

Arab NGO Network for Development Progress Report 2006



ARAB NGO NETWORK FOR DEVELOPMENT

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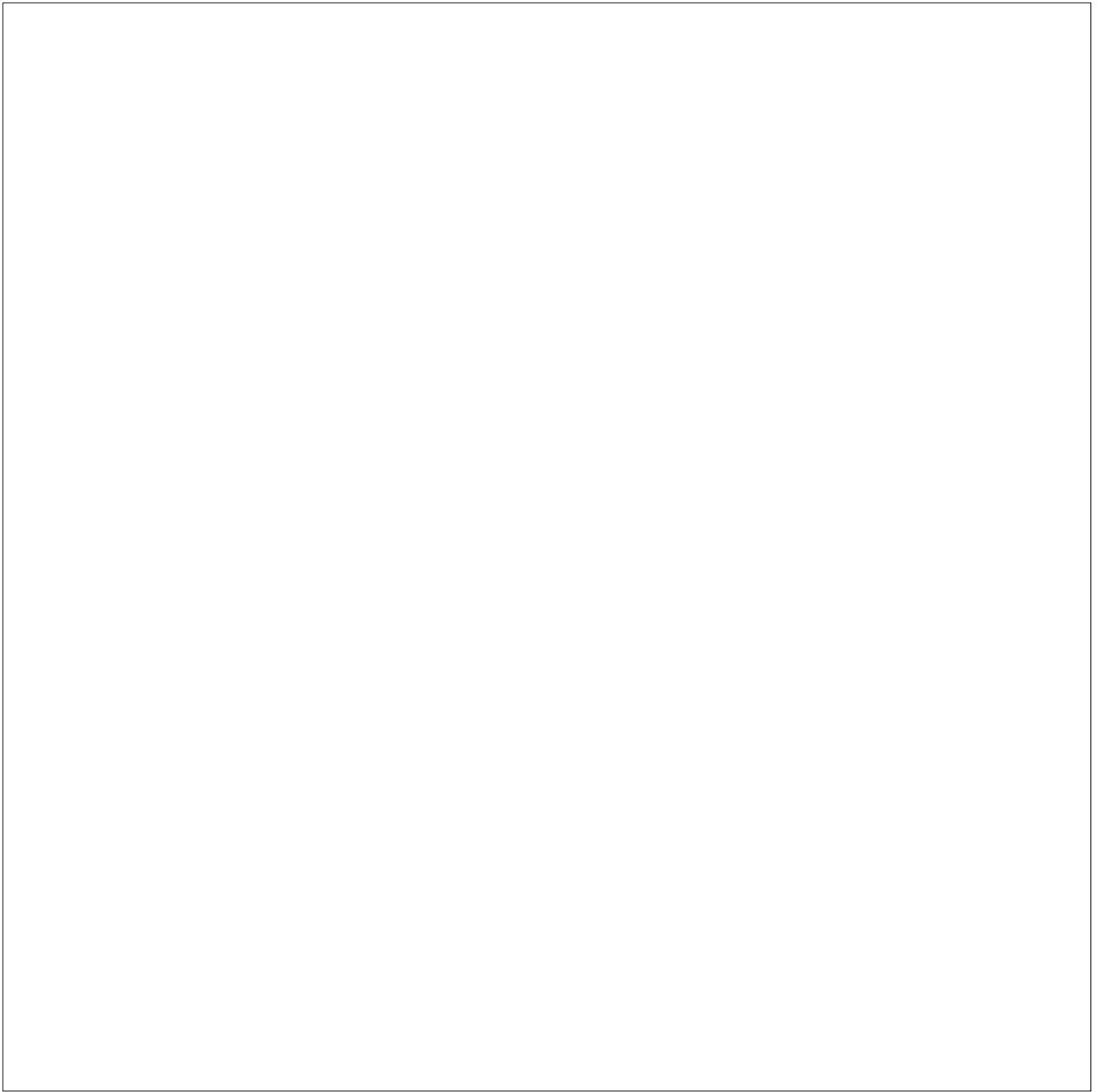
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Forward by ANND Executive Director

The year 2006 constitutes the end of the two-year ANND implementation plan, which witnessed an important period of progress for ANND as an institution and as a network. The work implemented through this period was based on the results of the strategic planning process launched in December 2003 and achieved by the end of the year 2004.

ANND focused in this plan on the empowerment of the Arab civil society and promoting their role as advocacy organizations. Arab civil society is often focused on service provision and implementing developmental projects, but is less engaged in challenging public policies and advocating for policy change. Consequently, ANND's priority was advocating and promoting positions and strategies from civil society perspective in the following three areas of concerns: (1) Globalization and Trade, (2) Democratic reforms and (3) Development policies. ANND's strategy and its work plan were elaborated in coordination with ANND's Coordination Committee (i.e. Board) and adopted by the General Assembly in June 2005.

Over this period, and in order to benefit from other experiences, ANND developed its contacts and partnership with several international networks such as the Third World Network, the Social Watch, Civicus World Citizen's Alliance, the International Forum of Montreal, the Our World is Not for Sale, the Reality of Aid, the Asia Pacific Research Network, and the International Council of the World Social Forum. The partnership and active involvement of ANND in these networks and groups helped open space for ANND's voice in many global events such as the Ministerial Meeting of the WTO in Hong Kong (December 2005), the World Social Forum (Porto Allegre 2005 and Nairobi 2007), the Euro-Mediterranean processes (Luxembourg- March 2005 and Morocco-November 2006), the World Economic Forum (Davos 2007), and many other global and regional foras.

During the second semester of 2007, ANND will be elaborating the strategy and the work plan for the coming three years 2008-2010; this process will be based on a comprehensive evaluation of ANND's programs followed by a strategic planning process. The success of this process will depend on its inclusiveness and on the participation of the members of the Coordination Committee

and the approval of the General Assembly.

It is worth noting that ANND's role is highly linked to the context it operates in, and it is often challenged by the need to elaborate relevant strategies in response to regional challenges facing civil society. These challenges include (1) the lack of peace, security and stability, (2) the obstacles facing the reform processes and (3) the low level of development and lack of developmental policies in the Arab countries. In addition, ANND's work often faces other challenges internal to civil society structures in the Arab countries such as (1) the lack of needed tools and resources for empowerment of the civil society, and (2) the limitations of the visions, missions, and comprehensive strategies among civil society actors in the Arab region.

These factors, as well as the importance and added-value of sustained regional coordination and active input to the global civil society dynamics will form an integrated consideration of ANND's forthcoming strategy. ANND continues to learn from the challenges and experiences faced during the past period, and benefit from experiences of other networks and other regions in order to continuously improve its performance and increase its impact as a regional network that advocates and promotes the respect of socio-economic rights in the Arab region.

Ziad Abdel Samad
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ziad Abdel Samad', with a small horizontal line underneath.

Introduction to ANND Programs; Progress over 2006

The year 2006 was a big challenge for ANND programs. Throughout the beginning of 2006, ANND was working on developing its human-resource capacities, its evaluation mechanisms and programmatic structures, and position as a network in the three areas of focus- development policies; trade and globalization; and reform and democratic changes.

In July 2006, ANND as a network faced a major challenge for the sustainability of its programs due to the Israeli war on Lebanon- where ANND's executive secretariat office is located. Throughout this period, extending from July 2006 till August 2006 [end of military attack] and into September 2006, most of ANND staffs were not able to access the office location and implementation of programs was highly complicated. However, ANND executive office succeeded to follow all programmatic responsibilities for 2006 and was shortly after July organizing the regional meeting for GCAP in Sudan during September, the regional training for youth on advocacy in Beirut during November, and the international workshop on free trade agreements in Cairo as well as regional training on the MDGs in Rabat during December.

Moreover, all through the war period, ANND executive office was contributing to international information dissemination on the social and economic consequences of the war on Lebanese communities. Please check the daily updates released during the war period on our website <http://www.annd.org/subindex.asp>, which were widely disseminated on regional and international levels. In addition, ANND executive office exerted lots of efforts in coordinating with the international community that is willing to bring support to the Lebanese community and civil society through facing the direct challenges in relief and emergency and later the challenges in the process of rehabilitation and development.

ANND Programs' Strategy Tools

Building on the outcomes of program implementation during 2005, ANND programs during 2006 witnessed further push towards focusing on (1) developing networking and coalition building at the national level (2) developing resource materials and information dissemination tools (newsletters

and websites) (3) actively linking up and engaging with international organizations and campaigns (4) actively engaging governments in debates on democracy, trade policies, and development processes (5) building training programs that capitalize on ANND experience and work on advocacy and networking.

Accordingly, 2006 witnessed the engagement of ANND in setting the GCAP website for the Arab region (www.gcaparabregion.org). It also included ANND's engagement with developing and implementing training programs on the MDGs for both civil society organizations and media personnel. Furthermore during March 2006, ANND organized the global meeting of the GCAP, which constituted a renewal of the call to continue the global campaigning against poverty and for equality through 2007. In addition, among the highlights of 2006 was ANND partnership with the Third World Network and UNDP for a regional meeting on free trade agreements, and its engagement in organizing the tripartite process of the International Conference on New and Restored Democracy 2006 in Doha, Qatar.

In this context, ANND continues to campaign through its member organizations on inter-related policies on reform, development, and trade, in a quest to serve the respect of social and economic rights in the Arab region. Continuous revision and evaluation of the networking experience is undergoing in ANND, aiming at more efficient mechanisms to serve our mission and vision. Accordingly, ANND undertook several writings on civil society and its challenges in the Arab region (which can be asked for from ANND executive office).

Following is a more detailed description of ANND programs' implementation for the year 2006.

ANND Programs in the Area of Trade and Globalization

The recent plethora of bilateral, regional and multilateral free trade agreements, through the World Trade Organization, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the free trade agreements with the USA, and other regional and bilateral agreements, presents a significant challenge for countries in the Arab region. Arab economies and institutions, which have traditionally been closed, are about to enter a phase of increased global exposure. Not only is there limited negotiation capacities among Arab governments and little awareness of trade issues within civil society organizations in the Arab region, but there is a dearth of studies examining the effects (whether social, economic, cultural, legal...) of these agreements upon Arab countries.

Trade as means to development

Only recently have the links between trade and development begun to be explored by scholars, civil society actors, and governments. ANND believes that trade can be one of many tools for development and trade liberalization should be looked upon as means for achieving sustainable development and not as an end by itself. Trade policies should be an integral part of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) oriented plans, based on national and regional priorities. Accordingly, the aim should not be to liberalize trade but to set trade policies that secure social, economic, and cultural rights for all. However, there is no implicit link between trade and development and therefore ANND believes the trade-development issue should be explored and examined further.

Civil society organizations have a role to play in trade issue

ANND believes that the role of civil society organizations is essential if trade policy will be oriented towards achieving the MDGs and supporting development-oriented national policies. Accordingly, setting trade policy should be based on a transparent and inclusive process that includes consistent and institutionalized dialogue between government and civil society organizations. ANND will continue to increase and strengthen civil society organizations' trade awareness and capacity by working on:

- Promoting policies that recognize **trade as a potential means towards development** and not an end in and of itself
- Push for **socio-economic assessments of trade liberalization policies** before signing any further trade agreements
- Advocating for **increased policy space** for civil society organizations and developing countries in setting trade policies
- **Encouraging further studies** examining the economic, social, cultural, and legal impact of free trade agreements upon the Arab countries
- **Enhancing the role of civil society organizations** with national governments and international organizations
- **Strengthen ties between and amongst scholars and civil society organizations** in the Arab countries in order to explore trade and development policies specifically suited for the region
- **Building the capacities of civil society groups** in the Arab region through raising awareness around impact of trade liberalization, coalition building and networking around trade issues, and exchanging of experiences with civil society experiences from other regions.



BRIEF on MAIN ACTIVITIES in Trade & Globalization

In light of this approach, ANND continues the implementation of a two-year program on trade and globalization issues entitled "The Socio-Economic Impact of Trade Liberalization in the Arab Region". This project started in 2005 and is being implemented with the support of the Ford Foundation.

The project aims at:

- Enhancing the participation of involved Arab civil society organizations in regional and international trade-related campaigns.
- Reaching a better understanding of the socio-economic impact of multilateral, regional, and bilateral trade agreements on the Region and a clearer insight into effective mechanisms to face these challenges
- Creating areas of opportunity for a more effective participation of Arab CSOs in the decision-making process and consultations regarding trade issues in the region

During 2006, ANND issues two trade-related e-newsletters - one in February and another in April. The newsletter includes information on trade agreements within the WTO framework, the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, the Greater Arab Free Trade Area and the bilateral levels, especially focusing on the agreements with the United States¹.

Within this project, ANND have produced till date 7 briefing papers on trade liberalization policies in the Arab region including papers on Bahrain, Morocco, Egypt, Yemen, Sudan, Lebanon, and Jordan. Moreover, ANND produced 7 e-newsletters and a detailed position paper on Arab countries negotiation positions prior to the WTO Hong Kong Ministerial Meeting.

¹ With the war on Lebanon in July, ANND was not able to sustain the production of the newsletter given that there was a severe staff shortage at the organization. However, the newsletter remains part of ANND's work plan and there are prospects for expanding it and developing on its subjects.

ANND worked towards further developing its relations with main partner organizations that it has worked with on trade issues. ANND developed close partnership with the Third World Network and established strong relations with departments working on trade programs in each of the United Nations Development Program, the UN Economic and Social Commission of Western Asia, and the League of Arab States. ANND is also currently actively engaged with "Our World is not for Sale" network and supporting its outreach in the Arab region.

Moreover, ANND contributed towards the emergence of a national coalition following trade issues in Lebanon called "Lebanon is not for Sale". The group includes a number of development and human rights organizations who are concerned with the impact of Lebanon's accession to the WTO and other trade agreements on the rights and livelihoods of communities in Lebanon.

About the National Consultations:

After organizing national workshops in each of Bahrain and Egypt during 2005, ANND organized three workshops in 2006; one in Morocco on the 11th of March 2006, another in Jordan on the 15th of June 2006, and a third in Yemen on 23rd of August 2006.

The workshops tackled the socio-economic impact of trade liberalization on various national sectors and the role of civil society groups in advocacy and lobbying on trade and development issues. The workshop in Morocco was held in partnership with ANND's member organization in Morocco, the Espace Associative, the workshop in Jordan was held in partnership with the Jordanian Center for Social Research, and that in Yemen was organized in partnership with the Yemeni Center for Human Rights. Participants included representatives from government, academia, international agencies especially UN agencies, civil society organizations, and media. Several workshops were characterized by the participation of

The workshops were a very important step towards highlighting the importance of having trade issues at the center of the debate among civil society organizations. It also presented an opportunity to engage governmental representatives around civil society perspectives on trade and development issues. Yet, a well-developed follow-up strategy for each of the countries is needed to keep organizations updated and moving towards creating more tight and effective coalitions working on trade and development issues. This necessitates more human resources and capacities in advocacy on trade issues and more engagement at the national level.

former negotiators whose contributions brought a lot of insights into experiences in negotiating free trade agreements and learning from mistakes done in the negotiations process.

About the Regional Workshop of Experts and Civil Society Groups on Free Trade Agreements

ANND, in partnership with the Third World Network, and in collaboration with the United Nations Development Program, organized a regional workshop for experts and civil society organizations, on free trade agreements in the Arab region. The workshop took place between the 9th and 11th of December 2006 in Cairo.

The workshop aimed at opening dialogue between civil society organizations and experts on trade issues, focusing on revising the structure, content, and mechanisms of FTAs signed by Arab countries, and whether these agreements are consistent with the developmental objectives of the region. It looked at the impact of bilateral FTAs on various areas of developmental and economic importance including health and intellectual property rights, services, investment, market access, and government procurement.

The workshop gathered more than 55 participants; it involved presentations and participation by scholars, civil society organizations and Arab government officials. The main trade agreements examined were the US bilateral agreements with various Arab countries and the EU-Mediterranean association agreements. This was done against the backdrop of the global trade regime under the auspices of the World Trade Organization and in comparison with experiences from other regions.

The overall discussions highlighted that the neo-liberal definition of development is being currently challenged by a new emerging development paradigm that stresses (1) that national governments and national development programs are necessary for development; and

In light of the overall discussions, recommendations noted that future steps could move towards:

- Creating increased intellectual space and forums to devise country-specific trade and development programs and strategies
- Building capacities on knowledge of trade agreements, negotiation strategy and advocacy skills for government negotiators, civil society organizations, and social movements
- Promoting research initiatives on trade and development in the Arab region

(2) that national governments need the utmost policy space and flexibility to address the social and economic challenges they face). Accordingly, national governments need to have clear development agendas in order to guide the country's economy and in order to have a stronger position when negotiating with more powerful entities.

ANND Programs in the Area of Development

The definition of human development is not limited to income anymore, but extends to indicators relating to living conditions such as health, education, housing, knowledge, equality, and sustainability. This approach was reflected in the Millennium Declaration that was issued by United Nations' Millennium Summit held in 2000. The declaration set forward the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as a compilation of the proceedings from various Summits held through the nineties. In 2005, the United Nations Secretary General reaffirmed the commitment of the international institution to the MDGs through linking development to peace and security and human rights.

The MDGs as a tool and not an end

ANND views the **MDGs as tools for the civil society organizations to advocate for policy change in their governments**, especially that all Arab countries are committed to the achievement of the MDGs by the year 2015. ANND works towards raising the awareness of the Arab civil society organizations on how the MDGs can serve as an effective tool for advocacy campaigns on integration of the goals in national socio-economic policies.

Partnership for development; Strategic mobilization for development in the Arab region

The MDGs presents as well means for enhancing **partnership between the governments, the private sector, and the civil society**, based on coordination of efforts and information sharing. Yet, the culture of partnership lacks in the Arab countries. This was very obvious in the preparation of the MDG reports, whereby in most Arab countries civil society organizations were not able to participate in the process.

Civil society organizations should have a **role in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, as well as setting of policies** based on needs of various social groups. Accordingly, civil society organizations should build their capacities and develop their **advocacy strategies** to improve their role and effectiveness and their impact on the policy-making related to national development strategies.



In this context, ANND invests efforts to enhance **national civil society coalition building** around the MDGs and development policies. ANND also works towards strengthening Arab **participation in global mobilization** behind the MDGs and development processes.

In line of that, ANND has played an active part **as a regional focal point for the Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP)** since its launch in 2004. With more than 1500 organizations from around the world rallying their governments to stand up to their commitments and work on eradicating world poverty, ANND sees in GCAP an opportunity to voice out Arab concerns globally and to strengthen ties with global movements. In addition, it is a venue to enhance support of regional and national civil society mobilization in the Arab region, for sound and sustainable development policies and poverty eradication schemes.

BRIEF of MAIN ACTIVITIES in Development

The years 2006 and 2007 are focal years for the follow up of the Millennium Development Goals. Those two years will see the production of another round of national MDG reports. Moreover, the 7th of July, 2007 represents a key date for civil society activists, whereby it will mark the mid-term review of the progress achieved on the MDGs.

ANND's work in the framework of the MDGs aims at the following:

- A. Increasing the number of Arab civil society organizations involved in the MDGs campaigning in the Arab region
- B. Enhancing coordination and networking among Arab civil society organizations working on the MDGs
- C. Contributing to enhancing the role of Arab civil society organizations regarding the Arab MDGs reports, through increasing CSOs analysis of, contribution to, and putting forward positions from the propositions outlaid in the reports

Through 2006, ANND continued to work on organizing national workshops on the MDGs and delivered in partnership with Center for Arab Women Training and Research (CAWTAR) a regional training on the MDGs campaigns. In addition, ANND maintained its role within the Global Call to Action against Poverty.

About the National Sessions on the MDGs

ANND continued the series of national and regional consultations around the MDGs that it started in 2003 in several Arab countries. These consultations are meant to contribute to enhancing the process of interaction between various stakeholders involved in the MDGs processes, including the government, UN agencies, and civil society organizations.

Participants focused on the need to adopt a participatory approach where civil society organizations are involved actively and effectively in the elaboration of the MDG reports and the implementation of the MDGs.

ANND had organized consultations in Egypt, Bahrain, Sudan, and Yemen during 2004 and 2005; in 2006, ANND held two more national workshops, one in Beirut on the 11th and 12th of April, and another in Amman on the 2nd of February 2006.

About the Regional Training of Trainers on the MDGs

ANND implemented a regional Statistical Training on the MDGs in Rabat, in partnership with Center for Arab Women Training and Research (CAWTAR) and with the support of the UNDP and Espace Associative.

The workshop was attended by thirty-six participants, divided among representatives of civil society organizations and media groups. This contributed significant added value to the debates and content of the discussions held through the six-day training. The training aimed at exploring the ways in which civil society organizations could advocate for further concrete steps towards MDGs' achievements and establishing a group of well informed and trained activists in this area.

The workshop included eighteen sessions that focused on the background of the MDGs and development policies, public-policy making and channels of influencing it, statistical skills needed in reading, analyzing, and preparing MDGs' indicators, practical training on the DevInfo system, training on skills of networking, negotiations, capacity building, and working with the media in relation to the MDGs, in working on developing national and regional propositions for campaigning on the MDGs.

The training was a unique experience in condensing a training program on the MDGs, including theoretical approaches on the MDGs, statistical literacy, and practical tools. ANND will work on developing a training manual based on the training program given in the workshop.

On the Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP)

ANND has been serving since 2005 as the regional focal point for the GCAP. The network contributed and supported the establishment of GCAP national coalitions in several Arab countries including Palestine, United Arab Emirates, Sudan, Yemen, Jordan, Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. ANND organized regional meetings for the GCAP in Cairo (2005), Sudan (2006), and a global meeting in Beirut (2006).

The Second Global Meeting for GCAP

ANND organized in Beirut, between 13 and 15 March 2006, the second global meeting for the GCAP. The meeting gathered 175 delegates from more than 80 countries. The participants recommitted to GCAP campaigning for the year 2007 and to the white band as the symbol of solidarity in the fight against poverty. The meeting issued 'The Beirut Declaration' which renewed the call and set October 17th, the World Poverty Day, as the global mobilization day for the GCAP coalitions around the world.

The Second Regional Meeting for GCAP in the Arab Region

ANND organized a regional meeting for GCAP coalitions in the Arab region, in Khartoum, Sudan between 15 and 17, September 2006. The meeting gathered representatives of GCAP national coalitions from Sudan, Yemen, Jordan, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia, in addition to representatives of the executive office of the Arab NGO Network for Development and a number of interested Sudanese organizations following the subject.

As a result of the meeting's recommendation, a website for the GCAP in the Arab region was established at www.gcaparabregion.net. The website is a tool to enhance communication and networking between the national coalitions and make available information about GCAP campaigns in the Arab region.

National Pilot Project: "Development in Lebanon; Poverty Eradication, Gender Equity, Youth Participation: The Role of NGOs, Civil Society and Other Actors"

In partnership with Oxfam Quebec/ the Canadian Fund for Social development, and UNDP, ANND started in 2005 a two- year program in Lebanon; aiming at fostering collaboration and partnership between the government and civil society on development policies. Initially, the project was structured along three main tracks: national awareness raising seminars, regional strategic planning roundtables, and a capacity building and training component. Participants worked towards developing features of a national strategy for poverty eradication, gender equity and youth participation from the civil society perspective.

In 2005, ANND implemented two national seminars on poverty eradication and gender equity in Lebanon. In 2006, ANND organized, in collaboration with the "Lebanese Social Movement Group", a national seminar on youth participation. The seminar was attended by over 250 participants who came from various regions in Lebanon. The participants addressed several topics directly affecting the Lebanese youth like employment, social security, education, family, and poverty issues.

In the aftermath of the Israeli war on Lebanon during July 2006, the original project objectives were revised to fit with the resulting situation and challenges. The main objectives of the revised plan aims at enhancing active participation of Lebanese civil society in the rehabilitation, recovery, reconstruction, and overall reform efforts in Lebanon within the framework of a longer-term vision of development needs in the country.

On January 16 and 17, ANND organized the "Conference on CSO Participation in recovery and Development in Lebanon". The conference gathered more than 257 participants distributed between local and national Lebanese NGOs, representatives of embassies, international agencies and funds, and ministries and municipalities delegates.

The conference was organized around five sectoral tracks: (a) community basic infrastructure, including water and sanitation; (b) livelihoods/ economic development (excluding agricultural development); (c) livelihoods/ agricultural development, (d) basic social services/ education and health; (e) reintegration & reconciliation, vulnerable groups, and mine action assistance; and (f) urban planning and environment.

The conference constituted the first phase of the revised project. It contributed towards gathering various actors working in the development field among different sectors and setting the ground for a more developed mapping of actors. It also highlighted the needs and recommendations of various sectors and linked groups to each other and to possible funding opportunities.

The outcomes of this international conference will contribute to the preparations of the second phase of the project which will gather different stakeholder, including national civil society organizations, UN agencies and governmental institutions in a national cross-thematic conference for rehabilitation and development. The process will be based on regional assessments and roundtables which aim at identifying the needs and priorities of various Lebanese regions and the extent to which these needs are being answered.

Regional Workshop for Active Youth from the Arab region; *Challenges of Youth Participation in Decision-Making Processes*

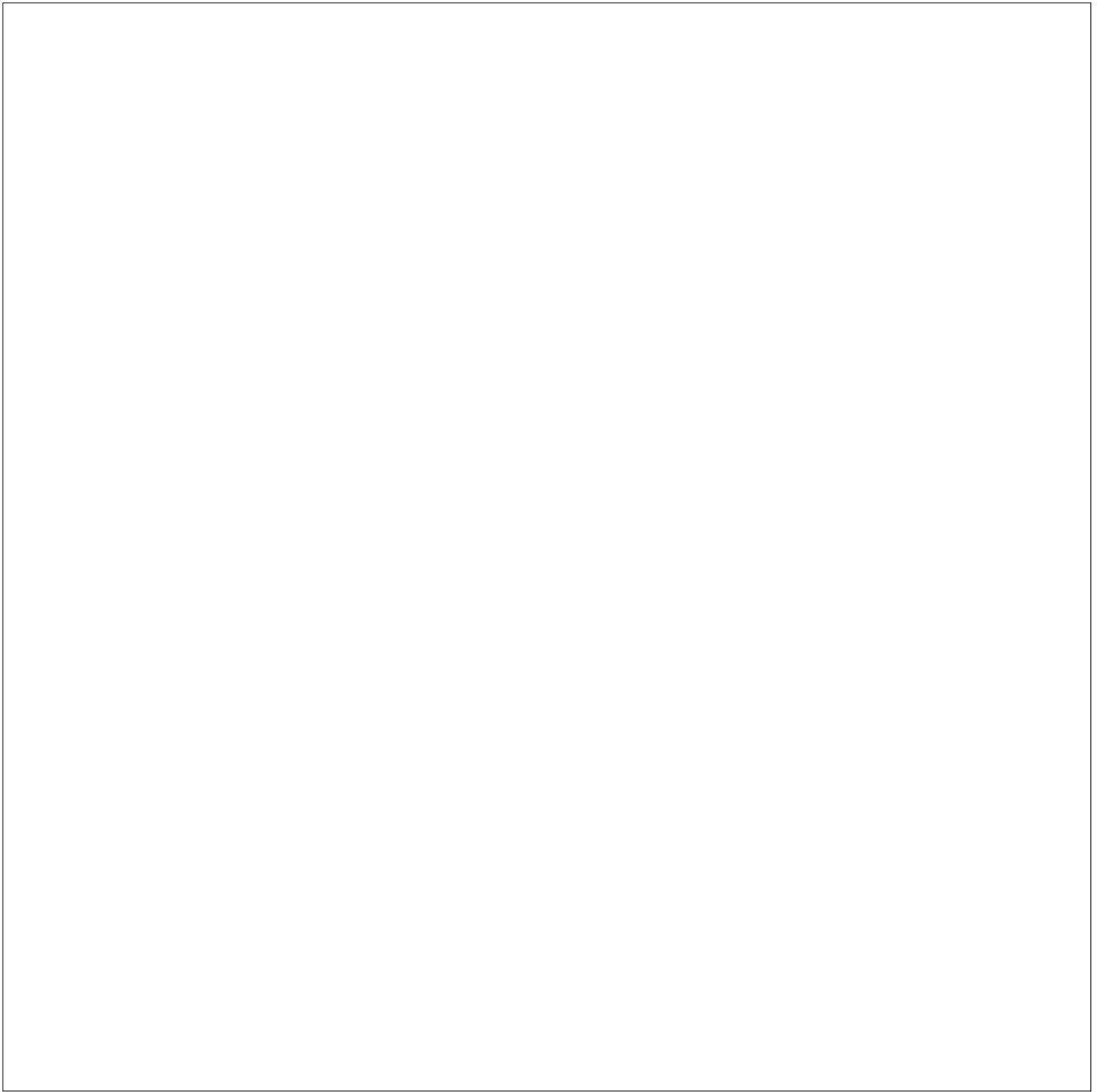
Given its commitment to youth issues and mobilization, ANND organized a four-day youth workshop in Beirut between the 4th and 7th of December 2006. The workshop gathered twenty-one active young people from ten different countries, including Jordan, Bahrain, Syria, Morocco, Palestine, Yemen, Sudan, Egypt, and Tunisia in addition to several regions in Lebanon. They participated training sessions and discussions around issues concerning youth participation in policy-making processes, focusing on mechanisms of advocacy and campaigning as empowerment tools.

The workshop shed light on the common challenges that youth face in the Arab societies, and the importance of common advocacy and networking among youth from the Arab region. This activity presents another stepping stone towards a more structured youth involvement within the ANND.

Participants pointed to: a higher degree of youth participation occurred in the non-governmental sector and in civil society and a weaker of participation in political parties and within one's own neighborhood and community.

The common problem that various groups identified as a hinder facing the role of youth in the Arab countries is "unemployment and poverty."





ANND Programs in the Area of Democracy and Reforms

The Arab region is at a turning point which presents significant challenges as well as opportunities for the political, economic, social, and cultural future of various countries within the region. Reform is unquestionably necessary, and it cannot be achieved without an active role for civil society organizations as a partner and stakeholder in the change process. ANND's involvement with democracy issues stems from the belief that there is a strong interlink between achieving sustainable development, strengthening democratic processes, and empowering the role of civil society, which aligns with the United Nations' vision for linking peace and security, human rights, and development.

"Countries need not to wait to be fit for democracy, but rather become fit through democracy"

Amartya Sen

The Role of Civil Society Organizations in advocacy

ANND strongly believes in the importance of building a healthy and efficient **tripartite relationship among civil society organizations, parliaments, and governments**, which could lead to a constructive collaboration and potential partnership. This process is vital for developing a strong and coherent understanding of the democratization challenges that are facing the Arab region and initiating effective and efficient means and models to deal with these challenges. Accordingly, ANND invests its efforts towards raising awareness and enhancing capacities of various civil society organizations in its quest of increasing their role beyond service provision into **advocacy and lobbying for policy change**. ANND also strongly supports the empowerment and improvement of the role of civil society organizations in the monitoring process of democracy building.

Comprehensive Approach to Reform

ANND perceives that the **reform process should be a comprehensive one**; political reforms cannot be separated from a process of socio-economic reforms and the latter cannot be separated from a healthy democratic process. In this line of thought, ANND sees an added value in contributing to mainstreaming the monitoring of social and economic national policies through programs of civil society organizations.

Moreover, **there is an intrinsic role of culture in the Arab region** in influencing various structures, ranging from personal interaction to governance institutions. This leads ANND to look at culture as a significant factor in the reform process and support a democratization process where the Arab citizen enjoys freedom of belief, thought, and expression. Traditions and diversity have to be respected but people can in no way be hampered to develop their capacities and be left in the rigidity of the past. Accordingly, there exists no contradiction between the particularity of the region and the application of principles of democracy based on citizenship and active participation.

ANND recognizes the **significance of openness and dialogue between all social and political forces** in the reform process and accordingly highlights the necessity of entering into a dialogue with progressive Islamic movements in the region. This engagement should be on the basis of democracy and human rights, and should ensure rights, responsibilities, and equality that would prevent conflicts and divisions in Arab societies. Indeed, the role and impact of Islamic movements in Arab societies has been increasing over time; in order to ensure a healthy and durable democratic reform, progressive Islamic who share a pro-democracy agenda ought to be given a space and voice within the change process. Excluding their participation would be unrealistic and undemocratic by itself, and therefore contradicts one of our core ideas.

“Democracy is neither black nor red. Democracy is gray, it chooses banality over excellence, shrewdness over nobility, empty promise over true competence... it is eternal imperfection, a mixture of sinfulness, saintliness and monkey business. This is why the seekers of a moral state and of a perfectly just society do not like democracy. Yet only democracy—having the capacity to question itself—also has the capacity to correct its own mistakes.”

Adam Michnik

BRIEF of MAIN ACTIVITIES Democracy and Reforms

ANND as the regional secretariat for the International Civil Society Forum for Democracy (ICSFD)-2006

The International Civil Society Forum for Democracy (ICSFD) was established during the parallel civil society conference to the 5th International Conference of New & Restored Democracies (ICNRD-5), which was held in September 2003 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia <http://www.icnrd5-mongolia.mn/>. The ICSFD is a global network of civil society representatives that aim to assert the values of democracy and promote effective democratic governance by strengthening the collaboration among civil society organizations at the national, regional, as well as international levels.

ANND supports the ICSFD process and believes in the tripartite process of the ICSFD, which seeks to link civil society, parliaments, and government. Accordingly, ANND contributed as a member of the International Steering Committee that prepared for the Forum that was to be held in Doha, Qatar during 2006.

ANND organized an Arab regional preparatory meeting for the ICSFD in Doha, Qatar, between the 17th and 18th of June 2006, in coordination with the Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) in Qatar.

Moreover, ANND was actively involved in the main Forum that was held between October 29 and November 1, 2006 in Qatar, whereby it three events:

1. A Panel on **strengthening democracy** that focused on the democracy assessment and promotion tools
2. A regional networking panel on the Arab region and the Middle East that focused on the **ICNRD/ ICSFD implementation processes as well as the democratic status in the region**

One of the major follow up recommendations resulting from the ICSFD conference is developing democracy indicators that will serve as tools to measure and assess democracy in the Arab region. In this respect, a need arises to establish (a) an Arab observatory or "watchdog" that would focus on the whole democratization process coupled with (b) national observatories that would base their work on the democracy indicators by relying on national and regional priorities and needs.

3. A side-event in coordination with Action Aid (AA) and Bridge Initiative (BI) on the **role of Governance, Cultural Perceptions, and the Role of Media within the Framework of Democratic Changes in the World**. This event was merged with a panel organized by the Forum International de Montreal (FIM) that focused on **Building Bridges II: Engaging civil society from OIC countries and other Muslim Communities with the Multilateral Sphere**.

ANND and the Association for Tunisian Democratic Women were elected as two members representing the Arab region on the International Steering Committee for the next ICSFD summit which is proposed to be held in Latin America.

Collaboration between ANND and Action Aid; Governance, Culture, and Democracy issues in the Arab region

In the context of its work on democracy and reform issues, ANND developed a partnership with Action Aid (AA) to work on the linkages between governance, culture, and democracy. In this context, two research studies were developed;

The first study entitled "**The Democratization of the Arab countries: A Comparative Approach between Foreign and Regional Agendas (political, economic, and social)**" tackles (1) the various Arab and foreign initiatives and their relationship with the concepts of human rights, peace, security, etc (2) the perception of the Arabs towards these initiatives and the impact the latter have on Arab countries (3) an evaluation of the mechanisms of the reform initiatives. This study was developed by Mr. Salah Deen El Jourshi from Tunisia.

the second study entitled "**Civil Society's role vis-à-vis Democracy and Governance in the Arab Region: A Growing or Fading Impact?**" tackles (1) civil society's role in pushing reform and democratic initiatives in the region as well as their capacities in doing so (2) an evaluation of the existent civil society organizations reform initiatives and recommendations on the means to strengthen the latter. This study was developed by Mr. Sana'a Abou Chakra from Lebanon

Electoral Process Information Collection (EPIC) <http://www.epicproject.org> Handbook

ANND constituted to a handbook developed by International IDEA, in collaboration with the regional partners of the EPIC Project and the University of Montreal, dealing with global election administration laws and practice, and based on the data of the Election Process Information Collection Project (EPIC).

The EPIC database encompasses various election related topics such as electoral systems, legal framework, electoral management, boundary delimitation, voter education, voter registration, voting operations, parties and candidates, vote counting, and media and elections.

The core aim of the handbook, which includes between 12 to 15 regional studies, is to deepen and apply the general knowledge of election administration, focusing on particular topics and region specific aspects, and to gain understanding of regional trends and areas of development.

ANND contributed to the handbook with a regional study on Voting Operations in Lebanon, Palestine, and Egypt. The study also included a small reference to the voter education subject that is a paramount issue prior to the voting operations.

Developing a Regional Program on Socio-Economic Reforms in the Arab Region

Based on its work on reforms and democratic changes in the Arab region, ANND had developed a regional project on socio-economic reforms, which aims at strengthening democratic development in the Arab Region, by enhancing a genuine, concrete, open and transparent dialogue on needed reforms between various stakeholders (i.e. state institutions, business sector, and CSOs), on both national and regional levels.

“The staggering political and security challenges that face the Middle East (...) should not be used as excuses to avoid addressing the urgently pressing socio-economic problems that the countries of the region face.”

Dr. Sufyan Alissa- “Beyond Politics”-
Carnegie Endowment

The project working tools include;

- 1- **Raising the awareness** of civil society groups on social and economic rights and realities in the Arab countries and needed reforms in that regards
- 2- Capacity building of these groups through **research and multi-track dialogue** in order to enhance and promote their role in developing a future-oriented vision of needed socio-economic reforms in the Arab Region



- 3- Mainstreaming the monitoring of **social and economic national policies** through programs of CSOs, in order to sustain a follow-up process
- 4- Enhancing networking and potential coalition building among involved groups

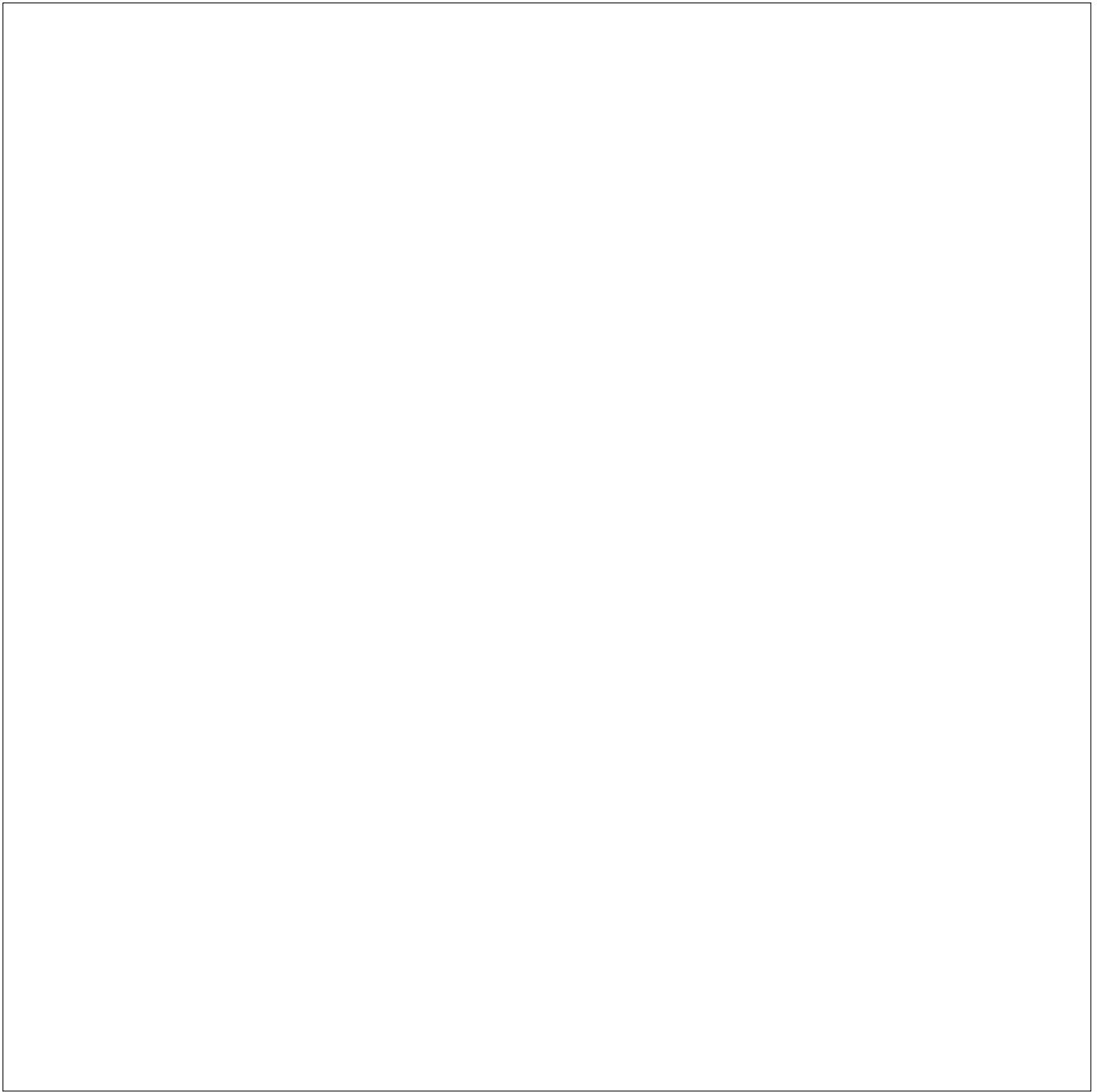
The project will include (1) dialogue among Civil Society Organizations at the national level (within seven Arab countries- Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Bahrain, Sudan, Yemen, and Jordan) (2) Dialogue among CSOs at the regional level (3) dialogue between CSOs and governmental institutions and (4) consistent and organized communication strategy and information production and analysis

In discussing socio-economic reforms, the project will focus on four main democracy topics;

- 1- **Concept and role of the state;** including the function of the state reflected through policies such as those on social security, social services, adequate taxation, the relationship between the government and the private sector, and the relationship between the civil society and the state.
- 2- **Institutional reforms;** including the needed reforms for the judiciary system, investment policies and related institutions, in addition to assessing of existent regional institutions.

- 3- **Unemployment** (*which represents the priority challenge for the region*): discussed through looking at economic growth policies, market strategies, and the relationship with education strategies, as well as the availability of resources and adequate investment environment.
- 4- **The role of religion**: including the relation of religion and the state, the impact on the role of women, its impact on promoting or inhibiting the concept of social justice and social rights (mainly the ones of women and vulnerable groups), and its influence on concepts of citizenship, diversity, and justice.

The project has received preliminary approval from the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF).



Financial Report for the Period from 1/1/2006 to 31/12/2006

Project: all Projects
Currency = US Dollar

A- 2006 Expenses:

Description	Expenses 2006
Administrative cost	72,208.00
Networking	50,939.00
Information & Communication	28,360.00
Development Program	128,075.11
Trade Program	71,526.62
Democracy Program	30,531.00
Youth Project	27,515.00
GCAP Meeting & Parallel meetings	211,559.00
Social Watch meeting	6,082.00
Solidarity	8,738.00
Total expenses	635,534.00

B- 2006 Incomes:

Description	Incomes 2006
Brought forward	44,763.97
2006 grants:	
Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)	8,848.00
Ford Foundation	125,000.00
Oxfam Solidarity	51,134.84
Oxfam Quebec	59,848.00
Heinrich Boell Foundation(HBF)	11,983.86
GCAP funders ²	211,558.31
Social Watch	25,996.93
Action Aid	49,983.86
National Human Rights Community (NHRC)	34,268.79
UNDP	43,745.00
Novib	47,991.93
Others	57,582.60
Total incomes	772,706.10
New Balance at 31/12/2006³	137,172.10

2- This amount of 211.558\$ are for the second global meeting for the GCAP held in Beirut, between 13 and 15 March 2006 and they were not included in the projected budget for the year 2006.

3- This balance corresponds to the postponement of some activities to the year 2007 due to the last Israeli aggression on Lebanon.