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Benghazi Civil Society Organizations

Survey Report

March 2015

Acknowledgements

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Request for information:

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Cover pictures:

Benghazi panoramic view, 2014 by Nada Elfeituri.

Sami Alkwafi, 2014 by RGB group. Use of picture kindly authorized by Siraj Alkwafi.

Tawfik Bensaud, 2014 by Zakaria Haghegh. Use of picture kindly authorized by Farah Bensaud.

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The first and foremost objective of this project is to benefit all Libyan civil society activists and organizations (CSOs). It is designed to help strengthen cooperation among Libyan CSOs, increase domestic and international awareness about its rich and diverse work and expand its opportunities for support and development.

Executive summary of findings

This research surveyed all reachable and willing CSOs in Benghazi (336) over the course of 60 days. Interviews were conducted face-to-face at the offices of Ein NGO by a team of fifteen Benghazi civil society activists. Each interview lasted approximately one hour to go over 104 questions, mostly multiple-choice.

a) Creation, registration & geographical coverage

Very few CSOs were being created in Benghazi in the last year. However, despite the difficult context, those who already existed seemed to persist.

Only 6% of Benghazi CSOs declared not being registered with the Ministry of Culture. Half of the CSOs in Benghazi had a national coverage.

b) Membership and recruitment

The typical membership size (median number) of Benghazi CSOs was 45 total members (median number), 15 active members and no paid staff.

Only 5% of CSOs declared that almost all their members were from the same neighborhood, and 96% of CSOs acknowledged that most of their members belonged to multiple communities (e.g. ethnic group; tribe).

A third of the CSOs in Benghazi lamented not having enough active members. Almost all the Benghazi CSO leaders also worked, usually full-time, besides their civil society activity. Only a small fraction of them studied part-time or full-time.

In terms of age, 78% of Benghazi CSO leaders were older than 35 years old. The proportion of young CSO leaders was very small, with only 4% of them being 25 years old or younger.

c) Internal governance

The majority of CSOs in Benghazi possessed the main elements of a democratic internal governance (written mission and principles; executive committee; internal elections).

Over half of the CSOs (58%) had adopted a de-centralized organizational structure, typically with project managers operationally independent, and the majority of CSOs (69%) declared having elected their current Executive Director.

d) Leadership

Overall, most CSO leaders appeared to belong to the lower middle class, with an average household income between a few hundred and 1400 LD per month

Generally, Benghazi CSOs ran by Libyans who lived abroad for at least three months seemed to conduct slightly less activities (measured by the desired Minimum Yearly Budgets (MYB) that would be sufficient to cover all their CSO's activities for one year) but they typically had a larger number of active members.

Knowledge of English of CSO leaders appeared to correlate with higher level of activities (MYB) and a larger number of active members.

e) CSO categories and activities

The most common type of CSOs in Benghazi were those focusing on human rights; training and education and charity work (assistance to people in need). Conversely, the least common type of CSOs in Benghazi were those who focused on work with media and freedom of the press; conducting research and analysis; professional association (labor union, political groups); improving the provision of basic services and protection of consumers' rights.

To achieve their goals, the most common activities among Benghazi CSOs were workshops, seminars and other forms of training.

The least common activity was monitoring and reporting on specific issues (e.g. drugs use, migration, health, education, budgeting and any other socially relevant phenomenon). The second least common activity was advocacy (i.e. supporting a cause or a proposal with decision makers).

f) Funding

Benghazi CSOs relied heavily on their own members as their primary source of funding while public funding represented their least important source**.**

Typically, the MYB for CSOs in Benghazi was 40'000 LD, although this figure varied widely among CSOs.

When looking at the following 12 months, two thirds of CSOs in Benghazi declared that their financial situation was not sustainable. However, less than 10% of Benghazi CSOs used any form of promotion of their activities through the media and an equal proportion had no fundraising strategy whatsoever.

g) Media

CSO activists in Benghazi appeared to privilege television and internet to receive information. Internet ranked first in terms of use with an average of more than three hours per day. More specifically facebook appeared to be the most prominent source of information and means of communication for civil society activists. In fact, most CSO leaders did not trust the media and they relied on friends and trusted facebook groups as their main source of information.

In terms of using media to achieve the objectives of the organization, despite almost all CSOs complained about funding and availability of volunteers, only very few of them used the media to raise funds and recruit members. Benghazi CSOs seemed to use media mainly to conduct public communication.

Most CSOs had a facebook page, yet only 13% of Benghazi CSOs declared having a website and only two percent had a twitter account or a blog.

h) Women CSOs

The typical women CSOs in Benghazi had 50 total members (median number), 15 active members and no paid staff. Women CSO leaders appeared to be equally busy with part-time or full-time work compared to the

average CSO leaders in Benghazi. However, no Benghazi woman CSO leader appeared to be engaged in full-time or part-time studies.

Compared to the other Benghazi CSOs, women organizations were slightly more likely to be managed by a young activist (25 years old or younger).

i) Youth CSOs (CSO whose leader is 25 years old or younger)

The proportion of youth CSOs in Benghazi was very small (4% of all CSOs). The CSO categories that were most common among Benghazi CSOs led by young activists were charity (26%); training and education (21%) and civic awareness (16%).

In terms of types of activities (i.e. field projects and service provision; training; advocacy campaigns; monitoring; public communication) Benghazi CSOs led by younger directors seemed to give a greater priority to field projects and training.

Youth-driven CSOs appeared to be more successful than those lead by activists 5 or 10 years older, based on the organizations' number of members and MYB.

j) Structural challenges

Civil society leaders feared for their security and felt that the situation had gotten worse compared to 12 months earlier, yet the majority remained optimistic that security would be better in one year.

When asked to choose the two main challenges facing Libya today, CSO leaders confirmed that security and stability were by far their primary concern. Corruption was a very close second and widespread concern. Benghazi CSO leaders were least concerned about justice, the challenges to strengthening democracy and the economic situation.

k) Operational challenges

Sixty-two percent of CSOs in Benghazi declared not having received any training. Of the training received, the two most common types were strategic planning and training on elections/constitution.

The types of training most desired by Benghazi CSOs were strategic planning and language courses. The least sought for were training on election monitoring and Constitution-drafting.

Among all operational challenges experienced by CSOs, securing enough financial resources to operate was certainly the most prominent, far ahead of security.

l) Cooperation among CSOs & with other actors

Cooperation among Libyan CSOs was somewhat low. Only 28% of Benghazi CSOs are part of a union or network of CSOs. When they cooperated with another CSO, it was usually with another CSO from Benghazi.

Cooperation with non-civil society actors was also limited, albeit more developed, with 42% of the CSOs maintaining a working relationships or cooperation with other social actors. Most CSOs cooperated with universities, while only 18% of CSOs had some relationship with local authorities. Interestingly, only a very small proportion of CSOs (4%) had any relationship with political parties.

m) Individual attitudes: identity; trust; empowerment; engagement

A majority of CSO leaders (62%) selected Libya as the geographical group with which they identified as being from primarily**.** However, a significant proportion of CSO leaders (23%) identified as being from Benghazi over being Libyans.

In terms of religious attitude, over half of the respondents declared using their own judgment to seek for religious guidance. At the other end of the spectrum, only less than 2% followed the guidance of a single religious sheikh.

Compared to average citizens, Benghazi CSO leaders had a greater inclination to trust individuals who did not belong to their narrow community and whom they did not know.

Benghazi CSO leaders had a higher voter turnout in the 2012 Parliamentary election (78%) compared the national average (reported at about 72%). When asked whether they intended to vote in the next election (which happened to be for the Constitution Drafting Assembly), the potential participation dropped by 4%, yet remaining higher than the intention to vote found across a sample of the Libyan population six months earlier, when the situation was even more stable (61%, NDI & JMW, Nov 2013).

n) Attitude towards institutions

Among various criteria in deciding whom to vote for during elections, Benghazi CSO leaders considered the level of education to be the most important criterion, followed by the extent to which they agreed with the candidate on issues that were important to them.

Overall, Benghazi CSO leaders had a low level of trust towards all state institutions. Among those, they had the greatest level of trust towards the Army, the Police and the judiciary (more specifically the judicial courts), despite the challenges they were facing.

Non-state armed groups (also referred to as kataib or militias) were also listed as an option and they received almost the lowest level of trust, beaten only by political parties and the Parliament.

Among the different levels of governance, respondents granted more trust to their neighborhood Council and to their City Council than to the government or the Parliament.

When asked specifically about their trust in armed groups, half of Benghazi CSO leaders chose the Army and another 24% chose the Police. However, 17% of respondents did not trust any armed group, including the army or the police.

Introduction

In the wake of the 17 February 2011 civil uprising in Libya, civil society organizations were able to proliferate in a newly found participatory climate. Given the importance of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to ensure the development of an inclusive and stable society in the new Libya, a number of International Organizations, bilateral and multilateral donors and International Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are supporting the Libyan Government to both engage with and encourage the growth of civil society.

In 2012 the European Union funded the "Civil Initiative Libya" to strengthen the capacity of emerging Libyan CSOs to deliver services and contribute to the promotion of good governance. It is in the framework of this project that a mapping and assessment of all active CSOs in the Sebha region was carried out in November 2012. The assessment was conducted in partnership with the Ministry of Culture and Civil Society and the Sebha Union of Civil Society Organizations.

Considering the relevance of the topic and the lack of reliable information, UNICEF and UNDP, with the approval from the Ministry of Culture and Civil Society, decided to expand that assessment to the cities of Tripoli, Benghazi, Misrata, Zawia and Zwara and to conduct an analysis and report of civil society for the first three of these cities.

This research was approved by the Libyan authorities at that time. However, it was designed and carried out in total independence from state authorities. All information available from this research to state and non-state actors alike are those published and broadly available to all.

This research aims at providing a coherent and rich database of CSOs on which to build strategic partnership, advocacy and communication for development (C4D) initiatives. Therefore, the objective of this research is twofold:

- Better understand the nature, activities, capacity, needs and challenges of civil society organizations in the target cities
- Establish a detailed roster of CSOs to serve as a reference for potential partners and donors, thereby facilitating their work while granting more visibility to the local CSOs

This assessment provides quantitative information on CSOs through the survey of a representative (typically the leader or founder) of all reachable CSOs operating in the above mentioned cities and at national level. The research data includes anonymous information that is currently not collected by the Ministry's Registration Office. Therefore, this report provides an opportune, independent and impartial source of general information for the Libyan Government (in particular the Ministry of Culture), for CSOs themselves and their national and international partners, academia, and the general public.

Notably, this information will allow UNICEF, UNDP as well as other Libyan and international organizations to craft more effective strategies of intervention, each in its field of expertise, and to identify potential partner CSOs to implement these strategies. Given the nature and the objectives of this project, it was deemed most useful to conduct this research in partnership with a local Libyan NGO in each city. This allowed a local Libyan CSO, rather than a private company, Libyan or foreign, to benefit from the social capital developed through the face-to-face interview of other Libyan CSOs, and to learn research skills.

Note that this research is strictly impartial, non political or partisan. All the data presented are factual representations of the reality observed.

a) About UNICEF

The United Nations Children's Fund is a UN program whose core mission is to provide long-term humanitarian and developmental assistance to children and women in countries around the world. Its Country Programme of Cooperation 2013- 2015 serves as the programmatic framework for its support to Libya. The overall objective is to support the process of incorporating the rights of children and adolescents into the national transition and reform agenda. UNICEF recognizes the great need of involving Libyan Civil Society Organisations (CSO) in the promotion of child rights across the country and strengthen their capacities. UNICEF has engaged with local CSOs through the Union of Libyan NGOs. An important challenge for many in the civil society sector is to have the experience and skills to influence the development of public policies and how resources are allocated. Libyan CSOs are fledgling organisations in a transitional environment and require support to enable them to evolve into responsive institutions which are accountable to their own members and communities, and at the same time, capable of holding authorities accountable. Most CSOs and umbrella groups UNICEF has encountered expressed a strong interest in enhancing their role in the democratic transition as a supplement to their main activities.

UNICEF's Strategic Framework and guiding principles for partnerships with CSOs stress engaging and strengthening partnerships with CSOs sharing a mutual focus on delivering results for children and women. UNICEF seeks to partner with CSOs in Libya that share a mutual commitment to the core values of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the principles of good governance. UNICEF aims to engage with independent CSOs, promoting forms of cooperation that are appropriate to the Libyan context and the goals to be pursued based on national priorities. A central element in engaging with national CSOs is to actively pursue opportunities to develop the capacities of CSOs, in accordance with the goals and commitments expressed in the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action.

At a 2012 UNICEF-sponsored workshop with CSOs seeking to identify organisations aiming at contributing to the fulfilment of rights of children, adolescents and youth in Libya, CSOs expressed the need to: establish effective mechanisms for dialogue between government and civil society; engage in the development of policy analysis, policy development and decision-making; strengthen their knowledge about internationally applied human rights instruments; help improve data collection and analyses on child rights and monitoring child rights violations; and contribute to creating protective environments for children.

UNICEF's engagement strategy with the emerging civil society sector aims to promote their participation in the ongoing national transition and reform processes in collaboration with other United Nations agencies and development partners for coherent, coordinated programme implementation, advocacy and resource mobilization.

The ultimate aim of UNICEF's support to Libya is to assist government and a strengthened civil society build a peaceful, inclusive society where all children, adolescents and youth have access to equal opportunities and in which their rights are understood, and upheld.

b) About UNDP

Globally, The UN Development Programme (UNDP) works in more than 170 countries and territories, helping to achieve the eradication of poverty and the reduction of inequalities and exclusion. UNDP helps countries to develop policies, leadership skills, partnering abilities, institutional capabilities and build resilience in order to sustain development results.

The UNDP in Libya has a long history in the country and its presence started back in the 1970s. After the independence and during the king Idris's rule, the UN opened an office in 1954 to support the country's development efforts. In 1976, UNDP signed a Standard Basic Framework Agreement (SBFA) with Libya which laid down the basis for all its development cooperation with the country.

The 2012-2015 Libya Country Programme (CPD) was signed by the Government of Libya and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in September 2012. The CPD is the UNDP strategic programme document to support the transitional governance and national development priorities in Libya.

In early 2012, as one of its support to Libya, UNDP created the "Support to Civic Engagement in Libya's Transition" (SCELT) project in order to contribute to the democratic transformation and the development of a new political culture in Libya. For this project, UNDP works in close coordination with its Libyan partner ministries: Ministry of Planning; Ministry of Culture & Civil Society; Ministry of Higher Education and Ministry of Al Awqaf. The project aims at supporting Libyan citizens, and in particular youth, women and marginalized groups with their active engagement in the democratic transition in Libya.

The project strategy is multi-pronged and its essential components are:

1. **Strengthening the capacity of civil society for civic education:** Civil society organizations (CSOs) have a central role to play in facilitating civic engagement and voice, engaging state institutions in responding to this voice, preparing citizens for transitional constitution building processes and developing ownership of the new Libyan social contract.

2. **Enabling youth participation in the transformation of Libya:** Many young people have idealistic expectations of rapid transformation of the country and expect marked and immediate improvements in political and economic inclusion. Their participation and innovation is vital to the effectiveness and legitimacy of the transition process.

3. **Supporting women's equal participation in the transition:** It is essential to build on the active role women played as activists in the revolution, and now as peace-builders, politicians and activists, as women of all ages have been an integral part of both the uprising and the transition to democracy.

4. **Developing a stronger culture of dialogue:** Dialogue helps reinforce the legitimacy of state institutions by building social consensus around them. Developing and modelling dialogue processes, which include all stakeholders is considered vital in helping to broker inclusive agreements, which reflect the aspirations of all sections of Libyan society.

The 24 month period since SCELT was designed has been characterised by an emphasis on providing proactive and responsive support to the electoral process (electoral support, voter education, political participation of women and youth etc.), followed by an emphasis on broader mechanisms and processes underpinning the

development of democratic institutions including civic education, engagement and voice, supporting inclusive dialogue, supporting women's political participation and empowerment and Libyan CSO development.

For UNDP, supporting the enabling environment for a vibrant and effective civil society is therefore a key priority and has included support to the capacity development of CSO's, working with the Government of Libya in ensuring an enabling institutional environment within which civil society can flourish.

In order to carry out this project, UNDP partnered with No Peace Without Justice (NPWJ) for logistical and administrative support. NPWJ is an international non-profit organization that works for the protection and promotion of human rights, democracy, the rule of law and international justice.

NPWJ has been working on the Libyan transition since early 2011 and has been on-the-ground since early October. It has a permanent presence in Tripoli since March 2012 and has been working to create a network of Libyan actors to engage different sectors of Libyan society on transitional justice. NPWJ works in cooperation with both the State institutions and civil society. Its work combines both the provision of transitional justice information, outreach and documentation, with the research and analysis of public expectations and perceptions. On the civil society side, NPWJ aims to help build and reinforce capacity of Libyan actors to play their role in incorporating accountability, human rights and the rule of law in the democracy transition and post-conflict reconstruction of their country. To that end, NPWJ is working together with Libyan civil society and human rights activists to build their knowledge and capacity in addressing transitional justice and to work on accountability processes and to assist the Libyan authorities with their transitional justice work, including the investigation and prosecution of crimes under international law and massive human rights violations. NPWJ also works on providing a tool through which areas of the country that are under-represented and specific types of violations that are under-reported can be identified and addressed. For this purpose, NPWJ focuses in particular on vulnerable groups such as women, youth and children.

c) About the research team

As was the CSO research in Sebha, this project was designed and led by Jean-Louis Romanet Perroux, who is a doctoral researcher at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy (USA) and consultant in the field of governance and civil society development. Jean-Louis has conducted research and humanitarian work in Africa. In Libya, he has conducted research and worked for a number of Libyan and international organizations from November 2011 until December 2013. The core focus of his research is the role of civil society and local governance in democratic transition, with a particular focus on Libya.

Benghazi research team, November 2013

A specific research team was formed in each of the cities surveyed. In Benghazi, the research operations were conducted in partnership with Ein NGO. Ein is a non-profit civil society organization created in Benghazi to defend freedoms and human rights

The research team was recruited and trained by Ein CSO and Jean-Louis Romanet Perroux. The team counted fifteen members, drawing in part from Ein's own members and from active students from the Benghazi faculty of Law. They were: Enas, Murad, Mohamed A., Amna, Mohammed H., Nasreen, Mahmoud A.A., Jamal, Saleh, Yeunes, Walid, Hala, Mahmoud F.H., Yemen, Faiza, Ibrahim, Leman, Ayub, Sami and Samiha.

These young civil society activists had the patience and dedication to call over a thousand organizations, interview hundreds of activists and compile thousands of survey data into an electronic database.

I would also like to acknowledge the support from Mrs Salwa Dagheili and her brothers and Mrs Nohad Chebaro.

Finally, a special mention to Mohamed Elmagbri who took over the task of managing operations in the spring of 2014 and whose efforts were crucial to overcome some challenges that affected the Benghazi research.

Benghazi research team, May 2014

d) Scope of the research

The scope of this research is to provide quantitative information on civil society organizations in Benghazi. This should provide the starting point for a closer look by national and international actors on their specific areas of interest.

The scope of this research is a statistical assessment of CSOs in Benghazi, not an explanation of their nature or condition

This report should be read as a source of statistical information and broad analysis, not as a source of explanation for the condition of civil society it has assessed. A more specific, qualitative understanding and an explanation of the trends and statistical results can only be provided by interviewing the very members of the local community. This could be achieved through a series of focus group discussions, and by restitution of findings to the interviewees for feedback and explanation. This is a worthy endeavor, which is beyond the scope of this research. Any such qualitative research efforts would certainly build on these findings and provide additional valuable insight.

The design and validation of the questionnaire took place between July and August of 2013. The Benghazi research team was recruited and trained between November 21st and 25th, 2013. Given the suspension of the research imposed by the degraded security situation and the change in team members, the team was trained again in early March 2014.

The field research in Benghazi took place between March 8th and May 10th, 2014. All interviews were conducted at the offices of Ein CSO, in Benghazi.

The local Civil Society Support Center of the Ministry of Culture provided the research team with the first list of 508 CSOs. This list was complemented with lists of CSOs provided by various international and Libyan partners. Moreover, other CSOs contacted the team following the research advertisement and outreach campaign. The final list counted 642 CSOs. Of the 297 CSOs that were not interviewed, an estimated 130 were reached but did not participate, either because they were unwilling or because they didn't find the time.

Table 1 - Number of CSOs in Benghazi

Interviewed	336
Unreachable or unwilling	297
Dissolved	10
Total listed	**643**

Of all the CSOs contacted, only 10 declared having been dissolved. Many reasons were invoked to explain the dissolution of CSOs, however, the most common were the lack of funding, lack of security and lack of enthusiasm.

The rest were unreachable due to incorrect or missing information they provided to the Ministry of Culture and Civil Society. Of all the CSO leaders that came to be interviewed, only two didn't complete it and left.

1. Creation, registration and geographical coverage

It was virtually impossible to create CSOs outside of State control during the Gadhafi regime, although a limited opening under state supervision happened in the late 2000s.

Thus, it is not a surprise that only 7% of the CSO interviewed declared having been created before the uprising. However, it should be kept in mind that it is likely that some of the older CSOs may have deliberately decided to remain silent and invisible (not registering with the current Ministry of Culture and not participating in surveys such as this one) for fear of being associated with the former regime and facing reprisals.

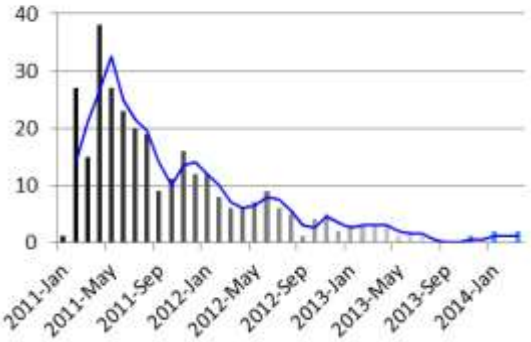
Benghazi was liberated very early compared to other cities in Libya. As a result, dozens of CSOs were being created in the Spring of 2011. Overall, two thirds of the CSO interviewed were created in the 10 months following the February 17th Libyan uprising.

Unfortunately, Benghazi also quickly became the theater of threats, aggressions, kidnappings and killings that increasingly targeted civil society activists. Prominent activists were murdered beginning in July 2013 with Abdelsalam al-Mismari, and further escalating with the killing of Salwa Bugagais in her home the very night of the June 2014 parliamentary elections. These were followed by the killings of Muftah Buzaid, Fariha Berkawi. Violence against activists crossed yet another threshold in September 2014 with the assassination of two young activists: Sami Elkwafi and Tawfik Bensaud, 17 and 18 years old respectively. Tawfik ans Sami's pictures are on the cover page of this report as a modest tribute for their contribution to a civil society in Libya.

The escalation of violence in the east led to the withdrawal of most international organizations from Benghazi, with the consequent decrease in funding, training and activities. The targeting of activists in turn led many activists to seek asylum abroad or simply relocate, much earlier than when the same phenomenon happened in other Libyan cities. This, coupled with the fact that CSOs started mushrooming in Benghazi months earlier than in other major Libyan

Very few CSOs were being created in Benghazi in the last year. However, despite the difficult context, those who already existed seemed to persist.

Fig. 1: Number of CSOs founded by month



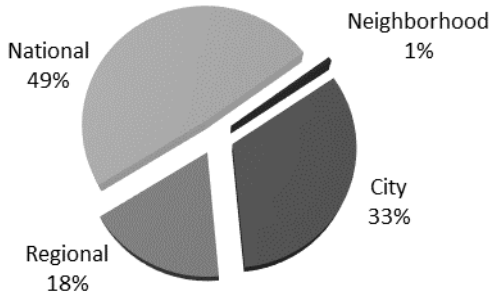
"I am Tawfik, I am Sami" campaign, September 2014

cities, may explain why barely any CSO has been created since May 2013.

However, despite the difficult conditions already present at the time of this research, it appears that the number of CSOs in Benghazi remains stable. In other words, the CSOs created continue to operate. Many have probably frozen their activities, but they are not disappearing.

Benghazi CSOs lamented the withdrawal of international organizations and the neglect they suffered in terms of lack of funding, training and conferences in Benghazi.

Fig. 2: Geographical Coverage



Almost all Benghazi CSOs were registered with the Ministry of Culture and Civil Society. Only 6% of Benghazi CSOs declared not being registered. However, the actual Figure could be slightly higher given that CSOs that are not registered were more difficult to reach and were probably also more likely to decline participating in this study.

In terms of geographical coverage, half of the CSOs in Benghazi had a national coverage (Fig. 2). Even though these figures were self-reported, this was quite encouraging. A third of Benghazi CSOs operated at the level of the city.

Mother of a martyr during a protest, Benghazi

2. Membership and recruitment

Typical Benghazi CSO:

- **50 total members**
- **15 active members**
- **No paid staff**

The typical membership size[1] of CSOs in Benghazi is 50. However about one third of CSOs declared having 100 total members or more.

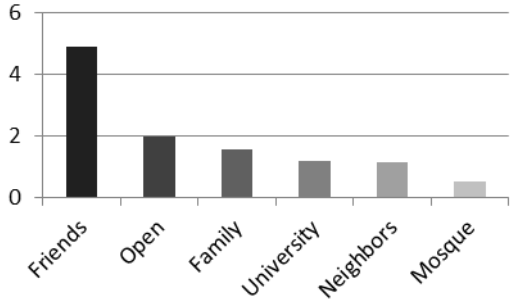
Nevertheless, what probably matters more is the number of active members on whom a CSO can count[2]. Benghazi CSOs typically had about 15 active members. Only a minority of CSOs in Benghazi had paid staff (10%), but those who did typically had 4 on payroll.

The preferred method through which Benghazi CSO leaders recruited members is drawing from their circle of friends. Open membership recruitment, as could be achieved through the media (internet, radio, etc.) was quite limited, although it ranked higher than family as a source of recruitment. This could be expected at such an early stage of development of civil society and free media.

It is interesting and encouraging to see that the university was ranked slightly higher than members' own neighborhood as an avenue for recruitment of new members, given that it allows to create connections that may span across one's own limited geographical community. It must be noted that neighborhoods often have a strong sense of belonging and are a source of protection. This is embodied by popular expressions such as "bint / waled shara" (daughter / son of my street), a term uesd to indicate those who belong to one's neighborhood and benefit from its protection. Likewise, during the uprising and to the present day, local security is often provided by neighborhood watch groups that often go under the name of "aolad el shara" (i.e. boys of the street).

Despite this strong social valence of neighborhoods, only 5% of CSOs declared that almost all their members come from a single neighborhood. Even more encouraging, the answer was equally unanimous when CSO leaders were asked whether members from their organization belonged to the same community or to multiple communities: 96% declared that they belonged to multiple communities.

Fig. 3: Membership recruitment



[1] This refers to the median number, meaning that half of the CSOs have less members and half of them have more members

[2] active members are defined as members who perform actual activities every week – not volunteers that join activities when these are organized

This is encouraging because one important role that civil society organizations can play is to establish bridges across communities and help build a sense of identity, common good and common destiny that can cut across social divisions. This potential of CSOs is all the more relevant at times of division and conflict.

In terms of regulation of membership, 26% of CSOs imposed membership restrictions, usually on age or profession and more rarely on gender. About half of the CSOs granted membership to any candidate but imposed the payment of a membership fee and/or the subscription of a formal statute or a list of principles and values.

In terms of membership recruitment, a third of the CSOs in Benghazi lamented not having enough active members (32%). As shown in Figure 4, the vast majority of CSO leaders also worked, usually full-time, besides their civil society activity. Only a small fraction of them studied part-time or full-time.

If we use 35 years of age as a reference, 22% of CSO leaders were that age or younger and 78% are older. As Figure 5 shows, the younger the age group, the lesser the proportion of CSO leaders.[3] The proportion of young CSO leaders was very small, with only 4% of them being 25 years old or younger. This may explain why so few CSO leaders were also engaged in full-time or part-time studies.

Fig. 4: CSO leader studies or works

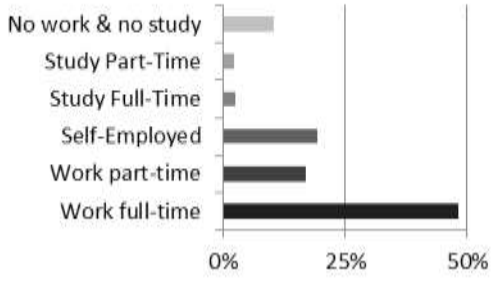
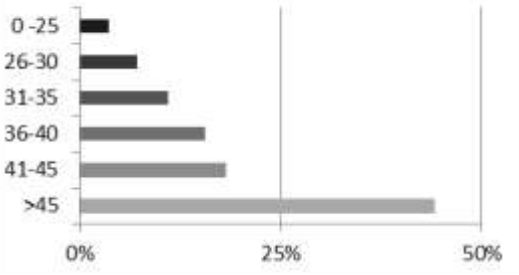


Fig. 5: CSOs by age group



[3] Note that the "over 45" is a much larger age span, therefore it does not compare equally to the other age groups set at five years intervals.

3. Internal governance

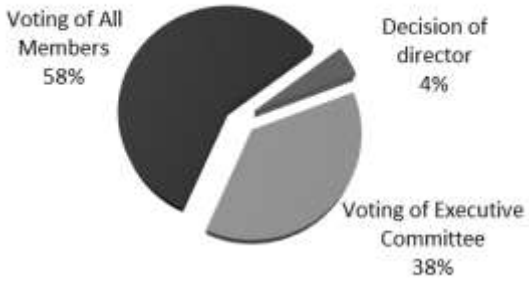
The majority of CSOs in Benghazi possessed the main elements of a democratic internal governance (written mission and principles; executive committee and internal elections)

Several elements make up the internal governance of CSOs. These range from decision-making procedures and organizational structure to the degree to which organizations' goals and principles are formalized. Internal governance also has very pragmatic manifestations, such as whether CSOs regularly set clear and quantifiable objectives, monitor the activities they conduct to achieve them and evaluate their success.

Most importantly, it is broadly recognized that the quality of a CSO's internal governance has a direct impact on its effectiveness. In Benghazi, over half of the CSOs (58%) had adopted a de-centralized organizational structure, typically with project managers operationally independent. The rest were centralized under the direction of an executive director.

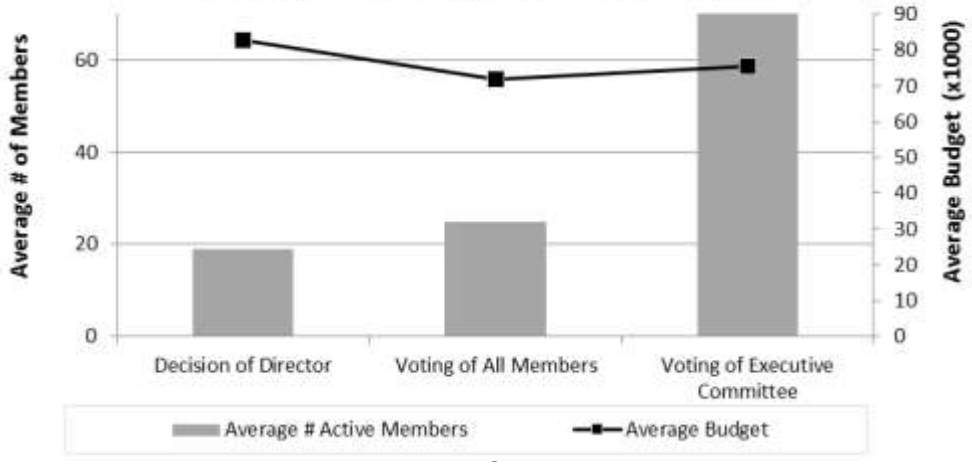
The majority of CSOs declared exercising a very participatory decision-making system through the voting of all members. Just over one third had established an Executive Committee to carry out this important function, whereas only 4% declared that all decisions were made by a single Director (see Fig. 6).

Fig. 6: Decision making



As figure 7 shows, the greater the number of active members, the more CSOs were likely to adopt a decision-making mechanism based on an executive committee. This is probably due to the increasing difficulty of making decisions through collective votes once the size of the organization and budget grows and the pressure increases against the concept of a single director managing a large CSO alone. The size of the minimum desired yearly budget doesn't seem to vary substantially across

Fig. 7: Membership size and budget by type of decision-making
*Excluding CSOs with budgets over 1 million (10 CSOs)



decision-making types.

Another important aspect of the internal governance of CSOs is the choice of their leadership. The majority of CSOs (69%) declare having elected their current Executive Director.

Almost all CSOs (94%) declared having a written mission statement and/or set of principles, which is very important both for coherence and clarity of purpose. Finally, a large majority (83%) also declared conducting some sort of monitoring and evaluation of their activities. Since both these Figures were self-reported, they were likely to be slightly more optimistic than the actual proportions, yet these remain encouraging.

The majority of CSOs had formally defined and written down the goals they sought to achieve in the previous year (Fig. 8), which is an important first step to allow for monitoring and evaluation. However, many organizations still have to work on this.

For those who had set clear goals, when asked to evaluate the effectiveness of their organization's performance in its main areas of activity during the previous year, the overall judgment was moderately favorable. However, most CSOs had a balanced assessment, whereby some goals were achieved while others were not (Fig. 9).

Fig. 8: Organizational goals

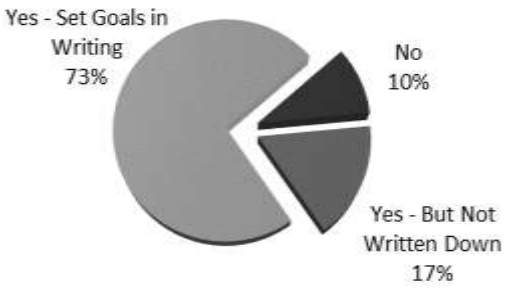
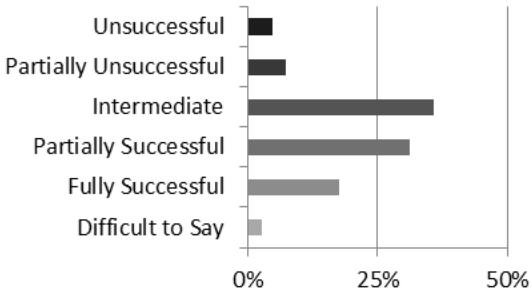


Fig. 9: Self-assessment



These fairly balanced results were encouraging. They showed that, by and large, CSOs were optimistic while keeping a measure of scrutiny on their success.

Overall, the majority of CSOs in Benghazi possessed the main elements of a democratic internal governance (written mission and principles; executive committee; internal elections) however further improvement was needed in this important aspect of CSO management.

Civil society workshop, Benghazi

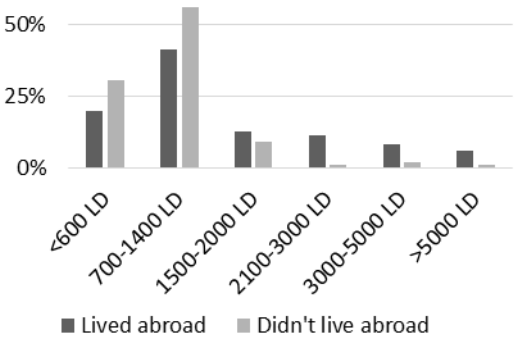
4. Leadership

Knowledge of English of CSO leaders appears to be correlated with higher Minimum Yearly Budgets and larger number of active members

Overall, most founders/directors of CSOs in Benghazi appear to belong to the lower middle class, with an average household income between a few hundred and 1400 LD per month (Fig. 10). Those who declared having lived abroad for more than three months are comparatively better off economically than those who did not.

One third of the Benghazi CSO leaders had lived abroad for more than three months and more than half of them declared being able to speak and write English. These were certainly higher proportions than for the general population. These findings lead to the conclusion that an experience abroad and/or a greater knowledge of English, that translates in a greater ability to access information from abroad and interact with foreigners (such as activists from other countries) may facilitate the creation of CSOs.

Fig. 10: Income range of director



The level of activity of CSOs is a very elusive and complex characteristic to measure, yet it is a crucial one. In order to have an indication of it, CSO leaders were asked to indicate the Minimum Yearly Budget that would be sufficient to cover all their CSO's activities (henceforth referred to as MYB). The question asked was: "What is the minimum annual budget that would be sufficient to cover all your activities?" While this indicates a desired budget, it provides an indication of the size of activities a CSO aims to conducts, in economic terms.

What factors are correlated with this measure of the level of activities of CSOs? Figure 11 presents the variation of the following factors according to the household income range of the CSO leader:

- Living abroad for more than 3 months
- Percentage of CSOs for each income range
- Average number of active members
- Minimum Yearly Budget

A few CSOs were clearly reporting much larger figures than the vast majority of them. Three declared having 1000 or more active members (all having lived abroad) and nine CSOs indicated a MYB greater than 1 million LD (five of which had lived abroad). These few outliers for both MYB and number of members were excluded

mainly to prevent a disproportionate influence of a few very large numbers on the statistical results from all other respondents.

Figure 11 shows that those who had lived abroad for at least three months had on average a larger number of active members (37 versus 27). However, on average they also seemed to have a slightly smaller Minimum Yearly Budget compared to those run by leaders who hadn't lived abroad (67'000LD versus 77'000LD).

This seems to debunk the myth that CSOs ran by Libyans who lived abroad necessarily enjoyed a greater success in terms of level of activity (MYB). However, they seemed to have a larger number of active members.

However, this was not the case for knowledge of English, which was proving to be quite important. In fact, generally CSOs founded or run by a person that declared having some knowledge of English had an average MYB of 76'000LD and 32 active members, versus an average MYB of 73'000LD and 22 members for those who did not (always excluding the outliers listed above).

The explanation may be that knowledge of English may facilitate contact with international organizations and access to information in English. In turn, this may allow CSO leaders to learn about and apply for foreign funding sources (which are the absolute majority of funding sources
available,
as is shown in section 6 of this report).
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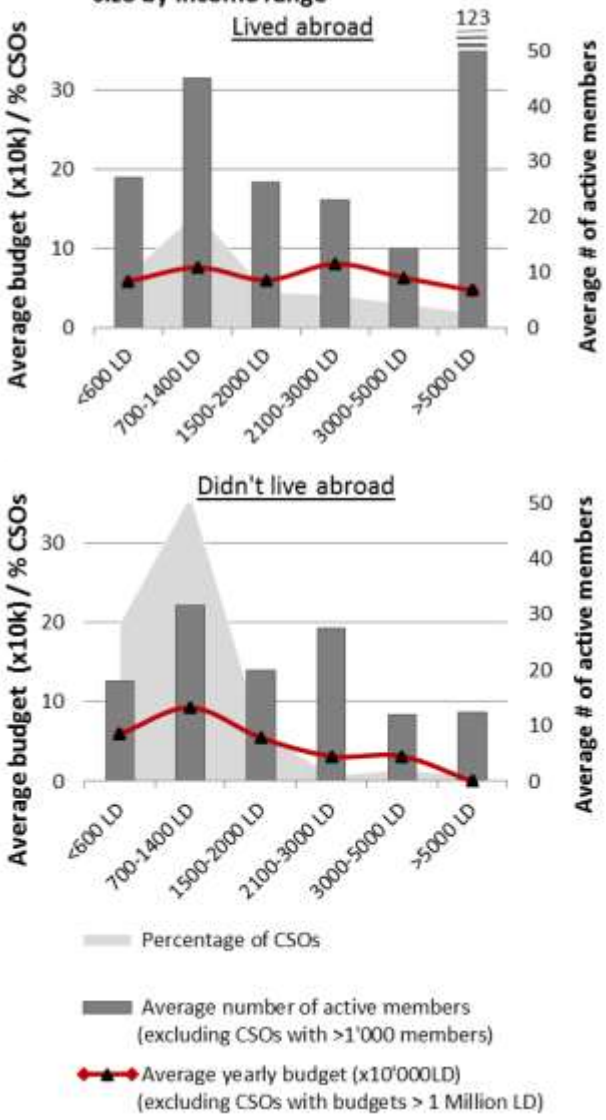
Fig. 11: Percentage of CSOs, budget & membership size by income range



Another fruitful analysis results from breaking down the same indicators of success, measured in terms of level of CSO activity (MYB) and size (number of active members) according to the age group of the CSO leader, as presented in Figures 12.a and 12.b below.

Overall, these results show that CSO managed by leaders in their mid-thirties appeared to have the

greatest success.

If these results are broken down further according to whether leaders have lived abroad or not, overall results show a similar trend. However, other patterns emerge for organizations led by younger CS leaders (25 years old or younger). Youth-driven CSOs appeared to be more successful than those lead by activists 5 or 10 years older. Maybe this can be explained by the enthusiasm, technology, new media skills and the inclination for innovation that usually characterizes younger activists. In fact, the relative success of youth-driven CSOs may rest in large part on their ability to bring about change and innovation. The fact that youn g leaders that lived abroad appeared to have a greater success than their peers may comfort this hypothesis, given the exposure to different ideas and practices.

Fig. 12.a: Percentage of CSOs, budget & membership size by age group

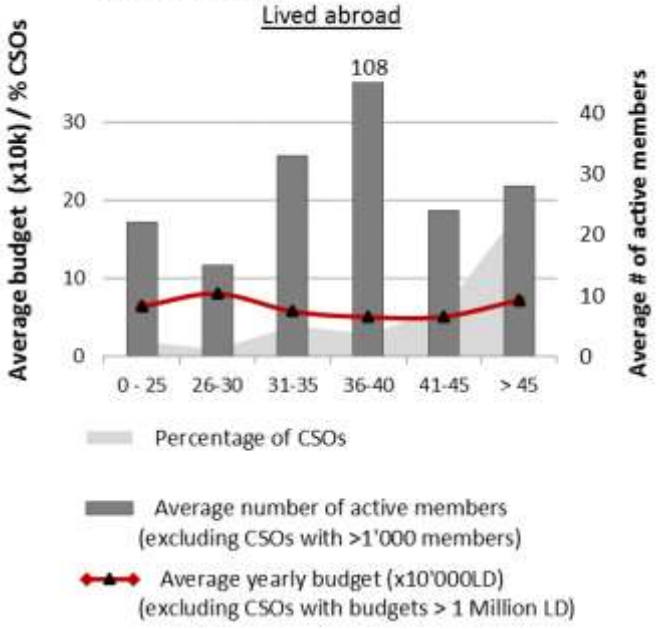
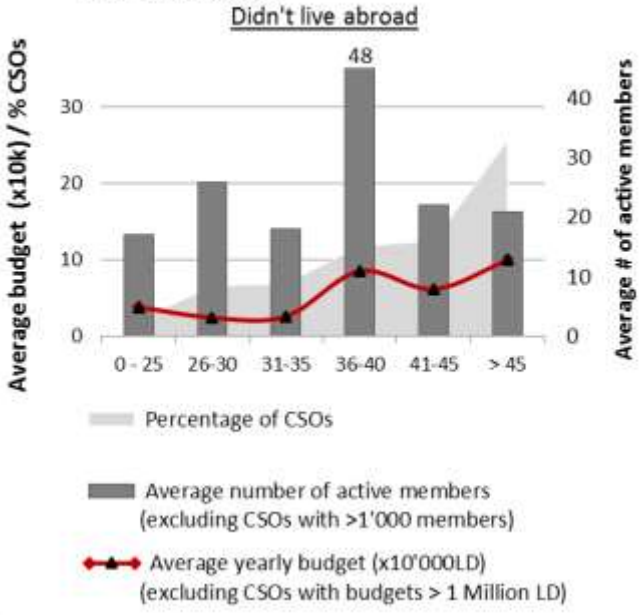


Fig. 12.b: Percentage of CSOs, budget & membership size by age group



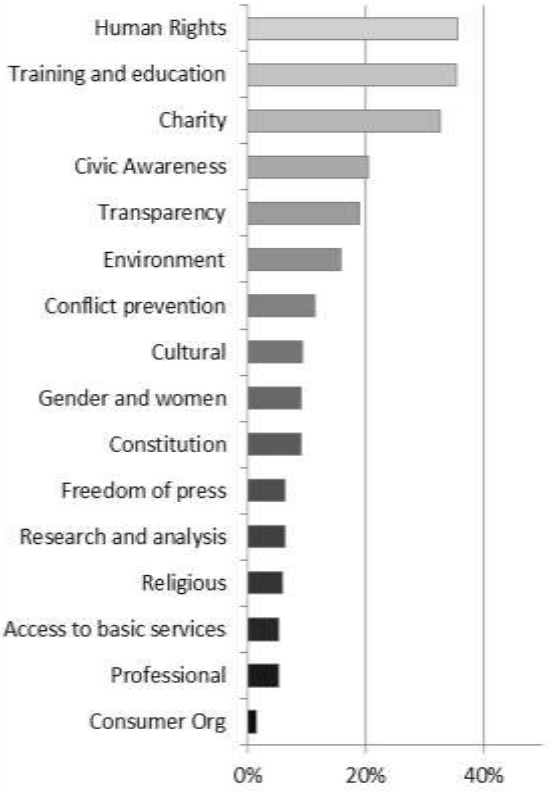
5. CSO categories and activities

Interviewees were asked to select up to three central activities of their organization. The options provided were:

1. Defense of human rights (e.g. child rights, minority groups, persons with disabilities, migration, prison detainees, etc.)
2. Environment; sustainable management of natural resources; wildlife preservation
3. Transparency; anti-corruption
4. Training and education
5. Gender equality and women's empowerment
6. Freedom of the press, media and information
7. Charity (support of the old, poor, sick or persons with disabilities)
8. Cultural association (history, music, arts or other cultural activities)
9. Civic awareness and participation (civic engagement, democracy, rule of law)
10. Constitution
11. Professional association (labor union, political party or group)
12. Access to basic services (water, electricity, trash collection, infrastructure)
13. Conflict prevention/resolution; reconciliation
14. Research and analysis (surveys, interviews, research in media and documents)
15. Consumer organization
16. Religious activities
17. Other

Defense of human rights, training and education, and charity were the most common type of activities among Benghazi CSOs

Fig. 13: Percentage of CSOs by type*



*CSOs could select up to three types of work areas

The most common type of activities conducted by Benghazi CSOs were defense of human rights and training and education (Fig 13).

The defense of human rights seems to be the defining characteristic of civil society in Benghazi, maybe for historical reasons. Benghazi hosts many prominent Figures advocating for freedoms and the respect of human rights. It is also the city that has paid the highest toll in terms of activists murdered.

The focus on training and education is also significant, showing the emphasis of civil society in Benghazi on the betterment of citizens.

The third most common activity is charity. However, this probably owes to Libyan's recent history, culture and tradition. Civil society work was highly controlled and restricted under the

Gadhafi regime. Charity work was one of few activities allowed, if any at all. *Zakāt* (charitable giving) is also sanctioned by Shari'a for all Muslims and constitutes one of the five pillars of Islam, which anchors it in the religious culture. These reasons may explain why many Libyans appear to confine their conception of civil society to charity organizations.

However, the majority of CSOs that define themselves as charity organizations also conduct a variety of activities well beyond strictly charitable ones.

Figure 13 shows that some very important activities, which require more action in the field and direct engagement in the public domain, were less common. Notably, these activities were:

- Work with media and freedom of the press
- Conducting research and analysis
- Professional association (labor union, political groups)
- Improving the provision of basic services
- Protection of consumers' rights

Civil society activists at a training, Benghazi, 2013

One reason can be the lack of familiarity and training with some of these more complex or novel activities, such as research and analysis and protection of consumers' rights.

The provision of public services, such as health, kindergarten, maintenance of infrastructure and garbage collection, was also not very popular. However, it can also be a very important function for CSOs in times of transition. In fact, the state may be weak and unable to provide these basic services equally to all citizens and at an acceptable level. Civil society can complement the action of, and even partner with, the local administration for the provision of these services.

Finally, a type of CSO that was still very much under-developed was that of professional associations, such as trade unions. These were emasculated and coopted by the Gadhafi regime which distinguished them from civil society. The fact that such organizations appeared to be very slow in re-organizing may be explained by the lack of expertise in organizing, coordinating and leveraging this kind of work. It may also result from the difficulty of changing the way of doing things among mature and established professionals and to an initial confusion about

the role that professional associations may play in the emerging system of governance. Conversely, youth organizations (such as students unions) were much quicker to re-emerge, organize themselves and venture into new activities. Libya could benefit from neighboring Tunisia in this regard, given how developed and important workers unions are in that country.

Libyan scouts, Benghazi

In line with the generational divide, it is interesting to observe the difference in the distribution of CSO categories by age group of the founder/director (see figure 14 below). The Figures show the actual number of CSOs per category and leader's age, whereas the bar size indicate the relative proportion of each category for that age group. A few categories do not have enough CSOs (less than 30 CSOs) to provide a reliable indication of their distribution across age groups or they appear to be fairly age-neutral. These are transparency, media freedom, cultural and training and education. It must be noted that there were only 19 CSOs headed by leaders younger than 25 years of age in Benghazi, which is a remarkably low number. This is insufficient to give a reliable trend distribution across 16 categories.

Fig. 14: Number of CSOs by category and age group

However, some categories appeared to be most common among Benghazi youth:

- Charity (26%)
- Training and education (21%)
- Civic awareness (16%)

The common thread between training and education and civic awareness appears to be individual promotion and social change. Youth-driven CSOs seem to focus more on increasing the level of knowledge and awareness, on changing social behaviors. As it is true elsewhere, youth has the greatest appetite for change and they are the agent with the strongest drive to bringing it about. Unfortunately this aspect has not escaped conservative and violent elements of the Libyan society who feel scared by the potential for change.

Sami Alkwafi, 17, Libyan civil society activist

Conversely, focus areas were most common among CSO activists older than thirty five years old included:

- Gender equality and women's empowerment
- Improving the provision of basic services
- Conflict prevention/resolution or reconciliation

A tentative explanation of this trend may be that most of these activities require professional experience and expertise (e.g. service provision) or some publicly acknowledged authority and legitimacy (e.g. conflict prevention/reconciliation) that usually belong to more experienced activists. This is not to say that youth do not or should not engage in these activities.

Tawfik Bensaud, 18, Libyan civil society activist

The research also sought to establish whether the type of CSO varied according to the income range of its director.

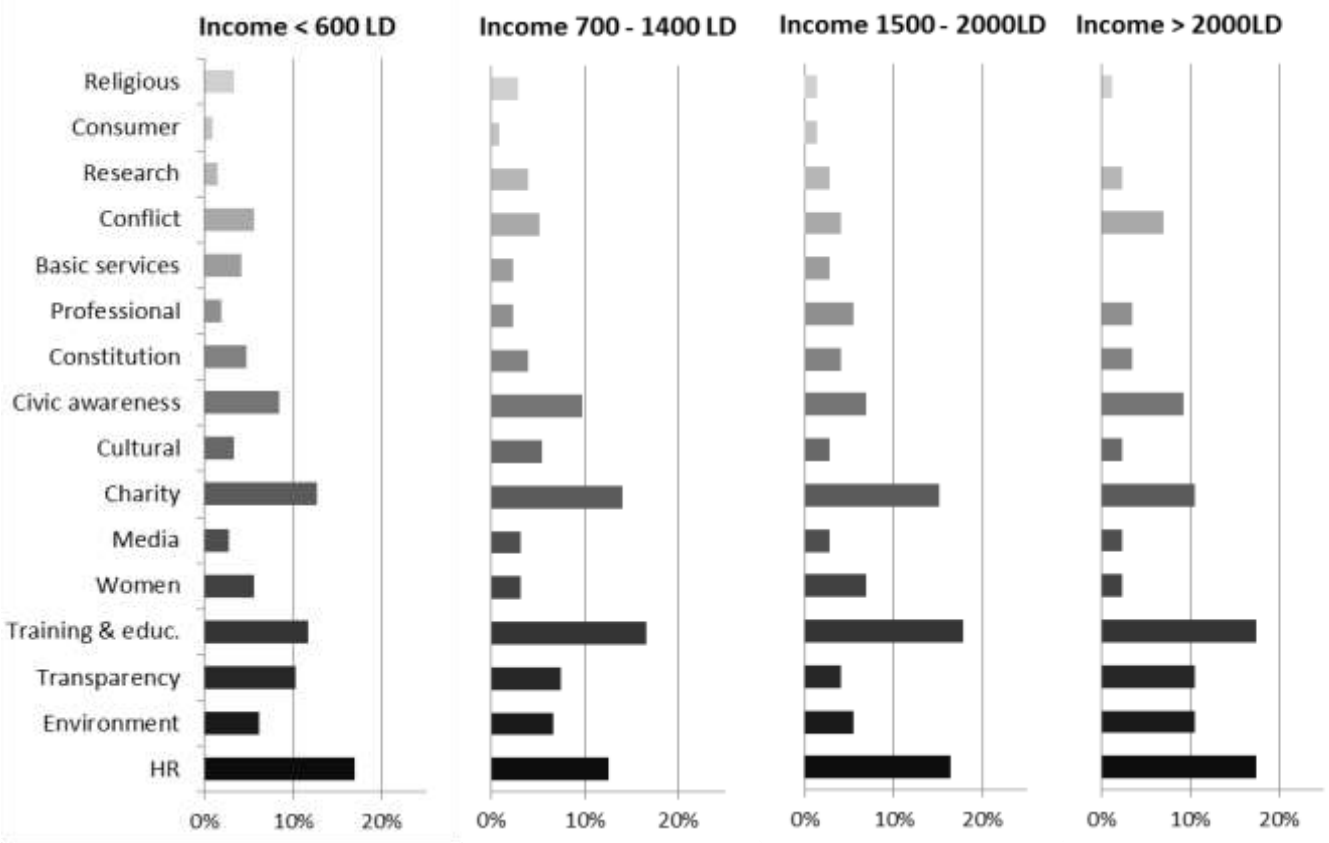
Results are presented in Figure 15 below. Given that the income range is self-assessed and self-reported, it can only offer a broad and subjective indication.

The data shows that Benghazi CSOs led by an activist with a lower income range were more likely to focus on basic service provision and religion and they were less likely to focus on professional representation (e.g. unions), research and analysis.

Abdelsalam al-Mismari, Libyan civil society activist

Conversely, CSOs whose leader has a higher income tended to focus more on the environment, conflict analysis and prevention and less on basic service provision.

Fig. 15: Percentage of CSOs by type and by Director's income range



Specific categories: Health, education and childhood

The results reported in Table 2 show that most of the CSOs conducting activities related to childhood focused on education issues (vocational training, basic education, civic education, dropouts, parenting education and quality education).

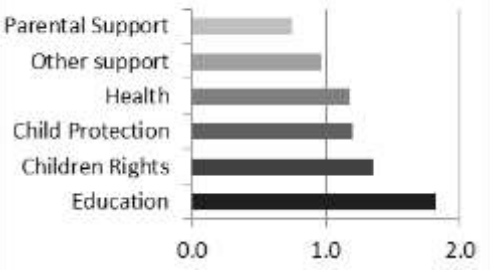
To a lesser extent, these CSOs focused on children rights (raising awareness, developing laws, promoting children's participation), health (child survival, mental health and psychosocial support, nutrition, disease control, HIV AIDs) and child protection issues (child abuse and violence, sexual abuse, child labor, street children, children with disabilities). Parental support (e.g. counseling, child care) was a comparatively rarer area of work.

Table 2: Specific categories

Education	144
Children Rights	109
Health	96
Child Protection	90
Parental Support	57

Note: Respondents could select multiple options

Fig. 16: Relative priority per category



This finding is confirmed by the level of priority (ranging from 0: no priority, to 3: high priority) that CSOs focusing on any or all of these activities assigned to each of them (Fig. 16). "Other support" was listed in the questionnaire as "basic social services, income support and referrals to services".

More specifically, those CSOs working on children's rights mainly did so through public campaigning and the promotion of children's participation and networking (Fig. 17). In comparison, activities such as advocacy and the development and monitoring of laws were somewhat neglected.

Of the 90 CSOs working on the protection of children, about half focused on child abuse and violence and an equal number worked with children with disabilities (Fig. 18). In contrast, the following activities were conducted by a quarter or less of these CSOs:

- Sexual abuse
- Child labor
- Street children
- Children in conflict with the law

Most CSOs focusing on youth worked with young adults (19 years old and older). Comparatively, only a quarter focused on children under five years of age (see figure 19).

As figure 20 shows, CSOs working with young adults focused predominantly on three types of education:

- Developing capacities of caregivers or teachers for better education of children
- Vocational training for young adults (e.g. sewing; accounting; information technology, etc.)
- Early childhood development

A relatively smaller number of organizations invested their efforts into educating and supporting parents and civic education (e.g. democracy; politics; constitution). Finally, only a handful worked as a day care for children, probably leaving this type of activity to for-profit organizations.

Conversely, organizations focusing on parental support conducted an evenly distributed spectrum of activities (see figure 21). Nevertheless, here too child care activities appeared to be less prevalent, together with group discussion. Most CSOs

Fig. 17: Activities for children's

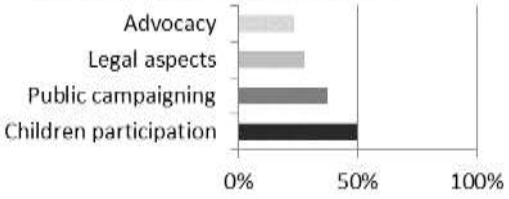
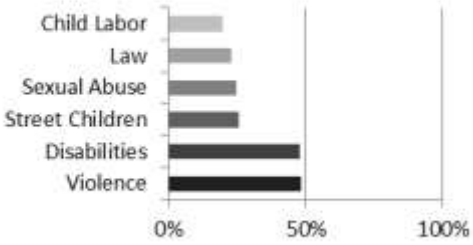


Fig. 18: Focus of child protection



% of CSOs choosing any of these options (126 CSOs)

Fig. 19: Age group focus

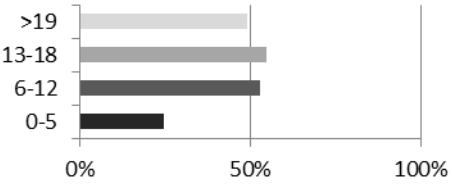
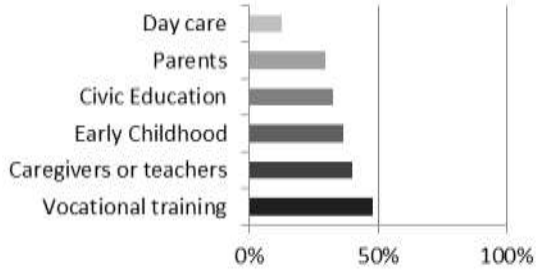
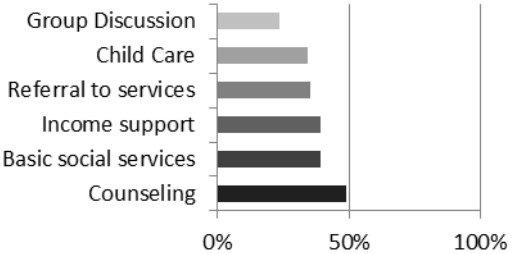


Fig. 20: Educational activity type



% of CSOs choosing any of these options (168 CSOs)

Fig. 21: Parental Support

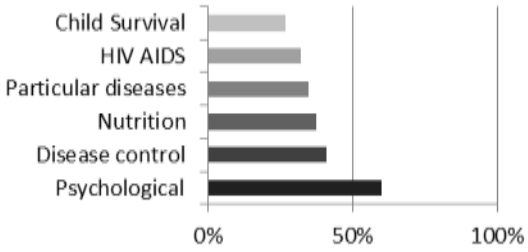


% of CSOs choosing any of these options (102 CSOs)

conducting parental support activities focused on counseling.

As figure 22 shows, most CSOs focusing on health issues worked on mental health and psychosocial support, disease control (e.g. measles) or nutrition (e.g. promotion of breastfeeding, etc.). A comparatively small number focused on child survival, HIV AIDS or on particular diseases (e.g. diabetes, Down syndrome). Further qualitative investigation would help understand the specific activities that these CSOs conduct.

Fig. 22: Health issue focus



% of CSOs choosing any of these options (115 CSOs)

Specific categories: Conflict resolution/reconciliation and minorities

The majority of Benghazi CSOs that conducted work on conflict resolution/reconciliation focused on tribal conflicts and on conflicts between armed groups and the population. Surprisingly, 41% of them also declared focusing on dialogue and/or reconciliation with those involved in supporting previous regime (Fig. 23).

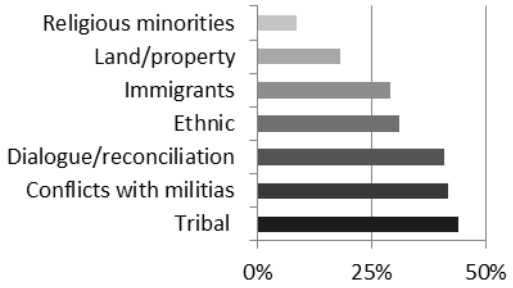
The potential sources of conflict that receives the least attention were land and property disputes and issues related to religious minorities.

In terms of minority groups (ethnic or other), Benghazi CSOs conducting conflict-related activities were primarily focused on the Tawergha population (Fig. 24). However, this was a contentious issue and some activists did not even agree on considering this as a minority group.

Other minority groups some CSOs focused on were:

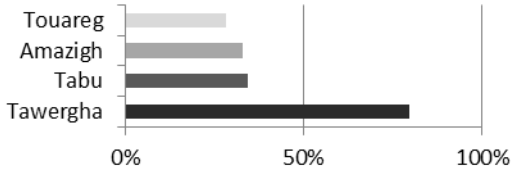
- Bedouins
- IDPs from Ajdabiya and Brega
- Migrants

Fig. 23: Conflict Resolution Focus



% of CSOs choosing any of these options (93 CSOs)

Fig. 24: Minority group focus

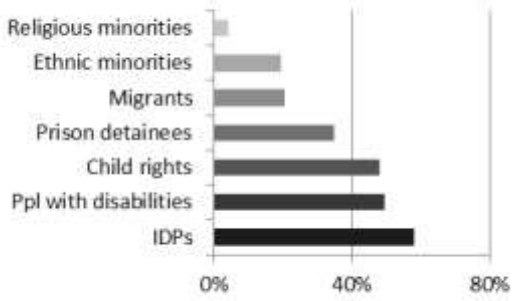


% of CSOs choosing any of these options (64 CSOs)

Almost half of the Benghazi CSOs focused on at least one type of Human Rights issue. As shown in figure 25, most of them focused on Internal Displaced Persons (IDPs), persons with disabilities and child rights (monitoring violations, violence against children, children in conflict with the law). Another important segment followed issues related to current and former prison detainees.

Only a fifth focused on migrants or foreign workers. Finally, only 4% of CSOs working on human rights focused on religious minorities.

Fig. 25: Human Rights issues focus



% of CSOs choosing any of these options (136 CSOs)

Specific categories: Constitution

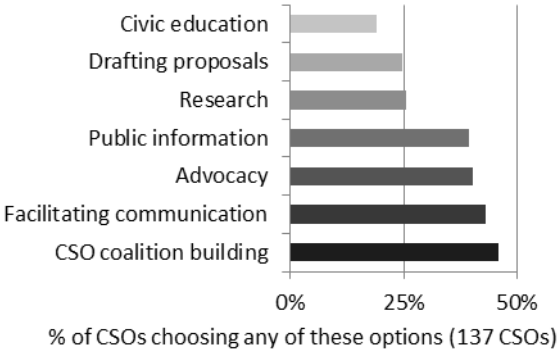
Over a third of CSOs in Benghazi focused on some aspect of the Constitution-drafting process. The majority engaged in networking, coordination with other NGOs and other forms of coalition building (Fig. 26). Three other activities were almost equally common. They were:

- Facilitating communication legislators and the people
- Lobbying and advocacy
- Providing public information through the media

Other important activities received less attention, such as:

- Civic education
- Conducting surveys, polling, assessments, research and analysis
- Developing submissions to the Constitution Drafting Assembly

Fig. 26: Constitution focus



Civic education is a very important activity in a nascent democracy given the lack of familiarity of citizens with democratic institutions. Civic awareness is the first stepping stone towards civic engagement and political participation.

The articulation of popular demands into Constitutional articles is also an important function that CSOs can and should play. Firstly, this activity helps articulate popular demands into clear and actionable points. Secondly, it aggregates disparate petitions into a manageable set of demands, making it easier for the Constitution Drafting Assembly (CDA) to give them the attention they deserve.

Other types of activity specifically mentioned by a number of CSOs included: monitoring the candidate's selection process for the CDA's election; inclusion of urban planning and environmental protection in the Constitution and advocating for the protection of the rights of children (although both of these fall into the advocacy activity option).

Libyan scouts, Benghazi

An important indicator of the type of civil society in a given community is the type of activities conducted. The type of activities can be grouped into two broad categories according to their target audience and beneficiaries:

- Socializing and welfare (field projects, service provision, training)

- Advocacy (advocacy campaigns, monitoring, public communication)

Socializing and welfare activities produce selective benefits for the CSO members and/or the specific recipients of their actions. By and large, the immediate objective of their activities is to provide goods and services to the individuals directly involved.
The public reached by advocacy-type activities instead is usually broader. In fact their interlocutors are all community members and/or the community's decision-makers. The goal of advocacy-type activities is to produce some form of collective benefits, thus broader in scope. Hence, arguably these activities have a greater civic and political salience.

Advocacy-type activities entail a much greater public visibility and partisanship. Therefore CSOs engaging in this kind of activities have a much greater exposure to scrutiny and retaliation. The lack of security and justice guarantees that characterizes the Libyan democratic transition poses a great danger to civil society activists and other public Figures. This was all the more true in Eastern Libya and in Benghazi in particular, where scores of public Figures – including young civil society activists – were kidnapped and/or killed.

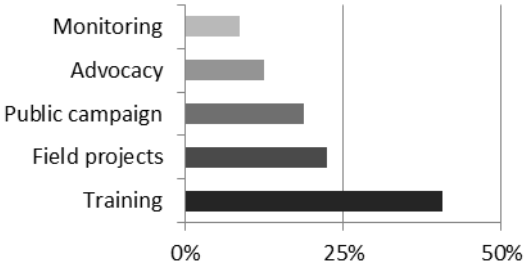
This may be the reason why such activities were comparatively less common among Benghazi CSOs.

CSO leaders were asked to rank how common specific types of activities are for their organization with 0 indicating that the activity is not conducted at all and 5 corresponding to their most common activity. The proportion who ranked each category as the most common are presented in Figure 27.

The most common activities for CSOs were workshops, seminars and other forms of training. This may be understandable in the early stage of the democratic transition, at a time when skills and education in a variety of fields
may
need development.

The least common activity was monitoring and reporting on specific issues, such as human rights violations, drugs, migration, health, education, budgeting or any other socially relevant issues.

Fig. 27: Type of CSO activities



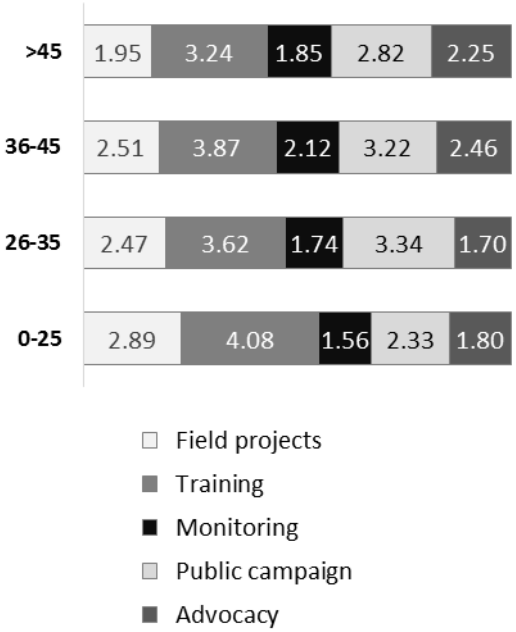
Mrs Salwa Bugaighis, HR activist assassinated in Benghazi

The importance of such an activity doesn't need explanation, particularly in a setting where weak State institutions lack the capacity to control and sanction.

The second least common activity was advocacy, which can be described in simple terms as supporting a cause or a proposal with decision makers (in this report the same activity directed towards the broader public instead is referred to as public communication/campaign). This is another important activity for the good functioning of democratic governance. Nevertheless, unlike training, it is not immediately intuitive nor simple to conduct. The skills required, the greater need for joint efforts and the current difficulty to establish channels of communication with lawmakers and decision-makers may also explain why advocacy activities were comparatively rare among CSOs.

As earlier, it is interesting to compare CSO activities with the age group of their leader. Figure 28, shows the relative priority for each type of activity (i.e. the share of the bar)[4]. CSOs led by younger directors appeared to give a greater priority to field projects and training. Conversely, CSOs whose directors above 45 years old were more inclined to advocacy (represented by the last portion of the bars in figure 28) and to a lesser extent to monitoring activities.

Fig. 28: Type of activities by age group



[4] The numbers in the bar do not have an absolute meaning, given that different individuals may assign a different level of values to all their priorities

6. Funding

Typically, the minimum annual budget desired by CSOs in Benghazi was 40'000 LD, although this figure varied widely among CSOs

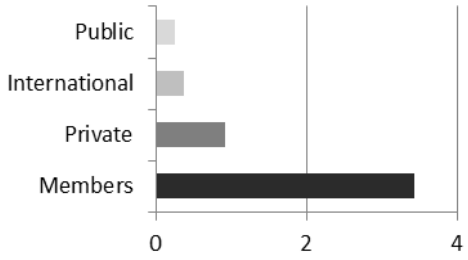
CSOs produce social goods, which are often intangible, without expecting a financial compensation in return. Understandably, securing funding sources is crucial for such non-profit organizations. Ideally, in liberal and democratic societies CSOs would rely on a balanced combination of four main sources:

- Private donors and companies (philanthropy)
- The State and local administration
- International donors
- CSO members and their friends and relatives

Each of these sources has advantages and drawbacks. However, if organizations can count on a fairly even availability of the first three sources, this provides them with a greater financial security and stability and it allows them to keep a high degree of independence in decision-making. Friends and family should then constitute the resource of last resort. Financial reliance of a CSO on its own members and on their friends and relatives is a survival mode that is not self-sustaining overtime for most types of CSOs.

Interviewees were asked to score their source of funding according to how central they are for them. Average results are presented in figure 29, with 0 representing no funding at all from that source and 4 being the main source of funding.

Fig. 29: Funding Source



Overall, it appears that Benghazi CSOs counted at least in part on all four types of sources. However, the relative importance of each source was far from balanced. Benghazi CSOs relied heavily on their own members as their primary source of funding. The least significant source was public funding. This may result from two opposite challenges. On the one side, State institutions still lacked bureaucratic capacity, legislation and expertise to allocate grants to CSOs in a transparent, fair and efficient manner. On the other side, many CSOs were very reluctant to accept any State involvement in their activity, owing to the traumatic experience with the previous dictatorial regime. Both these challenges can and should be overcome.

Benghazi CSOs rely heavily on their own members as their primary source of funding while public funding represents their least important source

The modest share of private funding for CSOs, despite the certain presence of private wealth in Libya, can probably be linked to socio-cultural traits that develop overtime. Philanthropy is a culture that develops slowly over the years in communities where the public role of CSOs is recognized

beyond mere charitable activities and where individuals develop a sense of ownership and civic responsibility. Civil society has now a chance to demonstrate its worth to the nation. In response, Libyan society has now the potential to develop its own forms of philanthropy. However, insecurity, lack of State and strong social divisions may seriously hamper this process.

If CSOs are broken down into activity groups, we can compare the centrality of each source of funding by CSO category, as presented in figure 30. Although, these are not the exact proportions for each source of funding, they show the relative centrality that each plays for the CSO's financial viability in the eyes of its founder/director (ranked from 0: no funding, to 4: main source). Another caveat to keep in mind is that each subgroup marked with an asterisk in the Figure has less than 30 CSOs, which weakens the reliability of that statistical information.

Professional, media, charity, basic services and human rights organizations appeared to receive the least support from the Libyan state authorities, be it either from the central or the local administration.

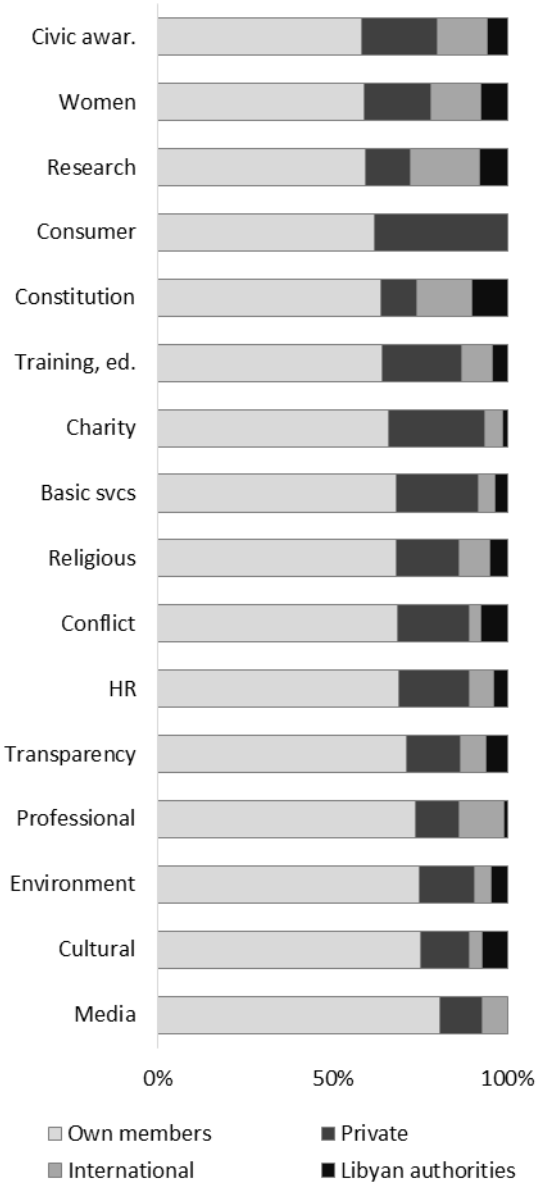
Private funding appeared to be most central for organizations focusing on charity, access to basic services, consumer protection and conflict prevention and resolution.

Funding from international organizations instead was most central for organizations conducting research and analysis, Constitution-related work, women organizations, and professional organizations.

Finally, media, cultural, environment, professional and transparency organizations seemed to be those relying most on fees and donations from their own members for financial support.

In terms of budgets, the typical size of the minimum yearly budget for CSOs in Benghazi was 40'000 LD. This was the median budget, meaning that half of the CSOs had a smaller minimum yearly budget and half of them had a larger one. median value is the best indication of the typical MYB of a Benghazi CSO. As mentioned earlier, it should be kept in mind that these were self-reported figures of the minimum yearly budget that CSO leaders estimated that they would need to cover all their CSO's activities.

Fig. 30: Relative priority of each source of funding by CSO category



When looking at the next 12 months, two thirds of CSOs in Benghazi declared that their financial situation was not sustainable

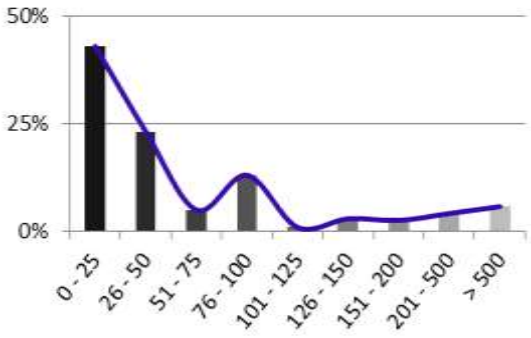
The average minimum annual budget instead is about 73'000 LD, without including the nine CSOs that declared a budget of 1 million or more. The large difference between the median and the average minimum annual budget indicates that the distribution of budget sizes is very skewed, which means that the size of budgets is not equally distributed among CSOs. In other words, a handful of CSOs in Benghazi ran or planned activities that would have require much larger yearly budgets than the majority of them, as shown in Figure 31.

At any rate, the vast majority of CSOs declare that their current funding was not enough to cover their current activities, let alone expand with future projects (see Table 3).

According to their leaders, the prospects about future funding for Benghazi CSOs appeared to be quite grim. Two thirds of the interviewees declared that, looking at the following 12 months, the financial situation of their organization was not sustainable.

Nevertheless this picture wouldn't be complete without turning towards the fundraising strategies adopted by CSOs. The results presented in figure 32 show quite clearly that there was a great deal of inexperience and inadequate efforts devoted to this crucial activity. In fact, less than 10% of Benghazi CSOs used any form of promotion of their activities through the media and an equal proportion had no fundraising strategy whatsoever. Only 22% of CSOs submitted grant proposals to potential donors. As already highlighted, most organizations in Benghazi relied on contributions from members, family and friends.

Fig. 31: Annual Budget (x 1'000 LD)*

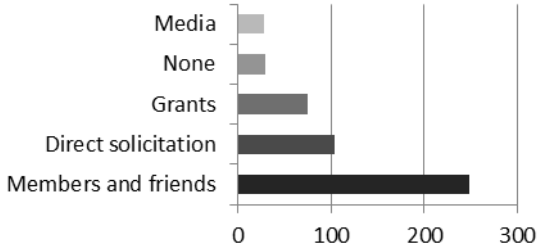


* minimum annual budget that would be sufficient to cover all the CSO's intended activities for 1 year

Table 3: Current funding situation

Insufficient to cover current activities	**83%**
Enough to cover current activities	**15%**
Enough to cover current & future activities	**2%**

Fig. 32: Fundraising Strategy



Number of CSOs choosing each option

Table 4: Top channels / newspapers / websites

Libyan TV channels	
Al Ahrar	26%
Al Hurra	16%
Al Assema	12%
International TV channels	
Al Arabiya	51%
Al Jazeera	42%
France 24	32%
Internet	
Facebook	44%
Google	27%
Government website	11%
Radio	
Benghazi FM	29%
Libya FM	22%
Al Hurra	19%
Newspaper	
Benghazi News	58%
Al Kalimah	21%
Qurina	21%

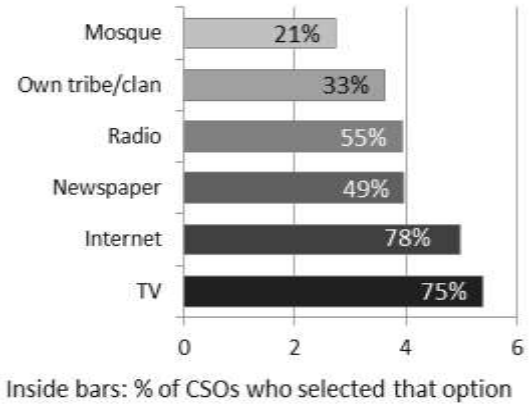
7. Use of media

The use of media can be divided in input-side (using media to receive information) and output-side (using the media to communicate).

Input side

On the input-side, CSO activists in Benghazi appeared to privilege television, internet and the radio (the percentage of selection indicated inside the bars in Figure 33). These are also the media that they considered primary sources of information (the size of the bar), ranking sources from 1 (least used) to 6 (most used). To a lesser extent, Benghazi CSOs also relied on radio and newspapers (surprisingly this received a higher ranking than radio, although it was selected by a smaller share of activists). The mosque and one's own community sub-group were the least popular and least primary source of information among Benghazi CSO leaders, nevertheless they still held some importance.

Fig. 33: Ranking of information sources



The source of information used by civil society activists is particularly important in times of tension between communities, when differing reports about events and diverging narratives may further deepen their divisions. Table 4 lists the three most cited channels for each source of information and the share of respondents that cited them (numbers refer to respondents who provided an answer to that question and not the entire population surveyed). A relatively large number of respondents did not provide any specific information. Note that in the months following the data collection, the media landscape changed dramatically. Some channels were closed, others were coerced to change their message or taken over by force.[5]

Overall, TV is ranked as the first source of information, and the top three Libyan TV channels were cited more often than the top three international channels. Many other TV channels were cited, but they were much less popular than the top three listed.

Internet ranked first in terms of use with an average of more than three hours per day. More specifically facebook appeared

[5] For more information read the various reports by *Reporters Without Borders*, available at: http://en.rsf.org/libya.html

to be the most prominent source of information and means of communication for civil society activists. Specific facebook pages and groups were often the most important, if not the only source

of information for some activists. However, these specific facebook pages and groups used varied from an individual to another, which has both advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, facebook is a peer-to-peer medium that provides a wealth of diverse sources. Moreover, it is an interactive medium, whereby users can share, comment and discuss information.

However, this medium has serious limitations. Firstly, individual users only access pages and groups that belong to their community of friends and relatives. Of course, the perspective they get is similar to their own, which reinforces any bias they may have. This naturally results in divergent narratives about events, which in turn may deepen divisions and fuel misunderstanding. Secondly, there is no check on the quality and reliability of information. Both these problems require an active effort on behalf of the user, which may rarely happen. As a result this type of source may be more likely to divulge biased and wrong information. Finally, internet access is not always reliable, let alone universally available throughout the country.

Radio is another important source of information and Benghazi FM, Libya FM and Al Hurra were cited as being the most popular stations, followed by Al Manara and Al Watania (see Table 4). Overall, respondents cited over a dozen radio stations.

CSO leaders also got information from reading newspapers, with almost half of Benghazi CSO leaders this medium. The most popular ones were Benghazi news, Al Kalimah and Qurina, closely followed by Albarneeg. Overall, respondents cited more than thirty different newspapers.

Finally, CSO leaders also relied on their own community group and the mosque to keep abreast of current events. Besides the options provided (as listed in figure 33) CSO leaders cited friends, personal contacts in government or other institutions and "rumors from the street" as other sources of information. Personal contacts were often considered the most trusted source of information, with all the problems of quality of information and partisanship that this entailed.

A large majority of CSO leaders did not trust the media and they relied on friends and trusted facebook groups as their sources of information

Fig. 34: Do you trust the media?

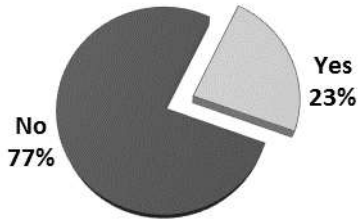
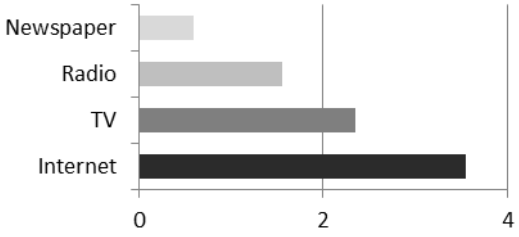


Fig. 35: Hours of media usage per day



Mohammed Nabbous, founder of Libya Alhurra TV

The findings above were confirmed by the amount of time respondents spend on average consulting each particular source of information, as figure 35 shows. Internet appeared to be used to a much greater extent, however internet was also used for leisure and communication via email and chat.

Despite the use of media just detailed, a large majority of respondents declared that they did not trust the media in general (see Fig. 34). This may have been due in part to the legacy from the previous regime but it may also have been an indication of a broad sentiment that Libyan media were perceived as being biased and lacking reliability and quality in their reports.

Civil society activity, Benghazi

Output side

The use of media to achieve the objectives of the organization is as important as the use of media to get information. CSOs privileged television and favored least the newspapers as a tool of communication for their projects. Almost a quarter of CSOs still declare not using media at all for their projects (Fig. 36). Yet, these results do not clarify the specific purpose for which CSOs used media. This can be one or more of the following:

- Advocacy (send message to decision makers to influence policy)
- Raise funds
- Public communication (raise awareness of citizens, explain activities of your CSO, advertising)
- Recruitment (call for volunteers)

Surprisingly, despite the complaints from most CSOs about the availability of funding and volunteers, very few used the media to raise funds and recruit members (see Fig. 37). Benghazi CSOs seemed to use media mainly to conduct public communication.

Benghazi CSOs made a large use of internet to carry out their activities, but this does not provide information on how they developed their presence on the web. Figure 38 confirms the predominant use of facebook, but it also shows that the vast majority of CSOs were not yet using all tools available on the

Fig. 36: Media used in projects

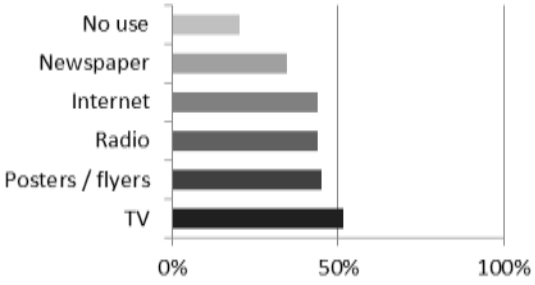
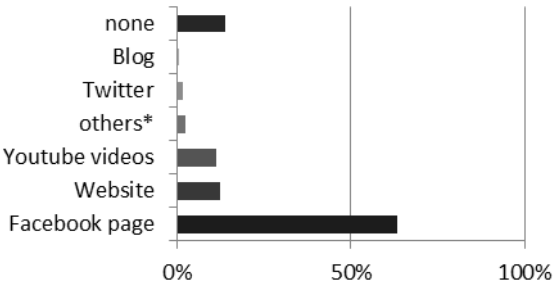


Fig. 37: Purpose for using media

Fig. 38: Web tools possessed



* Other tools cited: Newspapers; google plus; instgram; flicker; email messages; phone; leaflets

web. For instance, only 13% of CSOs declared having an organization's website, less than two percent had a twitter account and almost none had a blog.

8. Women organizations

Twelve percent of CSOs in Benghazi were women organizations (38 CSOs). Therefore it is important to keep in mind that the relatively small number of women CSOs may detract from the use of this statistical information as an indication of precise trends and characteristics, despite the fact that this is the entire population of women CSOs, not just a sample. Hence, these statistical findings are best taken as an indication of broad trends.

The typical size of women CSOs was generally the same as the typical size of CSOs in Benghazi, with about 50 total number of members and 15 active members (both median numbers). However, compared to the overall population of CSOs in Benghazi, the number of active members was more even among women CSOs (indicated by the difference between the median number and the average number of members, specifically 15 versus 24 for women CSOs compared to 15 versus 29 for all).

In line with other CSOs in Benghazi, typically women CSOs did not have any paid staff. Overall their geographical coverage was slightly more likely to be national compared to all Benghazi CSOs (53% versus 49%).

In terms of studying or working engagement, women CSO leaders appeared to be equally busy with part-time or full-time work besides their civic engagement. Nevertheless, no woman CSO leader appeared to be engaged in full-time or part-time studies.

Their organizational structure was more often decentralized compared to that of a typical Benghazi CSO (71% versus 57%), and their decision-making was more skewed towards both ends: it was more likely to be through the voting of all members (63% versus 57%) but also more likely to be centralized in the hands of a single director (8% versus 4%). In other words, a smaller share of women CSOs make decisions through an executive committee.

Women CSOs were as likely as other CSOs in Benghazi to follow mechanisms for a transparent and democratic internal governance (i.e. election of director, written mission statement, organization goals set, monitoring and evaluation).

Typical women CSO in Benghazi:

- **50 total members**
- **15 active members**
- **No paid staff**

Fig. 39: Geographical coverage of women CSOs

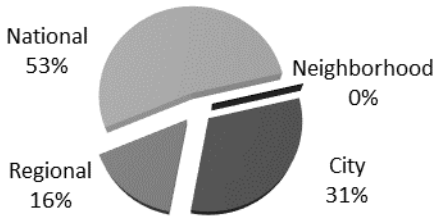


Fig. 40: CSO director studies or works, Women CSOs versus average

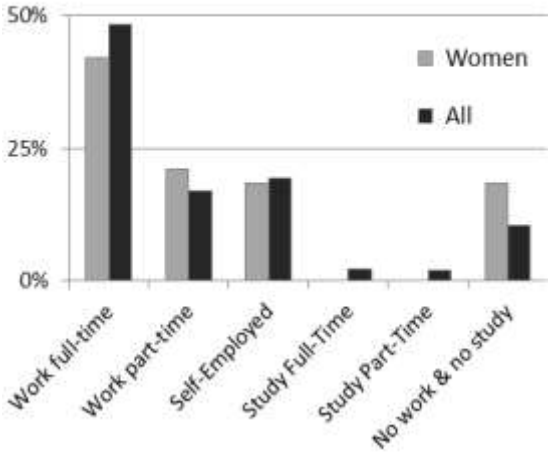
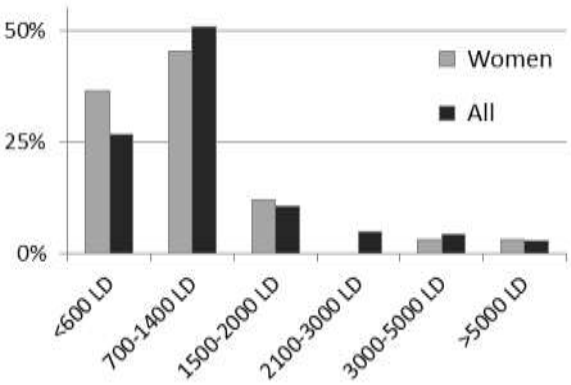


Fig. 41: Income range of director, Women CSOs versus average



The income range reported by leaders of women CSOs was almost the same as the average for CSO leaders. However, there were more women CSO leaders whose income range belong to the lowest bracket (Fig. 41).

Overall, women CSOs that had set objectives had a more extreme evaluation of their performance compared to all other CSOs, either in positive or in negative terms.

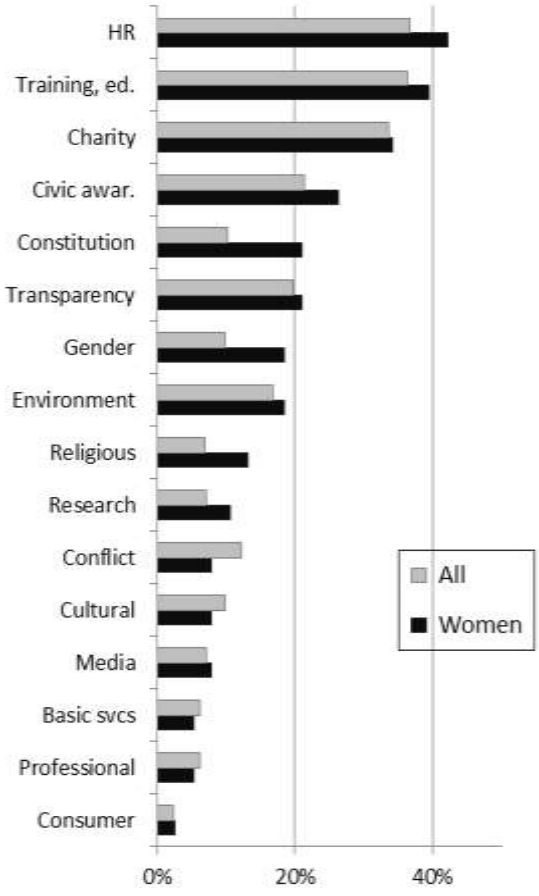
Considering their relatively small number, woman CSOs covered a wide variety of working areas, as shown in figure 42, for which each CSO was allowed to choose three core areas.

Quite surprisingly, only 18% of CSOs that self-identified as a women organization focused on gender equality and women's empowerment. Most women CSOs focused on human rights (e.g. child rights, minority groups, persons with disabilities, migration, prison detainees, etc.) and on training and education. About a third were charities.

Given the importance of the development of legal provisions to enshrine gender equality, it is not surprising to find out that a greater share of women CSOs focused on the constitution-drafting process compared to all Benghazi CSOs (21% compared to 10%).

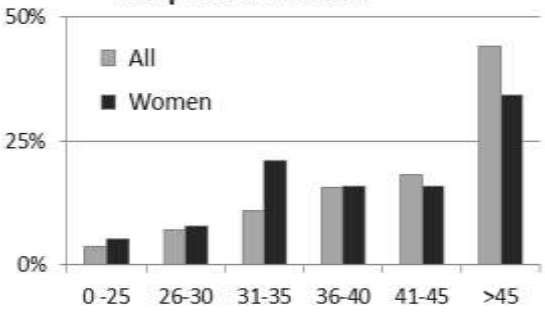
Looking at the age breakdown of women CSO leaders presented in figure 43, women organizations were slightly more likely to be run by a younger activist compared to the other Benghazi CSOs

Fig. 42: Percentage of Women CSOs by type compared to all*



* Overall there are only 38 women CSOs. Therefore these results should only be looked at as broad trends

Fig. 43: Women CSOs by age group, compared to all CSOs



Women celebrating the elections, Benghazi, July 2012

9. Structural challenges

For the purpose of this study, structural challenges are defined as those constraints imposed on civil society organizations that they cannot change by themselves. These external constraints are not merely physical, such as limitations of the available infrastructure (e.g. roads and communications) but include cultural restrictions, laws and security concerns. These challenges can change overtime, but this usually requires a long process and the intervention of factors beyond the control of any single CSO.

At the time of this research, in April 2014, almost all respondents did not feel secure in Benghazi (Fig. 44). Overall, the sentiment was that the situation had worsened compared to 12 months earlier (Fig. 46). When asked to rank their opinion of their own personal and their family's safety and security in one year's time, over half believed that the situation would be better (Fig. 45).

These answers reveal that civil society leaders feared for their security and felt that the situation had not gotten better since the previous year. However, the majority remained optimistic that the security situation would be better in a year's time. This survey was conducted in March and April 2014. Unfortunately intense fighting broke out in May and has not decreased since. Thousands of families have been displaced and entire neighbourhoods have been the theatre of intense fighting.

Security was clearly the greatest structural challenge that Benghazi CSOs had been facing since the end of the revolution, and with ever growing intensity. Scores of activists had left Benghazi and many others were intimidated and pushed to change the type of activities they conducted, stop them all-together or work underground.

Despite this immense pressure and level of threat, Benghazi citizens proved time and again their resilience and capacity to unite and raise up against powerful armed groups terrorizing their city.

Benghazi civil society leaders feared for their security and felt that the situation had gotten worse compared to 12 months earlier, yet the majority remained optimistic that security would be better in one year

Fig. 44: Sentiment of security

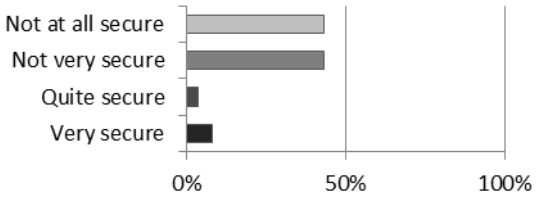


Fig. 45: Opinion on security in one year

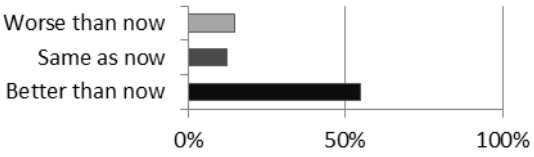
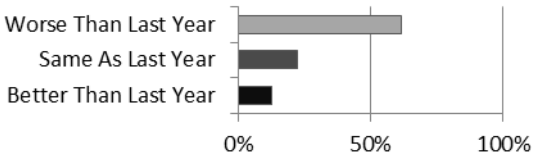


Fig. 46: Opinion on security compared to one year ago

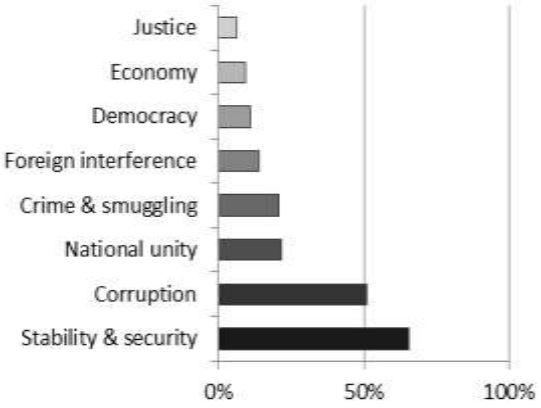


Public march, Benghazi, 2013

Overall, the vast majority of respondents did not report limitations on their activities, be them formal such as rules and guidelines, or informal ones, such as pressures by actors external to civil society. Nevertheless, a few CSOs decried receiving direct threats from armed groups and the security situation preventing them from conducting some activities. Some respondents mentioned pressures by state institutions over the conduct of their activities.

In general, when asked to choose the two main challenges facing Libya today (Fig. 47), CSO leaders confirmed that security and stability were by far their primary concern. Corruption was a very close second widespread concern for more than half of the respondents. Surprisingly, CSO leaders were least concerned about justice, the challenges to strengthening democracy and the economic situation.

Fig. 47: Most important challenges for Libya



10. Operational challenges

Operational challenges are defined here as those limitations and constraints on the existence and operations of CSOs on which they can intervene directly, either alone or with the help of external actors. These challenges can be overcome within a reasonable timeframe.

One of these challenges is the level of skills and training of civil society activists. Overall, 65% of CSO leaders thought that their organization's members had the training and skills required to do their job well.

When asked to select and rank the type of training that their CSO members would benefit most, CSO leaders identified strategic planning as the most important (Fig. 48). This was also by far the most common type of training selected. The second highest priority was given to team management, which was also the second most common type of training selected by respondents. A high priority was given to training on how to influence decision-makers (advocacy). These were followed by language training, program management, fundraising and how to use the media to communicate to the people (public communication). Although it was given a medium overall priority, language training was the third most common type of training selected by respondents, which highlights how common this need was, although it was not typically considered as the priority. Interestingly, the least desired training was on Constitution-making and election monitoring, probably owing to the fact that it was also the second most common type of training Benghazi CSOs had received (as presented in Fig. 49).

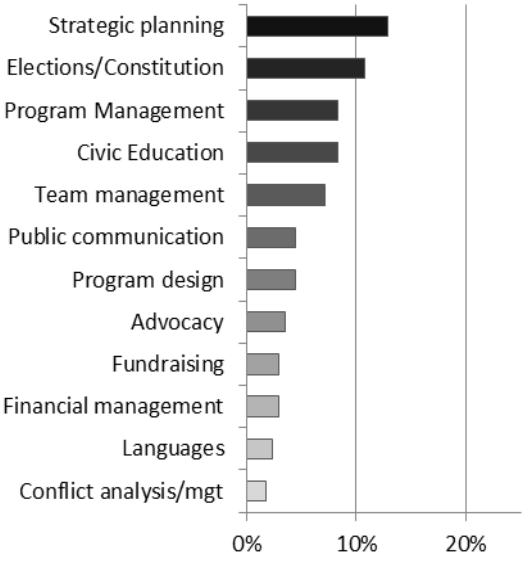
The training desired by CSOs should be looked at in parallel with the training received, which is presented in figure 49. Sixty-two percent of CSOs in Benghazi declared not having received any training. Of the training received, the two most common types were strategic planning and training on elections/constitution. It is interesting to note that the former is also the type of training most sought after, whereas the latter was the least desired by CSOs. This may be due to the fact that the latter is a fairly technical training, serving specific objectives that are narrow in time. Conversely, strategic planning is a more complex set of skills to acquire and these can be used for whichever purpose an organization may pursue. This should provide some guidance to donors and partner organizations.

The types of training most desired by CSOs in Benghazi were strategic planning and team management courses. The least sought for was training on election monitoring and Constitution-drafting

Fig. 48: Training most desired

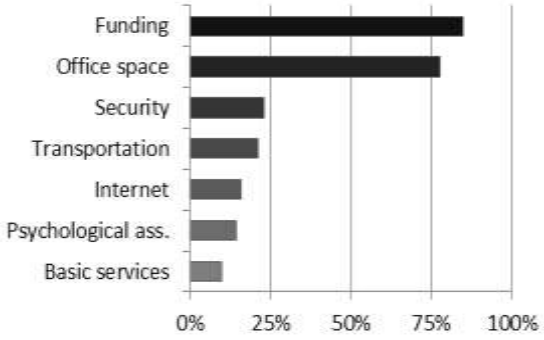
* Respondents ranked all desired training. The highest value is the most desired

Fig. 49: Training received (% of CSOs)



CSOs report receiving the least amount of training on language, conflict analysis and management, financial management and fundraising. It should be noted that conflict analysis and management is an unusual type of training in many societies. Its purpose and usefulness are often ignored or misunderstood until conflict training is provided. This, coupled with the fact that very few CSOs received such training, may explain why this last type of training was low in their priority, despite the prevalence and severity of divisions and conflicts that riddle the Libyan society.

Fig. 50: Primary challenges identified by CSOs



Among all operational challenges experienced by CSOs, securing enough financial resources to operate was certainly the most prominent (as shown in figure 50, considering that finding an office space is another expression of financial needs).

Although security was a major concern for CSOs, it did not appear to be a primary challenge to the conduct of operations, at least at the time of this research, in the Spring of 2014. However, the security situation greatly deteriorated since then, therefore this opinion may have changed.

The least important challenge was the provision of basic services. Psychological assistance was also ranked very low as an operational challenge. However, this issue was fairly new in the public realm and it was often misunderstood or underestimated. Thus, this assessment may suffer from the same lack of familiarity described earlier in relation to conflict analysis and management.

Other challenges identified were:

- Lack of cooperation among CSOs
- Lack of trained personnel
- Low number of volunteers;
- Lack of cooperation, communication and support from State institutions
- Lack of support from banks

11. Cooperation among CSOs & with other actors

Less than a third of Benghazi CSOs were part of a union or network. When they cooperated with another CSO, it was usually with another CSO from Benghazi

A quarter of the CSOs in Benghazi did not run activities in partnership with any other organization (Fig. 51). Most of those who did only cooperated with other CSOs from the city. Only 24% of Benghazi CSOs cooperated with other CSOs in Libya and 15% ran activities in partnership with international organizations.

Twenty-eight percent of Benghazi CSOs were part of a union or network of CSOs (Fig. 52). Benghazi CSOs cited about fifty different networks or unions, none of which seemed to have more than a dozen members in Benghazi. This reflected the fact that networks and unions that existed in Benghazi did not appear to have succeeded in coalescing a majority of CSOs into a relatively small number of networks.

Cooperation among CSOs at the national level is particularly important for several reasons. Firstly, it helps build the national identity, which is still largely undefined in Libya. Secondly, it helps with the implementation of grass-root dialogue initiatives. Thirdly, cooperative ties built on common elective goals (e.g. protection of the environment, health, education, human rights, etc.) can help bridge across community divides. Finally, the legitimacy and strength of a national network of organizations is greater than that of any one single CSO to pursue collective goals.

Of course, to improve cooperation among CSOs there is an attitudinal hurdle to overcome, which prizes the organization's own success over cooperation with others. In fact, as figure 53 shows, over half of Benghazi CSOs believe that developing the capacity of their own organization is more important than cooperating with other CSOs. This attitudinal hurdle is usually overcome through actual practice of cooperation and increased mutual knowledge. A positive note and a confirmation of this assertion is that those Benghazi CSOs who had established cooperative links, overwhelmingly declared that it was a positive experience overall.

Apart from cooperation within civil society, about half of the CSOs maintained a working relationships or cooperation with other social actors.

Fig. 51: Cooperation with other CSOs

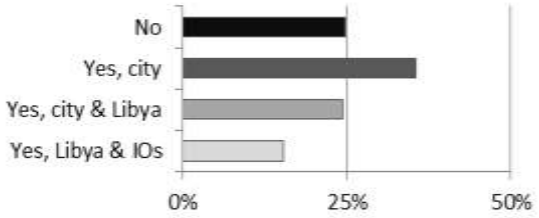


Fig. 52: Percentage of CSOs part of a CSO union or network

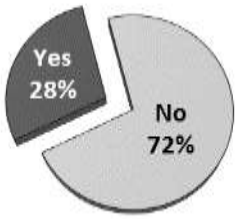
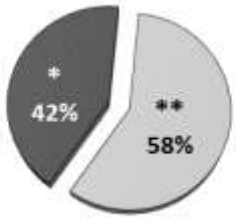


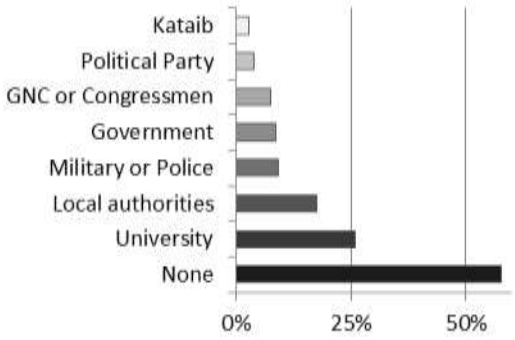
Fig. 53: Cooperation* VS own development**



* Cooperate with other civil society organizations
** Develop the capacity of your own organization

Most CSOs cooperated with universities (Fig. 54). Only a quarter of CSOs had some relationship with local authorities. Interestingly, only a very small proportion of CSOs (4%) had any relationship with political parties. This showed a very low cooperation between civil society and political society, which could be expected at this early stage of a democracy, but that may not necessarily be a good thing. Without taking the extreme example of Tunisia, where CSOs play a prominent role in politics and mobilization, CSOs play an important role in democracies. Civil society helps articulate social demands and aggregate preferences and interests into policy proposals and recommendations. CSOs are also an important vehicle for public communication and mobilization. Although any particular organization is only legitimately representing the interests of its members and narrow community, the plurality of organization ideally ensures that all needs and interests are heard and advocated for. In other words, plurality is an antidote against partisanship in civil society and maybe in politics. Finally, cooperation between parties and CSOs can help increase transparency and accountability of political figures.

Fig. 54: Cooperation with non CS actors



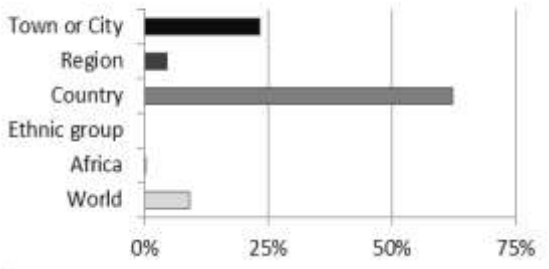
Libya debate club, Benghazi

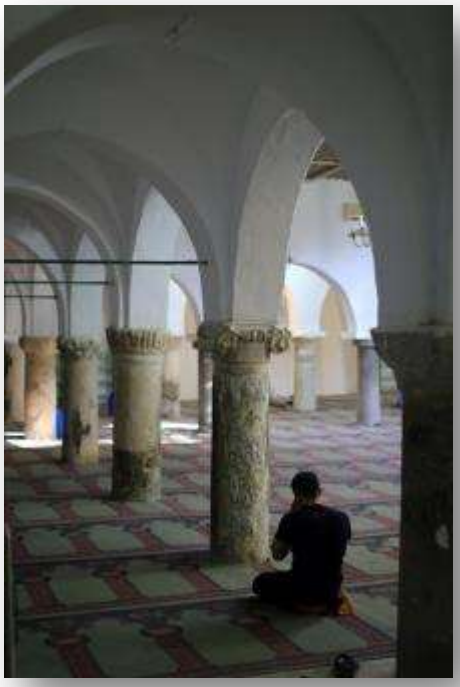
12. Individual attitudes: identity; trust; empowerment; engagement

Identity

In social terms, the definition of identity is an individual's conception of self in relation to others. In short, it is one's definition of the "collective self". It is an important attitude because it provides an indication of the size of the community with which an individual identifies. CSO leaders were asked to select the geographical group they identified as being from primarily**.** A large majority (62%) selected "Libya" (Fig. 55). A significant proportion of CSO leaders (23%) identified as being from Benghazi over being Libyans. Only a few identified primarily with Cyrenaica.

Fig. 55: Primary identity

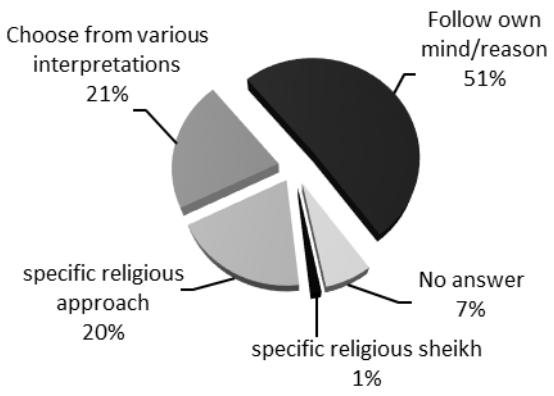




It is possible that there may be some respondent bias at play, whereby interviewees may be more inclined to choose an option they think is better regarded by interviewees. Yet, these strong results signal a significant positive identification with the Libyan identity.

Another facet of an individual's identity is the attitude towards religion. In particular, the degree of agency and autonomy that individuals exercise when they seek spiritual and ethical guidance has social relevance in terms of relationships among different religious groups and for the balance between conservation and change. Respondents were asked whether they sought guidance from a single religious Figure; from a single approach (i.e. manhaj); from various religious interpretations (i.e. tafsir) or from their own mind/reason (i.e. aqal). Half of the respondents declared using their own judgment to seek for religious guidance. 21% sought guidance through multiple religious interpretations. Only 20% followed a specific religious approach and about 1% followed the guidance of a single religious sheikh. These results were fairly uniform across age and gender.

Fig. 56: Religious attitude



These findings appear clear-cut. However, two considerations should be kept in mind. Firstly, the most religiously conservative CSOs were more likely to be among those who unwilling to take part in this research. Secondly, about 7% of respondents declined to answer to this question and we can only speculate that the non-responses may have been closer to the more

conservative side of the spectrum of religious attitudes.

Trust

Trust is "the mutual confidence that no party to an exchange will exploit another's vulnerabilities" (Sabel, 1993: 1133). This is a very important characteristic for any sort of enterprise because it determines how easy it will be for an individual to cooperate with other community members, and how far this benefit extends. Borrowing from economics, trust lowers transaction costs, thereby making any group or organization run more efficiently. In short, trust determines the facility of acting together.

Compared to average citizens, Benghazi CSO leaders had a greater inclination to trust individuals that did not belong to their narrow community and whom they did not know

One important distinction within this attitude is whether it is confined to the in-group that is known and/or similar to us (particularized trust) or whether it extends to the out-group, to people that is not directly known (generalized trust).

To get a better measure of the level of generalized trust of respondents we asked a question drawn from the World Value Survey, a well-established world-wide survey that measures this attitude. The results, shown in tables 5 and 6 are compared to the results of the WVS that was administered in 2013 to a representative sample of residents of Libya 18 years old and above.

Table 5: Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?

	Benghazi CSOs	Libya (WVS)
Need to be careful	85%	84%
Most people can be trusted	14%	10%
No answer	1%	6%

Table 6: How much you trust each of these groups?

	People you meet for the first time		People of another religion		People of another nationality	
	Benghazi CSOs	Average Libya (WVS)	Benghazi CSOs	Average Libya (WVS)	Benghazi CSOs	Average Libya (WVS)
Trust completely	2%	2%	10%	2%	9%	3%
Trust somewhat	28%	18%	51%	18%	54%	23%
Don't trust very much	50%	35%	24%	26%	26%	27%
Do not trust at all	17%	42%	12%	49%	8%	44%
No answer / DK	3%	2%	4%	5%	3%	3%

Overall Benghazi CSO activists displayed a greater level of generalized trust than the average among Libyan citizens, (Tables 5 and 6). This may explain in part why they engaged in civil society in the first place. Most importantly, this trait also equips them to play potentially a bridging role across Libyan communities that are increasingly divided by lack of knowledge of each other and mistrust.

As mentioned, particularized trust instead refers to that granted to a closer circle such as family members, friends, and others with similar backgrounds. Here too, we asked the same questions used by the 2013 World Value

Benghazi environment CSO distributing flyers, 2013

Survey.

The results of questions gauging particularized trust are more varied and their meaning is more complex. In fact, a high personalized trust coupled to a low generalized trust may be an indication of communitarian attitudes which may strengthen small communities but also foster polarization and mistrust towards other Libyan communities.

The directors or founders of Benghazi CSOs also displayed a greater level of trust in people they knew, as can be seen in Table 7. Overall, this indicates that they had a greater disposition towards trust across the spectrum. In general, the degree of trust, especially generalized trust, is also an indication of the trustworthiness of individuals themselves. In fact, Individuals are likely to base their judgment on how much they can trust others on the degree to which they would be faithful to other people's trust.

Table 7: How much you trust each of these groups?

	City		People you know personally	
	Benghazi CSOs	Average Libya (WVS)	Benghazi CSOs	Average Libya (WVS)
Trust completely	38%	N/A*	66%	40%
Trust somewhat	51%	N/A*	29%	38%
Don't trust very much	8%	N/A*	3%	15%
Do not trust at all	1%	N/A*	0%	5%
No answer / DK	3%	N/A*	2%	0%

* This question was not asked by the World Value Survey

However, the findings in table 8 show that Benghazi CSO respondents had a lower level of trust in family and neighbors than average Libyans. It should be kept in mind that the comparison is with a sample of all Libyan residents. This lower level of particularized trust towards family and neighbors may be an indication of a lower level of conservatism (i.e. the degree to which individuals privilege abiding by collectively accepted norms and behaviors versus expressing their own identity and beliefs, thereby prizing social acceptance, stability and continuity). In other words, CSO activists may be more likely to look for guidance for their behavior and thoughts in both themselves and in a broader circle of people. In this sense, they may have a lesser trust for traditional and familial figures. This may also explain why civil society activists are so often the most active and dynamic agents of change.

Table 8: How much you trust each of these groups?

	Family		Neighborhood	
	Benghazi CSOs	Average Libya (WVS)	Benghazi CSOs	Average Libya (WVS)
Trust completely	90%	94%	29%	38%
Trust somewhat	7%	5%	60%	48%
Don't trust very much	1%	1%	8%	9%
Do not trust at all	0%	0%	1%	4%
No answer / DK	2%	0%	2%	0%

Individual empowerment

Individual empowerment is a state of mind, whereby individuals believe that they can exert some control or influence on people and the environment. This is a central psychological premise on which individuals build their social action. Hence, in many ways individual empowerment is another core driver of civic engagement and social action. Overall, Benghazi CSO directors had a slightly higher evaluation of their freedom of choice and control over their life than the average among residents of Libya measured by the 2013 WVS (see figure 57). The difference was not as dramatic as could be expected. However, it should be noted that the survey was conducted over two years after the revolution. During this time CS activists were engaged in multiple actions demanding accountability and responsiveness from decision-makers and advocating for rights and freedoms while their demands were largely unanswered and their security seriously degraded. Moreover, dozens of Benghazi activists had been either killed or kidnapped since the end of the 2011 revolution.

Fig. 57: Freedom of choice and control over life

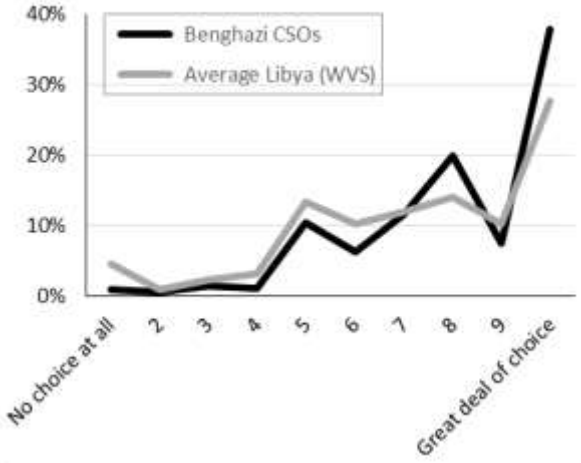
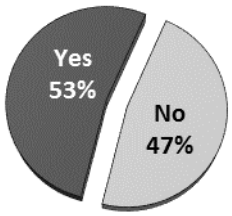


Fig. 58: A person alone can have an impact on society

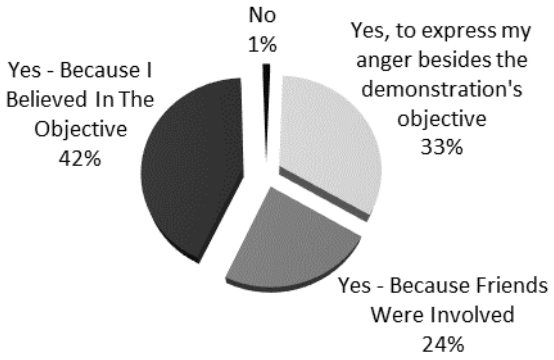


At any rate, despite the loss of faith in their collective power activists may have experienced, their overall level of individual empowerment was fairly high, considering that over half of the respondents still thought that a person alone could have an impact on society (Fig. 58).

Engagement

Civic and political engagement, such as participating in protests, writing petitions, calling decision-makers, voting and discussing politics are core constitutive elements of democratic governance. CSOs can be seen as the aggregation and formalization of individual acts of social engagement into organized voluntary associations.

Fig. 59: Participated in a public demonstration in the last 6 months



Thus it is not surprising to see that almost all interviewees had participated in at least one demonstration (Fig. 59). However, one third of Benghazi CSO leaders had participated in public demonstrations to express their anger and dissatisfaction with the current situation, regardless of whether or not they believed in the actual objectives of the protest.

The WVS asked a similar question, asking whether the interviewees had ever attended a peaceful demonstration. Only less than one third of respondents declared that they had, and another 20% that they may do so in the future.

Another important expression of political engagement is the act of voting. The results presented in figure 60 show that 78% of CSO leaders voted in the 2012 Parliamentary (GNC) election. This was a notably higher voter turnout compared the national average, reported at about 72%.[6] Finally, the turnout reported by CSO leaders stands out even more markedly in comparison to the official Figures (Libyan High National Election Commission) that reported a general turnout of 50,5% of eligible voters for that election.

Proud voter, July 2012

This difference is all the more relevant considering that a share of the activists interviewed were either abroad or were under the required age for voting at the time of the election. Some of the reasons given for not voting were not knowing enough about the candidates, not liking any of the candidates, not trusting the system, lacking the desire or interest and because perceiving the distribution of seats among regions as being unequal.

When asked whether they intended to vote in the next election (which happened to be for the Constitution Drafting Assembly), the potential participation dropped by 4% (Fig. 61). Yet, these figures remained much higher than the intention to vote found across a sample of the Libyan population in September 2013, which showed that only 61% of respondents would have voted "if parliamentary elections were held tomorrow" (NDI & JMW, Nov 2013).

Reasons cited for not intending to vote were:

- disappointment about the previous elections and about the failures of the government
- lack of confidence in the electoral mechanism;

Fig. 60: Voted in the 2012 GNC elections

Fig. 61: Intends to vote in the next election

[6] According to NDI and JMW Consulting, "Believing in Democracy: Public opinion survey in Libya", August 2013, available at: https://www.ndi.org/files/Believing-in-Democracy-Public-Opinion-Survey-Report-August-2013.pdf, and 70% according to "Libyan Elections: Preliminary Statement", The Carter Center, July 9, 2012, available at: http://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/news/pr/libya-prelim-statement-070912.pdf,

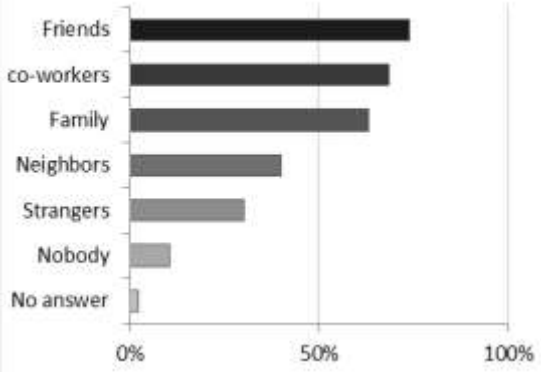
- lack of trust in parties and candidates;
- large number of parties;
- lack of knowledge about the candidates;

The intentions to vote continued to drop since the time of this survey in the spring of 2014 among average Libyans and CS activists alike. Yet the latter consistently show a higher willingness to participate in democratic change and exercise their civic duties. This is yet another reason why empowering civil society supports the democratic transition.

Most Benghazi CSO leaders regularly discussed politics and administration (Fig. 62). They appeared to do so primarily with friends and co-workers (Fig. 63). Interestingly, only 10% more respondents declared discussing with neighbors rather than complete strangers, which could have indicated a certain degree of openness towards strangers, some diffidence towards neighbors or a combination of both.

Fig. 62: Regularly discuss politics and administration (> once a week)

Fig. 63: With whom do you discuss politics?



Women protesters, Benghazi, November 2013

13. Attitude towards institutions

Among institutions, Benghazi CSO leaders trusted the Army, the Police and the judiciary the most and had the least trust in political parties

Democracy and politics

The criteria that citizens follow when deciding for whom to vote are a good indication of their attitudes towards democracy and politics.

Benghazi CSO leaders were asked to rate from 0 (not important at all) to 4 (most important) a series of criteria in deciding whom to vote for, whether for the parliamentary, municipal or local elections. Results presented in figure 64 show that they considered the level of education to be the most important criterion, followed by the extent to which they agreed with the candidate on issues that were important to them. This priority ranking may highlight an individual-based conception of politics, whereby an individual characteristic of candidates is more important than her/his political agenda on issues deemed important.

The degree of religiousness was also considered to be moderately important, as well as the candidate's social status. Surprisingly, these factors were considered to be more important than the candidate's party affiliation. Whether the candidate was a man or a woman was not considered to be very important.

CSO leaders were also asked to identify what they thought were the most important features of democracy among a series of options. The results in Figure 65 show that democracy was most associated with fighting corruption. It must be kept in mind that in 2011 Libya ranked 168th out of 182 countries in the world in terms of corruption according to Transparency International's *Corruption Perceptions Index.*[7] The second key defining feature of democracy is considered to be the opportunity to change the government through elections, followed by the equality of political rights among citizens.

Fig. 64: Voting criteria

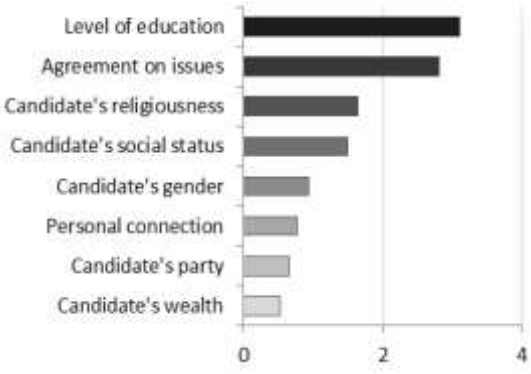
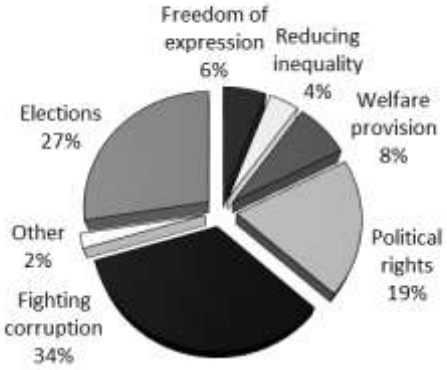


Fig. 65: Most important feature of democracy



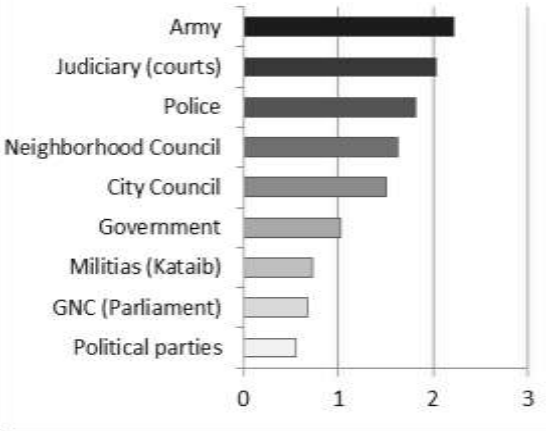
Trust in institutions

Benghazi CS activists were asked to rate the level of trust they have towards a series of institutions, going from 0 (do not trust at all) to 3 (trust completely).

[7] http://www.transparency.org/cpi2011/results

The first notable finding shown in figure 66 is that overall, most state institution failed to even reach a 2, which means "trust somewhat". Most average around 1, which means "do not trust very much". What is encouraging and remarkable is that the state institutions that enjoyed the highest degree of trust were the Army, the Police and the judiciary (courts) despite the challenges they were facing and their comparatively lower level of effectiveness.

Fig. 66: Trust in institutions



Non-state armed groups (also referred to as kataib or militias) were also listed as an option and they received almost the lowest level of trust, beaten only by political parties and the Parliament. Considering that the Libyan Parliament was the highest state authority during the transition period in Libya, it is quite disheartening to see that CSO leaders had a greater trust towards militias.

This rock-bottom level of trust towards political parties will be potentially problematic for the development of democratic institutions, particularly in terms of political dialogue, participation and engagement. With this level of distrust, civil society may have a pivotal role to play in bridging between the constituency and the political society (i.e. state and political parties).

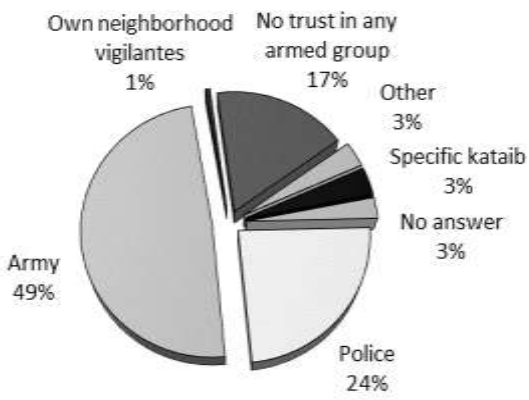
Army Special Forces' soldier, Benghazi, Nov 2013

Another important finding is that among the different levels of governance, activists granted more trust to the Benghazi city Council and to the various neighborhood Councils than to the government or the Parliament.

Armed groups

Finally, CSO leaders were asked which armed group they trusted the most for the security of their family and themselves. Results shown in figure 67 confirm the earlier finding also in relation to other armed groups. Non-state armed groups, such as militias (kataib) and neighborhood vigilantes were clearly not favored by civil society organizers. Half of the CSO leaders had the greatest trust in the Army and another quarter trusted the Police the most. This is an encouraging finding since it shows that activists had managed to preserve their trust in the official

Fig. 67: Trust in armed groups



state defense, security and justice institutions despite the very dire conditions and challenges these had faced since the end of the conflict.

Yet, it must be noted that 17% of CSO leaders did not trust any armed group whatsoever, including the army or the police. Other armed groups cited by a few respondents were Ansar al Sharia, Libya Shield brigades, their own neighborhood youth and the rebels (called “thouwar”) that were fighting before the end of the revolution.

Recommendations

To Civil Society Organizations

Information

1. Develop local news outlets for the provision of community information owned and managed by civil society activists, such as community radios; community newspapers; internet platforms (facebook pages and crowd-sourcing platforms[8]); public campaigns
2. Partner with existing local media channels to develop programs that explain the activities, needs and challenges of CSOs and publicize the role of CSOs

Networking and cooperation

3. Make efforts to conduct joint activities with other CSOs, particularly from other Libyan cities.
4. Join unions/networks of CSOs to share information, discuss activities and challenges. Share resources, expertise and information among CSOs.
5. Create national thematic network of CSOs to foster cooperation (e.g. environment; transparency; human rights; education; health; etc.)

Internal governance and good practices

6. Adopt participatory decision-making through voting and / or the creation of an executive committee, thereby fostering initiative and participation
7. Be transparent in the decision-making process, which is a prerequisite for accountability and breeds trust and adherence to the interests of the organization
8. Adopt an internal code of conduct and set organizational principles and goals. These shed clarity in the purpose of the organization thereby strengthening its identity, they help guide the actions of members and they provide them with a common vision
9. Design, Monitor and Evaluate (DME) activities that develops efficiency in the conduct of activities and effectiveness in the achievement of goals

Security

10. Make full use of new media technologies and digital security to maximize security and resilience of civil society initiatives online. Avoid exposing individual activists' identity online when not needed
11. Maximize efforts to develop the cooperation among CSOs locally and nationally to increase strength and support networks for CSOs
12. Increase ties, communication and cooperation with local communities in order to develop more collective strength, legitimacy and support. A strong anchoring and support from the local community is the most effective means to protect CSOs in a setting where the state is weak or absent
13. Establish regular and formal ties with the local administration to extend the information-sharing network and to benefit from whichever protection and support the local administration may be able to provide

[8] Such as the Ushahidi platforms, available at http://www.ushahidi.com/

14. Establish dedicated platforms for communication to divulge timely information about security threats making full use of new technogies such as cellphones and internet[9]

Politics and the democratic transition

15. Increase inclusive and non-partisan involvement in all stages of the democratic process, notably: constitution-drafting; national dialogue efforts; mediation and conflict-management
16. Strive against partisanship and political cooptation by discussing and adopting non-partisanship as an organizational principle. Fight against polarization and confrontation by fostering tolerance, information sharing, dialogue and collective initiatives
17. Engage with the local administration and support its provision of services according to the CSO focus and activities but maintain a large measure of autonomy and guard against political cooptation
18. Demand transparency and accountability from decision-makers at all levels of the state and civil society and the private sector in order to develop effective and responsive governance

To State authorities

19. Ensure the protection of civil society activists by publicly defending their role
20. Foster cooperation among CSOs, especially at the national level and formally acknowledge their role and legitimacy as interlocutors by engaging with them in all key sectors (education, health, national identity, culture, transparency, women rights, youth empowerment, minority rights…)
21. Increase transparency and communication with communities through CSO and community media

To the local administration

The current political and military division of the country lives little hope for the effective functioning of central state authorities. Therefore, local administrations have a very important role to play as the key official authorities for the daily life of Libyans. However, local administrations are faced with a challenging and vast array of problems at a time when they cannot count on a strong security, financial, legislative and judicial support from the central authorities. For these reasons, local administrators should reach out to their community to harness its potential to extend their capacity and anchor their public support. In particular, local administrations should partner with CSOs to quickly gain capacity and legitimacy in the provision of services.

Cooperation on the provision of services

22. Develop partnerships with specialized CSOs for the provision of services in fields such as health, education, environmental upgrade, maintenance of infrastructure (i.e. “co-production” of services)

[9] One model of this kind of initiatives is “Harassmap” founded in December 2010 in Egypt. It is a tool for victims and witnesses of harassment and assault in Egypt that enables them to anonymously share and report incidents. Available at: http://harassmap.org/en/.

Another model is the “Mapping Violence Against Pro-Democracy Protests in Libya” developed in February 2011, available at: https://maps.google.com/maps/ms?source=s_q&hl=en&geocode=&aq=&ie=UTF8&msa=0&msid=215454646984933465708.00049c59184ae1136341a&z=6

23. Develop and support programs of reintegration of fighters into society in partnership with volunteering CSOs

Good governance

24. Develop participatory governance by granting observer seats to civil society and community members in the Local Councils
25. Task and support CSOs to conduct training and education on democracy, civil society and governance for local state employees, former fighters, Police and Army

Information

26. Increase transparency and communication with communities through CSO and community media
27. Create and regularly update social media channels to provide information on decisions and projects

Dialogue and mediation

28. Encourage and initiate dialogue initiatives across communities together with CSOs in order to seek peaceful solutions to grievances

Security

29. Ensure the protection of civil society activists and organizations by publicly defending their role
30. In cooperation with community media and CSOs, establish platforms for communication dedicated to security information-sharing to divulge timely information about security threats

International community

At a time when polarization and recourse to violence appear to mute initiatives for dialogue, mediated agreements and power-sharing, the international community should invest in the Libyan civil society to capitalize on its unique ability to foster dialogue, develop popular participation in governance and most importantly to establish bridges across social divides.

Benghazi activists with children

Civil society organizations that advocate for collective goods, such as freedoms, human rights, education, transparency, environmental protection, health, youth development have a great potential to forge a sense of national identity and networks for dialogue and cooperation.

State-society cooperation

31. Provide technical assistance and financial support to both civil society and the local administrations to develop joint state-civil society programs listed under local administration above

CSO cooperation

32. Promote cooperation, cohesion and activities of CSOs by providing grants to groups of CSOs to manage collectively and to prioritize funding allocations to projects decided locally and collegially
33. Organize thematic conferences on any and all of the collective issues listed above to bring together activists from across Libya
34. Help Libyans create online and nation-wide platforms and web portals for discussion on those themes, to foster a sense of national identity not based on political, regional or ideological grounds

Good governance

35. Foster and support mechanisms for communication between civil society and decision-makers, both at the level of the local administration and at the central level of the executive and the legislative branches

Security

36. Conduct trainings for civil society activists on the use of social media and on digital security
37. Fund programs for psycho-social support

Information

38. Conduct training on citizen journalism and help create a network of local reporters to produce and share quality information nationally
39. Support the creation of an online platform for news sharing in partnership and under the supervision of well-established media support organizations
40. Develop the capacity of CSOs to conduct research (surveys, assessments, interviews) on service provision, human rights, education, health, justice, security. Help them publish the results and share them within Libya

Diaspora civil society

Finally, large and active Libyan diaspora communities exist abroad. Moreover, since the increase in violence and direct threats to activists in Libya in the Spring of 2014, many have sought refuge in foreign countries. These activists abroad are often among the most engaged and dynamic members of the Libyan civil society. Thus, the international community should harness their potential through dedicated initiatives, such as:

Libyan Civil Society Roundtable, Boston, December 2014

41. Organize or support Libyan civil society roundtables in countries where many Libyan activists currently reside (e.g. USA, UK, France, Tunisia, etc.)
42. Foster dialogue and cooperation with the dynamic Libyan civil society diaspora by funding projects and initiatives that establish bridges between them and activists in Libya

43. Develop projects for Libyan CS activists in their host foreign country, emphasizing advocacy, media, use of IT, and mediation

Appendix 1: Methodology

Research tool

The interview questionnaire was developed specifically to analyse the civil society landscape in Libya. Many questions were adapted from social surveys conducted around the world in the last three decades. Notably, the main references were the World Value Survey, CIVICUS, the Eurobarometer and the Arab Barometer. Other questions were devised specifically for Libya and some were drafted in collaboration with UNICEF and UNDP in order to survey more specifically activities relative to constitution; ethnic minorities; conflict prevention & resolution; children; education; health and parenting.

The draft questionnaire was then circulated with the staff from UNICEF and UNDP for feedback and suggestions until its final validation. Once finalized, the questionnaire was translated by a professional translator in Tripoli, and was submitted to several Libyans and to the UNICEF and UNDP Arabic-speaking staff for feedback on the translation and testing.

Finally, the overall research project and the survey questionnaire were presented to the representative from the Civil Society Resource Centers – now called Commission on Civil Society -, part of the Libyan Ministry of Culture, on August 12, 2013

The research was approved through an official letter signed by the Director of the Libyan Civil Society Resource Centers - Libyan Ministry of Culture and Civil Society.

The research covered the following subject areas:

1. Creation, registration and geographical coverage of CSOs
2. Membership and recruitment
3. Leadership, decision-making & organizational structure
4. CSO categories and activities
5. Funding
6. Use of media
7. Structural challenges
8. Operational challenges
9. Cooperation among CSOs
10. Attitude towards authorities and trust

Interview procedure

The questionnaire consisted of 104 questions, almost all close-ended (multiple choice).

All interviews were conducted in Arabic by a Libyan enumerator. Each interview was conducted individually in a public location between one representative of the CSO and one of the enumerators. Before starting the discussion, the enumerator explained the nature and objectives of the research, covering issues such as confidentiality, security of data, lack of costs and benefits to the interviewee, broader usefulness of the

research and the contact information of the research staff and of the research manager. The interviewee was then given up to 15 minutes to decide whether she/he was willing to participate in the research. The interview started only if the consent is given, and lasted about 45 minutes to one hour.

Based on their long experience around the world, major polling agencies take into account that statistically, around 10% of questionnaires are fake, that is they are filled out by an enumerator without actually interviewing a subject. This problem was mitigated by conducting interviews in a centralized location under the supervision of both peer enumerators, the Operational Manager and the Coordinator. As stated above, only for the last few interviews some team members were allowed to go to the location of a few CSOs, which would have been excluded from the research otherwise.

Confidentiality

To guarantee the complete security of interviewees, and that of their CSO, all personal information and that of the organization were separated from the rest of the interview. These data were entered in a separate spreadsheet document and kept securely.

The reports by city only present the statistics and data relative to the totality of CSOs interviewed, with no reference to any single one of them specifically. Conversely, the CSO rosters for each city only list the CSO overall description and contact information (name, contact number, field of activity, area of coverage) without more detailed and personal information provided in the survey.

Interview, Benghazi, March 2014

Team training

The team was trained over the course of 3 days between November 23rd and 25th. However, the research was put on hold a few days later due to the onset of a conflict involving the Army Special Forces and some militias. The research was postponed until March 2014, when the level of threat allowed a reasonably safe conduct of interviews. Some team members had left due to constraints and new members were recruited to replace them. The team was trained again for two days.

The training covered the following points;

- Objectives of the CSO research project
- Deliverables that will be produced (report and roster)
- Team roles and functioning
- Working hours and activities
- Research methodology, in particular the voluntary character of interview, privacy and confidentiality
- Questionnaire sections

The questionnaire was read aloud collectively, one question at a time. Each question was read by one of the team members and acknowledged by all. All team members were given all the time they required to ensure that the meaning was clear, that the words used were accurate and appropriate and most importantly to ensure that each of them was comfortable with the question. It was made very clear that the research interviews would not start until all members of the team understood each question and were comfortable asking them.

Finally, each team member conducted a full-length actual interview of another team member. All the questionnaires were reviewed and mistakes in marking down answers were discussed. This was another opportunity for the team members to ask further details about the reason or meaning of any particular question.

As could be expected, the questions that animated most of the conversations were those on religion, security and trust towards institutions. Nevertheless, all understood the need and interest in asking those questions, and agreed to do so. Some of the members were also very concerned by the question on the protection of minorities. In particular, they questioned the inclusion of Tawergha as a minority group, pointing out that it is the population of a city and not an ethnic group such as the Tabu and the Touareg. Given that these questions were accepted as such by the Misrata team before them with much lesser concern and after discussing the meaning of minority group, the team agreed to leave the options as such.

The Benghazi team was very excited about this research project and being part of it. They were the most enthusiastic to receive the training as enumerators. Their level of interest and commitment was evident by their request to be given a lecture on democracy and the role of individuals and civil society.

Overall, the team was most curious and eager to read about the results for the following questions:

- Perception of security
- Trust towards armed groups
- Most important traits of democracy
- Individual religious attitudes
- How CSO leaders define their identity

CSO outreach campaign

The reference list used to reach out to CSOs was given by the Ministry of Culture and counted about 2'700 Civil Society Organizations for the entire country. That was a solid starting point although many CSOs listed didn't provide any contact information. This probably owes to the fact that the list was put together in 2012 and was not systematically updated. It may also be the result of some residual mistrust towards State authorities that developed over the course of four decades under a repressive regime.

Team Leader radio interview, Benghazi, March 2014

This roster was integrated and complemented with lists of CSOs that were kindly provided by international NGOs working with CSOs in Libya.

Given the objective of this research project was to survey all operating CSOs in the target cities, a major challenge was reaching out to them. Relatively minor challenges were convincing them about the usefulness of the research and having them agree to be interviewed at the research location. To reach as many CSOs as possible, the research team and the Project Manager organized a targeted information campaign using all available media and communication outlets.

However, in light of threats and aggressions towards activists and attacks against the international community, the team expressed safety concerns in broadly advertising the research publicly and mentioning the sponsorship from the UN. Thus, unlike the approach followed in Misrata and Tripoli, the Benghazi outreach campaign was more cautious and gradual, keeping the safety of the research team members as the primary concern. The research was initially advertised only on facebook pages and through word of mouth. As the research progressed and observing no threatening response to it, it was advertised publicly via major radio outlets.

The research team also distributed and posted flyers in key city locations (universities, community centers, public spaces). Finally, the team contacted all major CSO Unions in order to obtain their own list of CSOs. Each member of the research team also contributed to advertising the research through facebook posts and direct contacts.

Challenges in the conduct of operations

Unwilling CSOs

Most Benghazi CSO leaders embraced this research project. Overall, activists were happy to see a sign of interest in Benghazi from the international community after many organizations had left the city due to the increased insecurity. However, a sizeable number of CSO leaders contacted said that they were unavailable at that moment and then never answered any further call.

Libya Debate Club, Benghazi

Security

By early December the team had completed training and prepared to start the research. However hostilities broke out in Benghazi, marking the beginning of continuous clashes among warring factions in and around Benghazi which would continue for several months. The increased level of violence, the direct threats to the security of CSOs and towards international actors by Ansar al Sharia led the research team to temporarily suspend the research until it was safe to proceed.

At the same time, the Team Leader who was also a prominent human rights activist in Benghazi, received death threats. Considering the surge in the number of killings and kidnappings, she took this threat very seriously and finally decided to seek asylum abroad with her husband, a very active filmmaker also under threat.

The research was resumed only in March 2014, after the team carefully assessed the level of the security threat.

Sensitive topics

Given the breadth of the concept of civil society and depth of inquiry pursued, the survey covered a variety of topics. Some of them proved to be sensitive for the CSO representatives interviewed. Similarly to the enumerators, they proved most sensitive to the few questions on religion, security and trust towards institutions. Many understood the explanations provided by the enumerators about the relevance of these topics to the nature and activities of CSOs, whereas others simply declined to answer them. At any rate, a large share of interviewees were sensitive to these questions.

Research closing and feedback

During the closing meeting, all members of the team provided their feedback on the research, both in terms of its content and on the management and conduct of operations. The members of the research team provided useful feedback on both the form and content of the research project. They expressed their satisfaction for the training received, stressing in particular that they had learned how to analyse civil society, differentiate needs, challenges and activities and how to craft and ask questions. The Benghazi team showed a particular interest in receiving training on democracy, politics and the role of civil society.

Moreover, the interviewers emphasized the importance of having had the opportunity to meet many civil society activists and learn about their work and needs. They asserted that the new network of contacts and the greater understanding they acquired about civil society will motivate them to engage in new enterprises in cooperation with fellow activists.