations on using similar systems and providing the latest updates and information on local activities.

Capacity Building: Capacity building will be on two levels. The first involves raising the capacity of ANND members on informatics and digital media. The second will target information workers on issues of development, democracy, human rights, and other fields that ANND works on.

ARAB NGO Network for Development NETWORK

Financial Report for the period from 01/01/2005 to 31/12/2005

Project: all Projects
Currency = US Dollar

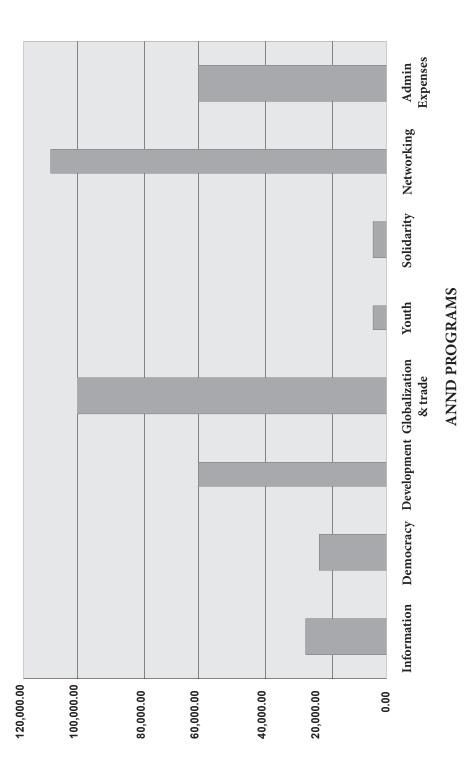**A- ANND annual Budget for the year 2005 - Expenses**

Expenses Item	Real Expenses
Information & Communication	27,180.28
Democracy Program	21,531.29
Development Program	60,718.06
Globalization & Trade Program	102,281.65
Youth Program	6,851.25
Solidarity	7,744.00
Networking	109,941.33
Administrative cost	62,012.44
Total Expenses	**398,260.30**

B- ANND incomes for the year 2005:

INCOMES ITEM	Real incomes
a- Brought forward	**36,992.65**
b- 2005 Incomes:	
HBF	71,293.86
Ford	124,994.93
Oxfam Q	54,150.00
Oxfam Solidarity	56,245.00
IDEA	18,439.93
Epic	3,989.86
GCAP	36,994.93
Other incomes	39,923.11
Total funders incomes	**406,031.62**
Total incomes	**443,024.27**

Balance at 31/12/2005[6]	**44,763.97**

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(6) The surplus balance of 44,763.97 USDollars at 31/12/2005 represent the balance of Oxfam Solidarity and Ford Foundation Grant for 2005 to be spent in the first quarter 2006

Chart: ANND Expenses for the year 2005

Y-axis (Amount USD): 0.00, 20,000.00, 40,000.00, 60,000.00, 80,000.00, 100,000.00, 120,000.00

X-axis (ANND PROGRAMS): Information, Democracy, Development, Globalization & trade, Youth, Solidarity, Networking, Admin Expenses

MEMBERS OF ANND COORDINATION COMMITTEE

1. Palestinian NGO Network www.pngo.net

1. Al-Amal Iraqi Organization www.iraql-alamal.org

2. Yemeni Center for Training and Information for Human Rights www.hritc.org

3. Sudanese Forum for Civic Engagement www.EDG-SD.org

4. Jordanian Women Union www.jwu.itgo.com

5. Moroccan Espace Associative Network www.espace.cjb.net

6. Algerian Youth Forum

7. Tunisian Association of Democratic Women

8. Forum of NGOs working among Palestinian Communities in Lebanon www.socialcare.org

9. Collective of NGOs in Lebanon

10. Egyptian National Association for Human Rights

11. Bahraini Committee for the Defense of the Human Rights