PLURALISM, CO-OPTATION AND CAPTURE:
NAVIGATING THE CIVIL SOCIETY ARENA IN THE ARAB WORLD

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By

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This dissertation examines the development civil society sector in the Arab world and its relationship with the state from a bottom-up perspective. Focusing on the regime of Hosni Mubarak in Egypt between 1990 and 2010, I both show that variation exists amongst development CSOs (DCSOs) in terms of their type and interaction with the regime and I explain what determines that variation. By conducting eight in-depth case studies of development civil society organizations, I argue that DCSO type, a variable that takes into account the interaction of three primary independent variables: rhetorical outside support, access to foreign funding, and level of perceived threat to the regime, provides the strongest explanation for DCSO behavior. By analyzing the specific patterns of interaction of these three independent variables, it is possible to predict whether a DCSO will choose the outcome of pluralism (choosing full autonomy from the regime), one of two forms of co-optation - administrative co-optation (in which the DCSO allows for some level of administrative control by the regime) or ideological co-optation (in which the DCSO changes their ideological or political agenda in order to conform to regime requests), or capture (allowing itself to be fully co-opted by the regime). By attempting to understand what strategies development civil society organizations use to navigate the unique configuration of liberalization under coercion, a situation in which the authoritarian regime allows for the gradual opening of the political space with one hand and seeks to limit the ability
of all CSOs to work independent of the state with the other, this dissertation contributes both to the literature on civil society in the Arab world, as well as to the growing literature on the hybrid regimes of the Middle East that has become particularly relevant after the start of the Arab Spring.
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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The literature on the persistence of authoritarianism in the Arab world, which has dominated the study of comparative politics of the Middle East for the past decade, has come to the conclusion that over the past two decades Arab autocrats have skillfully crafted a unique type of political system, liberalized autocracy, characterized by “guided pluralism, controlled elections, and selective repression” that enabled them to stay in power for years (and sometimes decades) despite pressure to reform from both their citizenry and the international community.¹

As this literature argues, part of the strategy of controlled liberalization employed by Arab regimes is the manipulation of civil society to make sure it fulfills its role as a pressure-release valve but remains crippled in its efforts to bring about political reform. As Robert Bianchi, writing in the 1980s, described the situation in one Arab state, “Fearful of the social unrest and political opposition that such choices would inevitably provoke, Egypt’s rulers have tried to promote a live-and-let-live attitude among antagonistic interests and ideologies without relinquishing power to any of them.”² And Sarah Ben Néfissa, in a more recent examination of the relationship of civil society and the state in the Arab world notes, “The conclusion, with regards to the influence of Arab NGOs on the democratization issue, seems quite mixed or at


least unsatisfactory in comparison to the magical virtues the political and intellectual elites have believed civil societies to be made of over the last thirty years.”

Thus, the relatively vast literature on civil society in Arab world has come to one main conclusion: civil society is ineffective, weak and lacks autonomy. However, while many civil society organizations (CSOs) in the Arab world have failed to achieve their goals, this characterization of the civil society arena as a whole is incorrect. In fact, development civil society organizations (DCSOs), which make up the vast majority of CSOs in the Arab world, have frequently been able to operate effectively and autonomously under the restrictive political and legal environment of liberalized autocracy.

This mischaracterization of the civil society sector in the Arab world is due to two major omissions in the literature - a lack of bottom-up research, or studies done from the perspective of civil society itself; and a near complete focus on the democracy-promotion sector of civil society (advocacy organizations that deal with issues like human rights, political rights and representation), while ignoring development civil society organizations (organizations that deal primarily with issues of human development such as poverty alleviation, education and health). This first error, an over-emphasis on state-centered analysis, has led to a lack of understanding of the ways in which civil society actors interact with the state. As Ellen Lust-Okar and Saloua

3 Sarah Ben Nefissa et al., eds., *NGOs and Governance in the Arab World* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2005), 5.


Zerhouni argue, “Looking at the question of authoritarianism in the MENA region, the big player absent from political analysis has often been the people . . . More research needs to be done on the agency of various social actors when faced with structural constraints.”

Ben Néfissa acknowledges the second error (although she fails to address it) in her introduction to *NGOs and Governance in the Arab World*:

Researchers and observers cannot let themselves be fooled by the extreme visibility of these advocacy organizations if they want to fully understand the problems faced by the other, more dominant type of organizations. The advocacy organizations are the most studied and the most internationally active. They are easier to access and more noticeable. Moreover, they share the dominant discourse of the international community. Even the research papers presented in this book could not avoid the trap of paying these kinds of organizations a relatively great deal of attention.

There are two reasons for the omission of development civil society organizations (DCSOs) in the literature. First, the discussion of civil society in the Arab world is based on the assumption that the goal of civil society is to bring about democracy. Thus, DCSOs, whose stated goal is not to bring about democratic reform, are excluded from any discussion of civil

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6 Ellen Lust-Okar and Saloua Zerhouni, eds., *Political Participation in the Middle East* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2008), 262.
7 Ben Néfissa et al., eds., 7.
society in the Arab world. The second explanation is that the literature on civil society under authoritarianism (both the literature that analyzes the ability of civil society to bring about democracy and the small amount of literature that examines civil society more broadly) assumes that development CSOs are non-problematic. That is, DCSOs actually help the regime by assisting in the daunting task of poverty alleviation and delivery of basic goods and services. The DCSO sector has thus been characterized by scholars, as well as the international donor community, as apolitical (frequently called “non-advocacy” CSOs to emphasize this point) and non-threatening to the state. However, this claim does not reflect the empirical reality. In reality, DCSOs in the Arab world frequently face harassment, intimidation and extra-legal and arbitrary punishments by the government agencies that oversee their activities. While DCSOs do have a less contentious relationship with the state than human rights CSOs, nevertheless, DCSOs regularly face the same hurdles and challenges in achieving their goals as their democracy-promotion counterparts. A brief example can illustrate this point. During an interview with the grants administrator of a Western donor organization in Egypt in October 2010, the grants administrator balked at the idea that DCSOs have any sort of antagonistic relationship with the Egyptian regime, saying that the government sees DCSOs as a “service provider” and these

organizations are “completely accepted by the government.”10 However, when the same issue was brought up to representatives of DCSOs operating in Egypt, the response was remarkably different: the DCSO actors told tales of daily harassment by the State Security services, noting that DCSOs were frequently shut down without notice by the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MOSS), and foreign funds frozen for months (or over a year in the worst cases), rendering DCSOs completely impotent.11

This dissertation fills in the gaps in the literature by examining the development civil society sector in the Arab world and its relationship with the state from a bottom-up perspective. Focusing on Egypt between 1990 and 2010, I both show that variation exists amongst development CSOs in terms of their type and interaction with the regime and I explain what determines that variation.12 As will be explained in more detail in Chapter Two, “Theory,” development CSOs, like their democracy-promotion counterparts, have three primary strategies at their disposal: allowing themselves to be fully captured by the regime, choosing to confront the state, or choosing to be partially co-opted, while maintaining some level of autonomy. While Egypt was home to between 10,000-30,000 CSOs during the period of this study, focusing on a wide variety of issues, research on the development civil society sector in Egypt reveals clear patterns in the ways in which DCSOs determine their preferred strategy for regime interaction.

DCSO type, a variable that takes into account the interaction of three primary independent variables: rhetorical outside support, level of perceived threat to the regime, and access to foreign funding, provides the strongest explanation for DCSO behavior. Thus, by analyzing the specific

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10 Interview with individual from Western donor organization. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
11 Interviews with civil society actors. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
12 While the empirical chapters of this dissertation are based on fieldwork conducted in Egypt, Chapter Six expands the argument to two other Arab states – the liberalized autocracies of Jordan and Morocco.
patterns of interaction of these three independent variables, it is possible to predict whether a DCSO will choose the outcome of pluralism (choosing full autonomy from the regime), one of two forms of co-optation – administrative co-optation (in which the DCSO allows for some level of administrative control by the regime) or ideological co-optation (in which the DCSO changes their ideological or political agenda in order to conform to regime requests), or capture (allowing itself to be fully co-opted by the regime). By attempting to understand what strategies development civil society organizations use to navigate the unique configuration of “liberalization under coercion,”13 a situation in which the authoritarian regime allows for the gradual opening of the political space with one hand and seeks to limit the ability of all CSOs to work independent of the state with the other, this dissertation contributes both to the literature on civil society in the Arab world, as well as to the growing literature on the hybrid regimes of the Middle East that has become particularly relevant after the start of the Arab Spring.

Definitions

The study of civil society across the globe is plagued with definitional muddiness. It is not the goal of this dissertation to address this debate. There is clear agreement in the literature that civil society exists in the Arab world. Where scholars disagree is which actors and groups comprise civil society and how to differentiate amongst those groups.

Civil Society

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13 Lust-Okar and Zerhouni, eds.
I define civil society not as a set of actors or organizations, but rather as an interactive sphere. I base my general understanding of civil society on the definition put forth by the London School of Economics Center for Civil Society:

Civil society refers to the arena of uncoerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family and market, though in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family and market are often complex, blurred and negotiated. Civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy and power. Civil societies are often populated by organizations such as registered charities, development non-governmental organizations, community groups, women’s organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations, trade unions, self-help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions and advocacy groups.14

I also borrow from Maha Abdel Rahman who argues, “civil society should be seen as more than the sum of its organizations: it is the environment in which these organizations develop and interact. Civil society organizations (CSOs) are the product as well as the components of the society as a whole and their formation an ongoing process which is born out of continuing changes in domestic social forces, the state, and the complex in which the two interact.”15

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

Civil society organizations (CSOs) are the organizations that make up civil society. As explained above, civil society contains both formal organizations, as well as informal networks, individuals and collective action. The focus of this dissertation is on the formal, organized groups that fit the aforementioned definition of civil society. CSOs have two or more members and are formally organized for a specific purpose. They are also separate, at least nominally,

14 “What is Civil Society?” London School of Economics Centre for Civil Society: www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/introduction/what_is_civil_society.htm (accessed February 20, 2010).
from the state, family, and market. Scholars (including several cited throughout this dissertation) frequently use terms other than “CSOs” to describe this or a similar phenomenon. When quoting other scholars I have used their preferred term, so as not to change their meaning. In all other cases, unless the terminology makes a theoretical difference, I have referred to the individual organizations that this dissertation addresses as “CSOs”.

The most common term in the literature for the organizations that make up civil society is “nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)”.[16] This is also the term preferred by the development community. Robert LaTowsky notes an important distinction between NGOs and a second frequently used term “private voluntary organizations (PVOs).” LaTowsky defines NGOs as “the broadest category of private, nonprofit associations. Included in this category are PVOs as well as other Egyptian organizations, including: professional and worker syndicates, youth centers, and professional and social organizations not registered with the [government].”[17] NGOs therefore are a broader category than CSOs, comprising all organizations within a state that are, at least nominally, separate from the government. This includes several categories of organizations that I do not define as CSOs, such as churches and other non-state religious institutions, for-profit advocacy organizations and professional syndicates. All CSOs are NGOs, but not all NGOs are CSOs. One subset of NGOs that is useful for this project is international

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[17] LaTowsky.
NGOs. These are organizations that fit the broad definition of NGOs, but operate in multiple countries. When referring to these organizations I use the term “international NGO”, not international CSO.

The term PVOs is used most notably by Denis Sullivan.\(^\text{18}\) Sullivan defines PVOs as “nominally unofficial” organizations that “promote development, individual and group agendas and profit-making.”\(^\text{19}\) Sullivan himself notes that the terms “PVO” and “NGO” are frequently used interchangeably although he favors the term “PVO” because the phrase “nongovernmental” implies a level of freedom from state control that does not exist in Egypt (or the Arab world as a whole).\(^\text{20}\) LaTowsky’s definition of PVOs is more restrictive. He includes only those NGOs that are registered as private associations with the Egyptian government.\(^\text{21}\) I use the term CSO rather than PVO both because of this restrictive definition associated with PVO and to differentiate between NGOs and CSOs. My definition of CSOs is less restrictive than LaTowsky’s definition of PVOs. I include both registered and non-registered organizations within the category of CSOs. As several scholars note, many active organizations in Egypt are not formally registered with the government. Most of the unregistered organizations are human rights groups that choose not to register for political purposes, but otherwise share similar characteristics to registered CSOs.

*Development Civil Society Organizations (DCSOs)*

This dissertation examines the relationship of one subset of CSOs, development CSOs, with the state. Development civil society organizations have as their primary goal improving the


\(^{19}\) Sullivan.

\(^{20}\) Ibid.

\(^{21}\) LaTowsky, “Egypt’s NGO Sector: A Briefing Paper.”
human development of the citizens of their state. While DCSOs may be involved in advocacy, they are not explicitly concerned with bringing about democracy to their state. Examples of DCSOs include poverty alleviation organizations, environmental groups, healthcare and education organizations, charities, and minority interest groups.

Why Egypt?

The country of Egypt provides a compelling arena in which to examine the relationship of DCSOs with the state. Egypt has a long and vibrant history of civil society activity, with the largest civil society sector of any Arab state, and one of the largest sectors in the developing world. While the exact number of CSOs in Egypt is impossible to determine, estimates for the number of registered CSOs in Egypt in 2010 ranged from 20,000-30,000. Furthermore, the CSO sector in Egypt is estimated to be growing at about 600 new CSOs per year. A 2011 report by the Brookings Institution described Egypt’s civil society sector as “composed of more than 30,000 officially registered nongovernmental organizations (NGO), nearly 700 philanthropic foundations and hundreds of other forms of CSOs, including professional syndicates, cooperatives, think tanks, student associations, federations, and other civic organizations that are registered as law offices or civic companies to avoid state interference.”

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23 No official directory or listing of all Egyptian CSOs exists. While the Ministry of Social Solidarity officially maintains such information, that information is not publicly available. In more than 60 interviews with individuals familiar with Egyptian civil society, no single person gave me the same figure for the number of CSOs in Egypt.
With a history of civil society dating back over 150 years, Egyptian civil society has operated under monarchy, socialism and modern liberalized autocracy. Egyptian CSOs are incredibly diverse, ranging from small, individually-run organizations dealing with one very specific issue to large, umbrella organizations with thousands of volunteers and hundreds of paid employees dealing with all issues related to development. Furthermore, Egypt’s large Christian population provides the ability to compare religious and secular CSOs without a focus solely on the Muslim-secular divide as has been common in the literature in the past. What makes Egypt especially interesting is the significant level of variation in DCSO strategy choice. While some DCSOs during the Mubarak regime choose to partner with the Egyptian government, some chose to operate entirely outside of the government’s control, while others chose some level of voluntary co-optation while simultaneously maintaining a degree of autonomy.

However, Egypt is not an anomaly. The constraints under which Egyptian CSOs operate are similar to the legal and bureaucratic hurdles in place in the other hybrid regimes of the Arab world (Lebanon, Morocco, Jordan, Kuwait, Yemen, Tunisia, Bahrain and the Palestinian Territories). And while Egypt has a much larger number of CSOs than other Arab states, similar variation in CSO strategy choice and CSO type exist in all the liberalized autocracies of the region. The findings of this dissertation can also be expected to apply to hybrid regimes outside of the Arab world, as will be discussed in Chapter Seven. While the theory is not tested in non-Arab states in the dissertation, it is the hope of the author that future scholars will attempt to test the relationship between CSO type and CSO strategy in countries outside of the Arab world. It is more difficult to extrapolate findings from Egypt to the full autocracies of the region, such as

26 For the best overview on the civil society sector in Egypt see LaTowsky, “The Organizations and Financing of Egypt’s PVO Sector.”
Libya, Syria and Saudi Arabia, where civil society has virtually no autonomy. However, there are still lessons that can be drawn from Egypt’s experience that can be applied region wide, particularly as several Arab states undergo some form of political transition following the 2011 Arab revolts and state-society relations across the Arab world begin to shift. Thus, the civil society arena in Egypt offers wide variation on all relevant variables and the findings of research conducted in Egypt can be extended to other Arab states and other non-Arab liberalized autocracies.

State Control over Civil Society: How the Egyptian Regime has Manipulated CSOs over Time

Egypt has a long history of CSO activity, with the first CSOs emerging during the mid-1800s when the Egyptian middle class began demanding their rights of association.27 Civil society organizations have thus been active in Egypt since 1821 when the Hellenic Philanthropic Association was created to assist the Greek expatriate community. The colonial era (1882-1922) gave birth to Egypt’s first trade unions (1898), political parties (1907), cooperatives (1908), chambers of commerce (1910), professional associations (1912) and women’s organizations (1919).28 The 1923 Egyptian Constitution guaranteed the right of association and the colonial era resulted in the creation of the Ministry of Social Affairs in 193929 to oversee CSO operations.

28 Ibid.
29 The Egyptian government agency in charge of civil society activity was first called the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA). Today, that same agency is called the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MOSS). The name change did not result in substantive changes to the organization’s work or function, thus, following this mention, the agency is referred to as the Ministry of Social Solidarity or MOSS, throughout the dissertation. Other scholarly work may refer to MOSA or the Ministry of Social Affairs to refer to the same agency.
During this time, political, economic and intellectual organizations flourished and were largely autonomous from the state.\textsuperscript{30} State control of civil society began in earnest following the Egyptian revolution of 1952.

There are four primary tools that the Egyptian regime has used over time and continues to use to manipulate and control civil society: official laws and regulations, unofficial security oversight, control of CSO funding, and the establishment of a parallel civil society through GONGOs. This section explains both these tools in-depth and how the state-civil society relationship in Egypt has evolved over time. Taken together, this provides the context within which CSOs operate in Egypt. Understanding that context is essential to understanding the range of choices available to CSOs and why they choose the strategies that they do.

\textit{The Legal Environment in Egypt}

The legal environment under which CSOs operate is highly restrictive and complex. The CSO sector is regulated primarily by the Associations Law, but is also influenced by the Political Parties Law, the Penal Code, and the Emergency Law.\textsuperscript{31} Article 55 of the Egyptian Constitution grants citizens the right to form associations, as long as those associations are not “hostile to the social system, clandestine, or have a military character.”\textsuperscript{32} The first modern Associations Law, Law 49 of 1945, authorized the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MOSS) to register, oversee, audit and dissolve all associations. That law was replaced by Law 32 of 1964, which suspended all of the 4,000 associations already registered by MOSS, pending reorganization under a new set of

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid.
regulations that gave MOSS the power to “merge, suspend, reorganize or freeze the assets of any organization for reasons not specified. [MOSS] did exercise this power.”

Law 84 of 2002, known as the “Associations Law”, replaced Law 32 of 1964. This law expanded the scope of MOSS’ authority over CSOs and required all associations to register with MOSS. The law gave MOSS the power to dissolve CSOs (a power previously reserved for the courts) and the ability to restrict CSO activities, funding and establishment of CSOs through an arduous permit process. Additionally, the law forbade CSOs from engaging in clandestine activity, labor advocacy or political campaigning. The specific language of the law is intentionally ambiguous, restricting CSOs from engaging in any activity “threatening national unity, violating public order or morals, or calling for discrimination between citizens of race, origin, color, language, religion or creed” as well as all political or unionist activity. The powers of Law 84 of 2002 are usually applied to prevent overtly political CSOs (such as human rights groups) from legally acting. However, it is also applied arbitrarily, such as in the case of the New Woman Research Center, which was initially denied permission to register with MOSS

33 Sheila Carapico, “Civil Society,” in Politics and Society in the Contemporary Middle East, ed. Michele Penner Angrist (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2010).
34 Technically Law 84 of 2002 replaced Law 53of 1999, which was enacted in May 1999 but quickly revoked in June 2000 by the Egyptian Constitutional Court.
35 While CSOs must legally register, many CSOs choose not to register in order to avoid government scrutiny. The exact number of non-registered CSOs is unknown, but civil society activists whom I interviewed in October 2010 speculated that at least 5-10 highly active development CSOs are unregistered, and most human rights CSOs are unregistered. Additionally, only one-third or one-half of CSOs registered with MOSS are thought to be active. Abdel Rahman, Civil Society Exposed: The Politics of NGOs in Egypt, 37.
36 The permit process is long and arduous, requiring numerous documents such as a list of the names, ages, nationalities, professions, and addresses of all of the founders of the association, an occupancy deed for the physical presence of the association and a mandatory deposit into the Fund for Support of Non-Governmental Societies and Associations. Ibrahim, Lachant, and Nahas; Non-Governmental Organizations Sector Study in Egypt, (Cairo, Egypt: Japan Bank for International Cooperation and Egyptian NGO Support Center, 2006).
37 “Law No. 84 of the Year 2002 on Non-Governmental Organizations (Associations and Non-Governmental Institutions),” Government of Egypt (Cairo, Egypt: 2002).
in 2003 on unspecified security grounds. After the organization sued, the court ruling was reversed, but never implemented.  

As part of the permit process, under Law 84 of 2002 CSOs must list their “kind, field and activity” as well as “geographic scope of work.” CSOs have a list of 17 fields of activity from which to choose. Twelve fields were established by Presidential Decree 932 in 1966, with an additional five added by ministerial decrees in 1994. While the purpose of this request is for the government to determine which CSOs are engaged in potentially threatening behavior such as human rights and democracy promotion, CSOs frequently do not register as working in those areas, and the majority of CSOs register in multiple fields of activity. For example, one civil society actor whom I interviewed who runs a women’s rights organization said that although much of their primary activity is in the arena of human rights, they are registered as a “family welfare” organization. Nada Ibrahim et al. offer another example of this in the Association for Health and Environmental Development (AHED), a service-delivery organization based in the Cairo slum of El Waily. As Ibrahim et al. explain, this organization is registered with MOSS as a “service delivery NGO”, however, one of their primary objectives is political reform and they frequently work on advocacy issues such as “lobbying local leaders to combat environmental degradation from surrounding factories and industrial waste affecting local health.”

The legal environment under which CSOs operate in Egypt is further complicated by the fact that while Egyptian CSO activities are legally overseen by MOSS, the State Security

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39 “Law No. 84 of the Year 2002 on Non-Governmental Organizations (Associations and Non-Governmental Institutions).”
40 LaTowsky, “The Organizations and Financing of Egypt’s PVO Sector.”
41 Interview with civil society actor. October 2010. Cairo, Egypt.
42 Ibrahim, Lachant, and Nahas.
services (SSI), while not legally in charge of CSO activity, play an informal role by interfering in CSO day to day operations through harassment, questions and threats.\textsuperscript{43} The SSI legally have no oversight of the associational sphere, however the regime regularly uses the intimidation tactics employed by the security services to prevent CSOs from becoming too political (and thus threatening to the regime).\textsuperscript{44} Additionally, State Security spies regularly infiltrate CSOs, signing up as members and attending meetings to gather information on the CSOs from within. Prior to the Egyptian Revolution of 2011, State Security offices existed in all government ministries, giving them the ability to oversee CSO activities from many vantage points. For example, CSOs that work on education must get approval to work in the public schools. To do so, they must not only get the approval of the local school, the school district, and the local government but also the Ministry of Education’s NGO office, and the State Security officer within the Ministry of Education. They must also get the regular MOSS approval.\textsuperscript{45} Finally, the emergency rule that has been in place since 1981 allows the Mubarak regime to supersede other laws and regulations in place.\textsuperscript{46} Foreign CSOs operating in Egypt are under even stricter government supervision. While they are also subject to Law 84 of 2002, they must obtain permission to operate from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. All foreign funding of CSO activity must be pre-approved by the government and disbursed by MOSS.\textsuperscript{47}

\textsuperscript{43} Kausch.
\textsuperscript{44} Ibid. This was confirmed by civil society activists whom I interviewed in October 2010.
\textsuperscript{45} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
\textsuperscript{46} The Emergency Law was lifted, briefly, following the January 2011 revolution, however it was put back in place in September 2011.
\textsuperscript{47} In 2009-2010 the government began drafting a new Associations Law to replace Law 84 of 2002. While no official draft of the law was published or released to the CSO community, both domestic CSO actors and the international community operating in Egypt said in October 2010 that pieces of the law published in the Egyptian press indicated that it would be even tougher on CSOs than Law 84 of 2002. The individuals whom I interviewed speculated that the law would most likely be passed quietly and quickly during the lead up to the presidential
The legal environment described above is essential to understanding the constraints facing Egyptian CSOs. However, despite the restrictive legal environment, Egypt retains “one of the largest and most vibrant civil society sectors in the entire developing world.” This is due, in large part, to the fact that Egypt’s main law governing civil society (Law 84 of 2002) is “not so much restrictive as it is discretionary.” This is captured in the 2005 CIVICUS regional stakeholder survey in Egypt, which found that 47% of respondents “were of the view that the government has not taken any initiatives to impose its hegemony over the civil society sector. However, significantly, 53% were of the opinion that the government has sought in varying degrees to infringe upon civil society autonomy.” Thus, CSOs must be aware of the laws on the books, but they are also aware of the considerable leeway granted to organizations that adopt certain strategies for regime interaction and stay away from certain redlines, as will be discussed in greater detail below.

Control of CSO Funding

The control over CSO funding is a powerful tool in the regime’s toolbox. By controlling the source and amount of funding available to CSOs, the Egyptian government can stop unwanted projects, bribe CSOs to alter their work, shame CSOs by branding them puppets of the West, or shut down a CSO altogether by cutting off its lifeline. As stated above, Law 84 of 2002...
gives MOSS the ability to vet all outside funding brought in to a CSO (with the notable exception of church or mosque funding). When a CSO receives a grant from a foreign donor or local foundation, the money is submitted to MOSS, who vets the grant and then disburses the money back to the CSO through a government-approved bank. This had led to a variety of problems including funding being both intentionally held up by MOSS for up to a year thereby making it virtually impossible for the CSO to use the money in a timely fashion. MOSS also regularly holds up funding not out of any political reason, but rather out of sheer bureaucratic disorganization. The Egyptian bureaucracy is famous for its bloated, dysfunctional nature. Thus, even CSOs that pose no threat to the government will likely not receive their granted funds for one to three months. Government control of funding also gives the Egyptian banks power over CSOs. After MOSS has released granted funds to the bank, at times the bank will refuse to disburse the money due to a political or personal grudge with the CSO.51 While grants from domestic funders usually make it into the hands of the CSOs much more quickly, there are reported cases of MOSS refusing to disburse money from well-known Egyptian foundations with high-level regime allies on the board.52

Government control over CSO funding is not new. There is no question that the regime of Gamal Abdel Nasser (1956-1970) brought the strictest control over civil society activity in all regards. Nasser’s regime was based on a socialist, corporatist model, resulting in heavy-handed government oversight over all aspects of Egyptian politics and economics. During the 1960s,

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51 Interview with international funding organization. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
52 Interview with CSO actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011. This is due to the low level of bureaucrats who are responsible for making funding decisions within MOSS. These bureaucrats frequently are not acting out of malice, but out of ignorance combined with the fear of making a decision that could upset higher-ups. Several CSO actors whom I interviewed noted that MOSS officials would much rather sit on money and never disburse it, than make any sort of decision, regardless of the level of threat of the CSO or its officials.
under Nasser, the public sector accounted for 40% of Egypt’s GDP.\textsuperscript{53} One of the ways that Nasser’s regime exercised control over CSOs was to cut off CSO funding. Under Nasser, the Egyptian government forcefully took money and property belonging to CSOs and brought the *waqf*, one of the main channels for philanthropic contributions to CSOs, under government control.\textsuperscript{54}

Anwar Sadat’s (1970-1981) *infitah* policy of privatization in the 1970s both relaxed many of Nasser’s legal restrictions on civil society and opened the door for civil society organizations to begin to take on many of the roles traditionally held by the state, such as health, education, welfare and distribution of basic goods and services. Sadat did not institute a new NGO law, thereby keeping CSOs officially under the harsh legal restrictions of Law 32 of 1964. Nevertheless, Sadat recognized the ability of CSOs to alleviate many of the economic burdens placed on the state by delivering services such as health and education to the Egyptian people. One scholar writes that civil society was greatly helped by “the decreasing capacity of the state to play its welfare role solo. . . .With the intensification of economic reform and IMF structural adjustment mechanisms, voluntary associations appeared as good partners to help in managing socioeconomic crises resulting from unemployment, poor health care, and price hikes of basic goods and services.”\textsuperscript{55} Thus, Nasser’s harsh restrictions on CSO funding were relaxed, although CSOs did not get free reign. Despite Sadat’s revolutionary economic liberalization policies, there remained an expectation that the government would solve all of Egypt’s problems, keeping

\textsuperscript{53} Barbara Lethem Ibrahim and Dina H. Sherif, eds., *From Charity to Social Change: Trends in Arab Philanthropy* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2008).

\textsuperscript{54} *An Overview of Civil Society in Egypt: Civil Society Index Report for the Arab Republic of Egypt.*

\textsuperscript{55} Korany, Brynen, and Noble, 60.
CSOs in the background. This changed with the ascension of Hosni Mubarak to power following Sadat’s assassination in 1981.

Mubarak publicly stated in the mid-1980s that the government could not, in fact, solve all of Egypt’s problems. The Mubarak era thus ushered in a paradigm shift and an expansion of CSO activities, particularly among development CSOs, which coincided with increased donor interest in civil society, particularly in the areas of human rights, women’s rights, environmental protection and children’s rights. The early years of the Mubarak administration also coincided with an explosion of out-migration of Egyptian labor to the oil-rich Gulf States, which led to the growth of the private sector as the first migrants began to return home with large sums of money in the late 1980s. This, combined with the 1992 structural adjustment program implemented in Egypt, promoted further privatization, eliminated many state social services and led to a proliferation of private sector development organizations and nonprofit CSOs, which reached its peak during the 1990s. This shift to privatization and “shrinking public services have led low-income Egyptians to increasingly rely on CSOs for social services previously provided by the government.” Thus, Mubarak significantly relaxed financial restrictions on CSOs. However, once CSOs began to proliferate and flourish throughout the 1990s, the regime felt threatened and instituted harsher control on CSO funding through Law 84 of 2002.

GONGO: Parallel Civil Society

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56 Interview with civil society expert. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
57 Interview with civil society expert. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
60 Ibrahim and Sherif, eds., From Charity to Social Change: Trends in Arab Philanthropy.
One of the most common tools of civil society control is the creation of GONGOs (government-organized non-governmental organizations). The first GONGOs were created under the socialist regime of Nasser. While Nasser instituted corporatist measures throughout Egypt, concentrating power in the hands of the state, his regime specifically targeted civil society, seeking to both co-opt existing CSOs and to prevent the creation of new autonomous CSOs. Nasser employed almost all of the tools used to date: the creation of laws and regulations, strict control over CSO funding and the creation of GONGOs.

It was during Nasser’s rule that the Community Development Associations (CDAs), localized CSOs that are closely aligned with the government, were established to allow for government control over civil society. CDAs were created by MOSS to aid in rural development and implement state social welfare programs. They are only nominally considered “development” organizations as they rarely provide assistance to the poor and do not develop community projects. They are regularly staffed by ministry employees and often share office space with the local government. Until 1973 CDAs were “an explicit ministry objective and included in the Ministry’s annual and five-year plans.”

The Mubarak regime also responded to the proliferation of CSOs by creating parallel, state-controlled CSOs. The government began by establishing their own community development associations (CDAs) en masse. Several of these CDAs have since shifted to citizen-control, but all remain closely linked to the government. During the late 1990s business associations began to appear throughout Egypt. While not GONGOs per se, these were primarily

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62 Carapico, “Civil Society.”
63 Interview with civil society expert. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
private investment groups who found that they could more easily advocate for their interests as a CSO rather than as individuals. These groups also discovered early on the benefit of partnering with the government in order to achieve their goals and ceased virtually all of their CSO activities by the mid-2000s. The Mubarak regime also saw a phenomenon that swept across the Arab world – the “first lady phenomenon” in which first ladies or other high-level regime allies either support or run their own NGOs. These NGOs qualify as GONGOs, as they are not autonomous from the regime in any way. As Steven Heydemann states, “In Egypt, Jordan, and Syria, for example, regime élites have become visible sponsors of semi-official NGOs that enjoy protected status, benefit from privileged relations with powerful political actors, but lack meaningful autonomy. These tend to be located in service provision, education, training, sports, youth development, and other areas that are seen as apolitical and therefore non-threatening.”

Egypt’s former first lady, Suzanne Mubarak, founded and sat on the board of several high profile NGOs, particularly those focused on women’s issues and children’s healthcare and education including the Suzanne Mubarak Women’s International Peace Movement, the Egyptian Society for Childhood and Development and the National Council of Women.

Initially, the Mubarak regime was not concerned with the establishment of individual CSOs, focusing its attention instead on CSO coalitions and federations that had the potential to snowball into a legitimate threat. The government established its own CSO federations to partially counter this threat, most notably the General Federation of NGOs, tasked with overseeing all CSO activity (discussed in more detail in Chapter Five). The Mubarak regime also

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64 Interview with civil society expert. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
65 Heydemann: 8.
cracked down on professional syndicates at this time, bringing all “politically relevant” syndicates under direct government control.67

Within this context of official and unofficial legal control, oversight of CSO funding and the creation of a parallel civil society through GONGOs, the state-civil society relationship during the period from 1990 to 2010, on which this dissertation focuses, has seen a marked shift in Egyptian public policy toward development CSOs due to increasing economic concerns. As Amani Kandil argues:

Because the State can no longer provide care for all in need, as part of its economic reform policy, nonprofit organizations are recognized by the government and by foreign funding sources as important vehicles for providing health and social services for the poor and job training programs for the young. Although such recognition has not been formalized through changes in law, official political discourse and changes in general policies reveal the government’s new attitude toward the nonprofit sector.68

Despite a general increase in Egypt’s economic indicators (GDP per capita increased from $3,185 in 1990 to $5,151 in 2009, literacy increased from 57% to 72%, and infant mortality decreased from 78.5/1000 births to 34.8/1000 births)69 the number of Egyptians living on less than $2 a day rose from 39.4% in 1990 to 42.8% in 2008.70 While about 40% of Egyptians benefit from public spending on healthcare and the government provides free, constitutionally-mandated, public education, the quality of these services is poor. Egypt does have a social protection program, which is aimed at alleviating poverty, but the poorest Egyptians (defined as

70 GDP per capita, PPP is measured in constant 2000 international $. Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators 2009. Number of Egyptians living on less than $2 a day source: Joint NGO Submission to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Occasion of the Seventh Session of the Universal Periodic Review (Cairo, Egypt, 2010). The poverty rate in Egypt is projected to increase even further, particularly in Cairo, from 4.6% in 2005 to 7.6% in 2015. Ibid.
those in the lowest quintile of income distribution) receive only 16% of social safety net resources, while 28% of resources are spent on the highest income quintile.\textsuperscript{71} Furthermore, increases in levels of human development have been uneven across governorates, failing to impact the lives of all Egyptians.\textsuperscript{72} Despite these negative indicators, over the past decade, public spending on health, education and social security has decreased.\textsuperscript{73} This has created both an opportunity and a necessity for CSOs to step in to fill in the gap.\textsuperscript{74}

**Methodology**

In order to determine why civil society organizations choose pluralism, cooptation or capture, I engage in qualitative case study research (including across-case and within-case analysis) of civil society organizations in Egypt beginning with the peak of civil society activism in the Arab world, through the end of the Mubarak presidency (1990-2010). While the empirical research was conducted in the context of Egypt, the theory is applicable to all of the liberalized autocracies of the Arab world. Chapter Six, “Beyond Egypt,” applies the theory that DCSO type determines DCSO strategy to two other liberalized autocracies – Morocco and Jordan – to show the external validity of my argument. Furthermore, I hypothesize that my theory is also applicable to hybrid regimes outside of the Arab world (although I do not test this). While the specific DCSO typology would not necessarily map on to other regional contexts, the three

\textsuperscript{71} Arab Republic of Egypt: Selected Issues, (Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, 2007).
\textsuperscript{72} Beyond Orthodox Approaches: Assessing Opportunities for Democracy Support in the Middle East and North Africa (NIMD/Hivos, 2010).
\textsuperscript{73} Joint NGO Submission to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Occasion of the Seventh Session of the Universal Periodic Review.
\textsuperscript{74} Dawn Chatty and Annika Rabo, eds., Organizing Women: Formal and Informal Women’s Groups in the Middle East (New York: Berg, 1997).
independent variables that determine the typology (outside rhetorical support, level of perceived threat and access to foreign funding) should carry over.

It is important to note that throughout the dissertation I refer to the Egyptian regime in the present tense. Although the formal rule of Hosni Mubarak ended in February 2011, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), which replaced Mubarak, does not, at the time of this writing, differ substantially in its treatment of civil society from the Mubarak regime, as will be explained in further detail in Chapter Seven. I conducted interviews with civil society actors both shortly before the Egyptian Revolution of 2011 and after and I found that their descriptions of the legal environment under which CSOs operate has not changed and experts do not expect the SCAF or the newly elected Egyptian Parliament to drastically alter the Associations Law any time soon.75 The most visible change post-revolution is the official dissolution of the State Security Services. As explained above, State Security played a large, but unofficial role, in reporting on and attempting to control civil society behavior. The fact that the security services no longer exist on paper is an important change. However, some CSOs actors after the revolution continue to receive threats from “former” security service officials and while security officials are no longer as actively and visibly involved in the civil society arena, their presence has not completely vanished.76

In the post-revolution environment while many DCSOs are beginning to take on new projects and issue areas related to the political transition (such as voter education programs and coalition-building exercises) and seek out new funding sources, their strategies for regime

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75 Interviews with civil society actors and scholars. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
interaction have not changed. The only marked difference in the civil society environment pre- and post-revolution are the redlines. Following Mubarak’s resignation, CSOs now believe that the only remaining redlines are the military and the unity of the Egyptian state and society (i.e. sectarian and religious issues).77 In order to control for the shift in redlines, I have limited my case studies to CSOs operating between 1990 and 2010. While most of the CSOs that make up my case studies continue to operate after the revolution, I have limited my data collection and analysis to their behavior and actions prior to January 1, 2011.

This research is based primarily on over 60 in-depth semi-structured interviews with Egyptian civil society actors, Egyptian and Western academics and international donors in Egypt in November 2009, October 2010 and June 2011. Additional interviews with Western experts and Egyptian civil society actors based in the United States were conducted in Washington, DC in 2010, 2011 and 2012. Interviews were also conducted with Moroccan civil society actors in Fes and Rabat, Morocco in Summer 2008 for Chapter Six, “Beyond Egypt.” Other data sources include CSO publications, including annual reports and other publically-available as well as private documents and secondary literature including scholarly books and articles and Egyptian newspaper articles.

**Organization of the Dissertation**

This dissertation is divided into seven chapters. Chapter Two, “Theory” explains the puzzle and argument in greater detail as well as both the dependent and independent variables at length. Chapter Three, “Pluralism,” uses case studies of two Protected Minority CSOs (the

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77 Interviews with civil society actors and scholars. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services and the Association for the Development and Enhancement of Women) and a Single-Issue CSO (the Egyptian Association to Support Street Children) to show that these types of DCSOs are most likely to choose pluralism. Chapter Four, “Co-optation,” fleshes out the strategies of administrative co-optation and ideological co-optation, arguing that Muslim CSOs are most likely to choose ideological co-optation, while Charity and Development CSOs are most likely to choose either ideological co-optation or administrative co-optation, depending on their level of outside rhetorical support and level of perceived threat to the regime. Additionally, this chapter explains that Single-Issue CSOs with low levels of outside rhetorical support and perceived threat to the regime are also most likely to choose administrative co-optation. This is shown through case studies of two Muslim CSOs (Resala and Dar al Orman), two case studies of Charity and Development CSOs (Nahdet el Mahrousa and the New Horizon Association for Social Development), and one case study of a Single-Issue CSO (the Education for Employment Foundation). Chapter Five, “Capture,” explains the strategy of capture and why full capture is limited to GONGOs. This chapter further explains that although capture is not, itself, a strategy “choice” by DCSOs as it is endogenous to DCSO type; it is a strategy employed by some of the strongest and most powerful DCSOs in Egypt and thus warrants examination. Chapter Six, “Beyond Egypt” tests the theory outside of Egypt in two other liberalized autocracies in the Arab world – Jordan and Morocco. This chapter shows that the argument that DCSO type determines DCSO strategy is not specific to Egypt and can (and should) be tested in hybrid regimes across the region and outside of the Arab world. And Chapter Seven, “Summing it All Up” revisits the initial theory that DCSO type determines
DCSO strategy, highlighting areas for future research and situating my findings within the context of the Arab Spring.

Conclusion

Despite a well-developed scholarly literature on the persistence of authoritarianism in the Arab world and on the relationship between the state and democracy-promotion civil society organizations, no scholar to date has analyzed the development civil society sector and its relationship with the state. This has led to a deep misunderstanding of the role of civil society under authoritarianism and the ability of civil society organizations to navigate the unique configuration of liberalization under coercion that exists in the Arab world. This dissertation is one first step towards filling in a very large gap in the literature by providing an empirical study of the development civil society sector. Through an analysis of development CSOs in Egypt from 1990-2010, I explain that the interaction of a DCSO’s level of access to foreign funding, level of outside rhetorical support and level of perceived threat to the regime result in a pattern of configurations, called “DCSO Type”, each of which predictably determines whether a development CSO will choose to confront the authoritarian regime head on, allow itself to be fully captured by the regime or choose a middle-ground strategy. This dissertation makes a major contribution to the literature both by acknowledging and examining the role of development civil society under autocracy as well as by shedding further light on the state-society relationship from the perspective of society.

This dissertation was written in the midst of the Arab Spring, the series of revolts and uprisings that spread across much of the Arab world beginning in December 2010. While the
purpose of the dissertation is not to explain the Arab Spring or even to respond to it, it is important to understand how the dissertation is situated within the backdrop of current events, which will be explained in more detail in Chapter Seven. The importance of understanding state-society relations in the Arab world is even more important in light of the popular revolts in the region. Understanding what drives civil society organizations to work with or against the ruling regime can help inform the larger debates about how hybrid regimes control their citizenry and how citizens respond to that control. At the time of this writing, no single Arab state has successfully transitioned to democracy, nor appears to be on the verge of doing so. Rather, while there is no question that transitions of one form or another are taking place in some states, in others the status quo is firmly in place and in others, while leaders will not likely fall, the state-society relationship has shifted. This dissertation therefore, can address some of the questions that we are just beginning to ask in regard to the Arab Spring by shedding much-needed light on the ways in which societies operating under hybrid regimes with fluid and shifting rules and boundaries decide whether to engage the state or whether to be subsumed by it.
CHAPTER II: THEORY

The goal of civil society actors is to procure tangible goods that serve their interests. As Moheb Zaki writes of associational life in Egypt, “The overwhelming concern of almost all associations is how to extract from the state the support needed to procure basic goods and services, as well as maintain a modicum of freedom to pursue their material interests without undue interference by the government.”78 Thus, as John Clark argues, CSOs have only three options, “They can oppose the state, complement it, or reform it – but they cannot ignore it.”79 These options can be re-framed as the three main strategies available to development CSOs in the Arab world: operating fully outside of the regime (pluralism), allowing themselves to be partially co-opted while maintaining some form of autonomy (co-optation), and allowing themselves to be fully incorporated into the regime (capture).80 These strategies are a direct response to the environment in which DCSOs operate. Arab DCSOs must navigate the unique and complex configuration of liberalization and coercion that has resulted in a harsh legal environment for civil society where regulations are arbitrarily applied, along with the government’s rhetorical support of CSOs as well as a dire need for development CSOs. Due to the prior literature on the ability of the authoritarian state to manipulate and control civil society

78 Zaki.
80 The terms for these strategies were first suggested to me by Daniel Brumberg. They are also based on the concept of “exit, voice and loyalty” developed by Albert Hirschman. Albert O. Hirschman, Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970). Adil Najam has developed two sets of terms to describe the relationship of civil society-government relations in the developing world. The first, “contestation, participation and engagement” fails to capture the end of the spectrum which I term “capture” and focuses solely on the cooperative elements of state-society relations. Adil Najam, “Developing Countries and Global Environmental Governance: From Contestation to Participation to Engagement,” International Environmental Agreements 5 (2005). The second set of categories: “cooperation, confrontation, complementarity, and co-optation” also ignores the notion of capture. Najam, “The Four-C’s of Third Sector-Government Relations: Cooperation, Confrontation, Complementarity, and Co-optation.”
(discussed in detail in Chapter One and briefly below), we understand the state-society relationship from the perspective of the state. The question that remains is what determines the way society behaves in relation to the state. That is, why do some civil society organizations choose to confront the state, while others choose to cooperate with it? As this chapter will explain, an interaction of three independent variables: the level of outside rhetorical support for a CSO’s issue area, the level of perceived threat that a CSO poses to the regime, and the level of access a CSO has to outside funding determines the strategy for regime interaction that a CSO is most likely to choose.

The Egyptian regime regularly uses the process co-optation of individuals and whole social classes as a method to extend or maintain control, to neutralize potentially threatening elements of society, and to maintain stability and some modicum of legitimacy.81 Joshua Stacher defines co-optation as “a process of incorporating, mobilizing, and sometimes, depending on the context, neutralizing individuals in the state’s structural and institutional framework. It operates within a system of informal patron-client and corporatist relationships. Within academic literature, clientalism describes the process of co-opting individuals while corporatism designates co-optation of whole social classes.”82 As Stacher explains, co-optation provides benefits for both the co-opter (the regime) and the co-opted. Once an individual or group is co-opted, there is “little incentive for him/her to challenge the regime.” Furthermore, co-opted individuals may even increase their support of the regime as they begin to reap the benefits of co-optation including “social prestige” and “personal security.” He notes, “Being co-opted increases the

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chances one will be protected from a regime’s security apparatus. One might therefore tacitly support a regime’s general stances while privately acknowledging the existence of deeper systemic problems. By such tacit support of a regime’s key positions, one seeks not only to acquire job security and greater social status, but one further hopes that such support might translate over time into greater social mobility.\footnote{Ibid.}

Another tool at the regime’s disposal is coercion or repression. Several scholars have noted the skillful way in which Arab leaders use both the ability and the willingness to apply coercion to maintain power.\footnote{The best overview of this is Eva Bellin, “The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective,” \textit{Comparative Politics} 36, no. 2 (2004).} While coercion is not frequently used on civil society organizations, the threat of coercion remains a very powerful tool in the regime’s toolbox. The mixture of repression and co-optation in Egypt has led to what Abdel Rahman describes as “neo-corporatism,” which she defines as “an arrangement of mutual gains between representatives of State authority and those of interest associations. Each of the two has something to offer and also something to fear from the other.”\footnote{Abdel Rahman, \textit{Civil Society Exposed: The Politics of NGOs in Egypt}, 37.}

Albrecht describes the overall environment of CSO-state interaction most clearly:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Seemingly a contradiction in terms, the authoritarian regime in Egypt juggles between competing social interests to reach an equilibrium, so as to maintain political stability. This process, in turn, creates winners and losers, and is highly dynamic: winners may fall as quickly as they came up, and losers may rise from the ashes at similar pace. True, the rules of this game are not equal to all parts of society; and the leveling out of elitist interests does not necessarily mean social peace – the vast majority of the populace is structurally excluded from political participation and, more often than not, falls victim to repressive statist mechanisms. Only those social groups or strata deemed as strategically important for power maintenance are likely to be on the winning side. On the other hand,}
\end{quote}
no individual can be sure of his position only because of his affiliation with a certain social strata or political group.\textsuperscript{86}

Thus, CSOs operate in a context in which the choices they make and the ways in which they present themselves to the regime matter tremendously. In order to achieve their goals, and more basically to simply stay alive, CSOs must navigate a difficult political landscape.

In explaining what determines a CSO’s strategy for regime interaction this dissertation focuses on one sub-set of civil society: development civil society organizations (DCSOs). DCSOs, defined as organizations with a primary goal of improving human development, constitute the vast majority of all civil society organizations in the Arab world, but they have been virtually ignored in the literature on civil society under authoritarianism.\textsuperscript{87} Part of the reason for this is that the literature argues that there should be no variation in the outcome of development CSO strategy. That is, all DCSOs, due to their non-advocacy nature, should choose a strategy for state interaction wherein they allow themselves to be fully co-opted by the state. As explained in Chapter One, the vast majority of the literature on civil society in the Arab world makes no mention of development civil society. The works that do discuss DCSOs as part of the larger civil society landscape characterize it as partnering with the ruling regime, quietly operating within tight constraints and generally failing to contradict the state.\textsuperscript{88} Ben Néfissa addresses this point stating, “Most of the Arab NGOs are more or less linked to the states and


\textsuperscript{87} Sparre and Petersen.

\textsuperscript{88} See, for example, Al-Sayyid; Bayat; Brand; Hawthorne; Hussein; Jamal; Kandil, \textit{Civil Society in the Arab World: Private Voluntary Organizations}; Ottaway and Choucair-Vizoso, eds., \textit{Beyond the Facade: Political Reform in the Arab World}; Pratt; Wiktowicz. A notable exception to this is a USAID contractor report from 1996, which found, “Service NGOs have an impact that goes well beyond service delivery. They also enhance the prospects for democratization because they foster associational life, empower individuals, and provide them with the skills and attitudes [that are useful for democratization].” Chemonics International, \textit{Final Report: The Democratic Institutions Support Project} (Washington, DC: The U.S. Agency for International Development, 1996).
their administrations. Luckily there are always exceptions to the rules, which, in this case, are the advocacy organizations.” She goes on to state, “In general, [development CSOs] rarely criticize the influence of the state or of the administration as the latter are a valuable source of information and financial resources.”89 Asef Bayat, writing on urban grassroots activism in the Arab world, notes that development CSOs and individuals can make positive contributions and contradict the state, but “they tend to happen in extraordinary social and political circumstances—in revolutionary conditions or in times of crisis and war, when the state is undermined or totally absent, as in Palestine. Thus, few such activities become a pattern for sustained social mobilization and institutionalization in normal situations. Once the exceptional conditions come to an end, the experiments begin to wither away or get distorted.”90 He is generally critical of the ability of DCSOs to confront the state due primarily to the legacy of populism in the region and the high level of state control over civil society. He argues, “In the Middle East, the existing forms of activism in the communities—or through labor unions, social Islam, and the NGOs—do contribute to the well-being of the underprivileged groups. However, they fall short of activating and directing a great number of people in sustained mobilization for social development.”91 And Shari Berman does not directly address DCSOs, but argues that civil society in the Arab world is “uncivil” because it is dominated by Islamist (service-provision) CSOs that are authoritarian in nature.92 Thus, DCSOs by definition should not pose a threat to the state and should not require autonomy from the state in order to achieve their goals.

89 Ben Néfissa et al., eds., 7-8.
91 Ibid.
However, there does exist significant variation on this outcome (DCSO strategy). Some DCSOs do display full co-optation, as is predicted by the literature. But other DCSOs operate with full autonomy while others operate with a degree of autonomy and a degree of co-optation. This variation is explained by the variable DCSO type – a combination of three independent variables: the level of outside rhetorical support the DCSO receives, the level of perceived threat the DCSO represents to the regime, and the level and availability of foreign funding for the DCSO.

DCSOs not only make up the largest part of the CSO sector across the region, but also operate under different (and lesser) constraints than democracy-promotion CSOs. There is no question that the relationship of government and development CSOs is based on an unequal power dynamic, however, unlike democracy-promotion CSOs, which, by their very nature, pose a direct threat to the regime, DCSOs have the potential to form a pseudo-symbiotic relationship with the state, albeit one in which the state still holds most of the power. Carolyn Hsu, writing about civil society-state relations in China, finds that contrary to conventional wisdom, the relationship between CSOs and the state is frequently one of interdependence and strategic alliance. Her argument is that CSOs need resources from the state in order to serve their constituencies and meet their goals. Thus, their relationship with the state is not necessarily antagonistic, but rather symbiotic.93

Adil Najam, writing about the state-society relationship across the globe notes, “Even when they work in unison and demonstrate the friendliest of relations, the tension remains palpable; when they do not, it becomes inescapable. This tension – sometimes latent, sometimes patent; sometimes constructive, sometimes destructive – is always present, and is in many ways a

defining feature of all NGO-government relations.”^94 And Bayat, who has generally been
critical of the ability of organized groups to impact change in the Arab world writes:

In the experience of the Middle East, ‘pressure from below’ is highly relevant to social
development. Given the gradual retreat of states from their traditional social
responsibilities, the Middle East’s poor would have been in worse conditions had
grassroots actions been totally absent. Yet, grassroots activities do have limitations – both
in terms of internal constraints on how much can realistically be achieved, and in relation
to constraints dictated by the state.\(^{95}\)

From the perspective of international donors working in an authoritarian context, Guilain
Denoeux argues that DCSOs represent a more appealing channel of support as supporting
DCSOs over democracy promotion CSOs is less likely to alienate the host government and
“destabilize an ally and benefit hostile forces.”^96

Both the development and democracy promotion CSO sectors saw a proliferation of
CSOs and CSO activity throughout the Arab world beginning in the 1980s and peaking in the
1990s.\(^{97}\) This proliferation was due, in large part, to a conscious decision by Arab regimes to
open up the space for dissent partially out of a desire for political reform, but mostly out of a
more selfish desire to please international donors and a need to quell dissent before it threatened
the stability of the regime. As Quintan Wiktorowicz observed in Jordan, the proliferation of civil
society organizations across the region in the 1980s and 1990s were “embedded in a web of
bureaucratic practices and legal codes which allows those in power to monitor and regulate
collective activities. This web reduces the possibility of a challenge to the state from civil society
by rendering much of collective action visible to the administrative apparatus. Under such

^94 Najam, “The Four-C’s of Third Sector-Government Relations: Cooperation, Confrontation, Complementarity, and
Co-optation.”
^95 Bayat, Social Movements, Activism and Social Development in the Middle East, 29.
^96 Ben Néfissa et al., eds., 90.
^97 Langohr, 8.
circumstances, civil society institutions are more an instrument of state control than a mechanism of collective empowerment.”98

But this authoritarian control of civil society, particularly in regard to DCSOs, should not be overestimated. First, Wiktorowicz, like most scholars writing on civil society in the Arab world, focused his analysis on democracy-promotion and other advocacy CSOs. While development CSOs are also embedded in this bureaucratic and legal web, they are not the target of state control in the same way as democracy promotion CSOs. Ben-Néfissa argues that unlike democracy-promotion CSOs, development CSOs are able, at times, to become more autonomous and develop “conflictual relationships with public authorities” particularly when they are backed by “important social movements that represent the interest of numerous different social classes or they are run by influential political forces, such as the Islamists.” But, she argues, “the non-advocacy Arab NGOs perfectly know where their autonomy ends.”99 Additionally, as Bianchi observed, the unique configuration of corporatism in Egypt has both allowed the Mubarak regime to control and divide the opposition, including civil society, but also, by its very flexible nature, has allowed “considerable leeway” for these same actors.100 Furthermore, in many Arab states, and in Egypt in particular, corporatism has taken place a variety of times in a variety of ways, leading to a lack of a unified corporatist structure.101 This has allowed for occasional opportunities for civil society to actors to challenge the regime.102

98 Wiktorowicz, 43.
99 Ben Néfissa et al., eds., 8.
100 Bianchi, 20.
101 Ibid.
102 Daniel Brumberg, Democratization versus Liberalization in the Arab World: Dilemmas and Challenges for U.S. Foreign Policy (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2005), 9.
As Heydemann argues, “In the Middle East, it seems, authoritarianism is not inconsistent with the presence of vibrant civil societies.”\footnote{Steven Heydemann, “Social Pacts and the Persistence of Authoritarianism in the Middle East,” in \textit{Debating Arab Authoritarianism: Dynamics and Durability in Nondemocratic Regimes}, ed. Oliver Schlumberger (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007).} A 2010 study by Dutch think tank Hivos, found “despite the limitations of political parties and civil society, they are not to be viewed as irrelevant. As long as they are not too oppositional towards the incumbent regime, parties and civil society can play a role in shaping politics.”\footnote{Beyond Orthodox Approaches: Assessing Opportunities for Democracy Support in the Middle East and North Africa, 11.} And while all Arab CSOs are under administrative control of the state they “have shown an exceptional sense for survival and self-organization within a dire context.”\footnote{Ben Néfissa et al., eds.} Development CSOs, more so than democracy promotion CSOs, have had a large impact on societies throughout the Arab world. The 2005 CIVICUS report, which is largely critical of the role of civil society in Egypt, notes, “as for civil society’s impact on society at large, it is difficult to overlook the scope of nongovernmental organizations’ (NGOs’) engagement in service delivery, or their work in providing social benefits and handouts to the needy.”\footnote{An Overview of Civil Society in Egypt: Civil Society Index Report for the Arab Republic of Egypt.}

Najam argues that despite the unequal relationship between CSOs and the government, “the ultimate nature of this relationship is a strategic institutional decision made by both the government and the nongovernmental organizations in question….One party, often the NGO, may have fewer options to play with in reaching its decision, but its very choice to stay in the game is in itself a strategic decision.”\footnote{Emphasis added. Najam, “The Four-C’s of Third Sector-Government Relations: Cooperation, Confrontation, Complementarity, and Co-optation.”} Finally, Sullivan, in his examination of private voluntary organizations (PVOs) in Egypt sums up the situation well, “While it is indisputable that the

Egyptian government plays a large role in PVO/NGO affairs, what is being disputed is whether that role is appropriate or improper, beneficial or detrimental, requested or imposed.\footnote{Sullivan, 41.}

Thus, it is clear that under these conditions, the relationship of DCSOs with the state is not static. Rather, in interacting with the authoritarian regime DCSOs, like their democracy-promotion counterparts, do have choices to make: how to respond to government control and if and when to subvert or succumb to that control. Thus, DCSOs have three primary strategies at their disposal: choosing to operate with full autonomy, allowing themselves to be partially co-opted, while maintaining some autonomy, or choosing to be fully captured by the regime. The question that remains is what determines the strategy that a development civil society organization chooses? Based on an examination of DCSOs in Egypt in the period 1990-2010, it is clear that despite the diversity of Egyptian DCSOs, individual civil society organizations behave in predictable patterns. Based on the combination of three factors - level of outside rhetorical support for one’s area of work, level of perceived threat that one’s area of work poses to the regime, and the level of access to foreign funding sources, it is possible to predict with great accuracy the strategy in which a DCSO is most likely to engage.

This chapter describes this argument in detail. The chapter proceeds as follows: first, an examination of the alternative explanations for DSCO behavior within the literature on state-society relations in the Arab world; second, a description of the civil society arena in Egypt including an inductive typology of development CSOs in Egypt; and third, the argument in depth, including a description of the variables and case selection.
Alternative Explanations for State-Civil Society Relations in the Arab World

The literature on the persistence of authoritarianism in the Arab world has helped us understand in great detail the ability of Arab regimes to dodge the waves of democratic transitions that swept through virtually every region of the world prior to 2010, except the Middle East. This literature has done a good job of both moving past the transitions literature, which assumed that the Arab world was on a linear path towards liberal democracy, albeit a very slow path, and explaining the specific mechanisms and strategies that Arab leaders have used to bat down both formal and informal opposition to their rule. The reality of the 2011 Arab revolts have, in fact, confirmed some of the main theses of this body of literature, particularly the idea that Arab autocrats are smart, strategic and flexible rulers who continuously adjust their behavior to changing conditions on the ground,\(^\text{109}\) as well as the idea put forward most convincingly by Eva Bellin, that the explanation for the lack of democratic reform in the Arab world lies not in a litany of missing prerequisites, but rather the “will and capacity” of the coercive apparatus of each Arab state.\(^\text{110}\)

Although the literature on the persistence of authoritarianism in the Arab world is not directly applicable to my theory, understanding how Arab leaders and regimes have responded to pressure to reform from below is essential to understanding the context within which Arab CSOs operate. We do not yet fully understand the bottom-up strategies used by civil society actors to obtain benefits from regimes that help improve the daily lives of the citizens of the Arab world.

\(^{109}\) See, for example, Bianchi.  
\(^{110}\) Bellin, 143.
under ever-changing and arbitrarily applied bureaucratic rules.\textsuperscript{111} And without a clear explanation of the ways in which the Arab state interacts with civil society, it is impossible to understand how civil society interacts with the state. Furthermore, because the state-society relationship is a dynamic and interconnected process, this dissertation has clear implications for the literature on the persistence of authoritarianism by illuminating both the strategies available to and the most likely choices of development CSOs, the vast majority of CSOs in the Arab world.

As mentioned above, there has been almost no research by political scientists on the development civil society sector in the Arab world, thus there are no traditional alternative explanations for my theory. Despite an “increased interaction between nongovernmental and governmental entities all over the world,” there remains a “lack of conceptual understanding of these relations and the need to refine our understanding in this area.”\textsuperscript{112} Due to this gap in the literature, the main body of existing literature that I am responding to is the state-centered explanations of Middle East authoritarianism. Recent work on the Arab world has echoed earlier claims, pointing to strongly cohesive ruling coalitions in the region as the main explanation for continued authoritarianism.\textsuperscript{113} But, as Dina Shehata points out, while state-centered approaches

\textsuperscript{111} Both Bianchi and Diamond have noted the ebb and flow of the shifting strategies of regimes over time. Bianchi; Larry Diamond, “Why are there no Arab Democracies?” \textit{Journal of Democracy} 21, no. 1 (2010).
\textsuperscript{112} Najam, “The Four-C’s of Third Sector-Government Relations: Cooperation, Confrontation, Complementarity, and Co-optation.”
\textsuperscript{113} Jason Brownlee, \textit{Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization} (New York: Cambrighe University Press, 2007); Michael Herb, \textit{All in the Family: Absolutism, Revolution and Democracy in Middle Eastern Monarchies} (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999).
tend to do a good job of explaining the persistence of authoritarianism in closed authoritarian regimes, they fail to fully explain the dynamics at work in liberalized autocracies.\textsuperscript{114}

Several scholars have noted the ability of Arab autocrats to respond to both external and internal pressures to democratize by instead “upgrading authoritarianism” by “reconfiguring authoritarian governance to accommodate and manage changing political, economic, and social conditions.”\textsuperscript{115} This is done in variety of ways, including the use of patronage to buy off groups, allowing for the proliferation of political parties and civil society groups as a method of divide and rule, and creating legislative elections wherein the opposition parties have no real chance to win or, once elected, legislators have no real power.\textsuperscript{116} These top-down liberalization measures offered no real chance of reform, nor were they intended to. Through this body of literature we do know some of the top-down strategies employed by the regime to manage civil society. These include divide-and-rule strategies, random and discretionary application of the civil society or associations laws (cracking down on both legal and illegal organizations), limiting or refusing funding of civil society organizations, and, less frequently, harsher acts of repression (such as arresting civil society actors). Albrecht notes that liberalized autocracies (and Egypt in particular) generally use three strategies of containment beyond coercion: “the legitimization of authoritarianism through the allocation of rent income, the co-optation of strategic societal groups, and the playing of societal groups against one another.”\textsuperscript{117}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{114} Dina Shehata, \textit{Islamists and Secularists in Egypt: Opposition, Conflict and Cooperation} (New York: Routledge, 2010), 7-9.
\bibitem{115} Heydemann, “Upgrading Authoritarianism in the Arab World,” 1.
\bibitem{117} Oliver Schlumberger, \textit{Debating Arab Authoritarianism} (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007).
\end{thebibliography}
Beyond containment, the literature identifies two other ways the regime interacts with civil society under authoritarianism. The first is as a pressure-release valve, in which opposition groups (including CSOs) represent a way for individuals to “blow off steam [without] undermining the regime’s ultimate control.”118 Second, civil society organizations offer the regime a form of social control. Due to the harsh legal environment in which CSOs operate and the arbitrary application of rules and laws, the regime is able to “monitor and regulate” the activities of civil society actors and groups.119 However, as John Ackerman notes, an active civil society and the strengthening of the state apparatus are not mutually exclusive, rather this combination leads to what he calls “co-governance.”120 Finally, Stacey Pollard provides a typology of options for the regime to deal with CSOs. These are: to facilitate the aims of civil society, to assert neutrality, to co-opt or absorb civil society, to repress voluntary associations or to eradicate voluntary associations.121 These explanations for elite behavior are essential to understanding the constraints under which CSOs must operate.

There have been a few recent scholarly examinations of state-society relations from the perspective of society. Zerhouni and Lust-Okar provide a good examination of political participation from the bottom-up, but they do not focus on civil society and make no mention of development civil society.122 Francesco Cavatorta and Vincent Durac’s 2010 book on civil society in Arab world takes a society-centered perspective, but does not examine development

119 Wiktorowicz.
122 Lust-Okar and Zerhouni, eds.
civil society in depth, focusing on democracy promotion organizations only. And the most comprehensive work of civil society in Egypt, Abdel Rahman’s book, also does not address development civil society in depth. This only emphasizes the need for increased bottom-up, society-centered analysis on the state-society relationship in the Arab world.

**The Civil Society Sector in Egypt**

There is no question that the civil society sector in Egypt contains wide variation on all indicators. As the authors of the 2005 CIVICUS report on Egypt noted:

> The level of heterogeneity in Egyptian civil society is striking. Civil society organizations (CSOs) are diverse in their structure, objectives, size, membership composition, values and nature of their relationship to other organizations and the government. For every general comment that is made about civil society in this report, the reader will be able to list at least one or two exceptions to the rule.

However, scholars have failed to adequately describe this diversity in a clear, comprehensive and empirically useful manner. The most common way CSOs are described in the literature is as one of two categories: advocacy CSOs (also known as democracy promotion CSOs) and service CSOs (also known as development CSOs). Advocacy CSOs are explicitly engaged in criticizing the government and promoting social and political change and take on issues such as democracy promotion and human rights. Service CSOs seek to provide goods and services to citizens (such as health, education, basic goods and professional training) that the government is either unable or unwilling to provide. The dichotomy between these two types of CSOs has been

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123 Cavatorta and Durac, *Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World: The Dynamics of Activism*.
124 Abdel Rahman, *Civil Society Exposed: The Politics of NGOs in Egypt*.
125 *An Overview of Civil Society in Egypt: Civil Society Index Report for the Arab Republic of Egypt*.
126 See, for example, Ben Néfissa et al., eds; Molly Schultz Hafid, *Emerging Trends in Social Justice Philanthropy in Egypt* (Cairo: John D. Gerhart Center on Philanthropy and Civic Engagement, 2009).
well-documented and widely accepted in the literature, however it is too simple and does not provide a sufficient explanation of the variation that exists within each of these categories.

A second type of differentiation that is prevalent in the literature is between Muslim CSOs and secular CSOs (a grouping which includes all non-Muslim religious CSOs). While this differentiation is important, it does not capture the wide spectrum of variation in CSO types in the liberalized autocracies of the Arab world.

A third form of differentiation, related specifically to the development sector is between community development associations (CDAs) and social welfare organizations. Community development associations are those groups that were initially created by the Egyptian government and that serve a specific individual community, described in Chapter One. CDAs work on a wide variety of “social, cultural, economic and productive activities or services in support of local development.” Social welfare organizations, in the research conducted in the 1990s, are defined as simply everything other than CDAs. LaTowsky notes that, “in principle, social welfare PVOs differ from CDAs in their focus on a particular target group (e.g. Muslims, students, the poor, mothers and child, the handicapped) – rather than the community as a whole.” This division of CSOs is also far too simple, ignoring the wide diversity of types of social welfare organizations and is no longer used in the literature.

These initial attempts at typologizing the CSO sector have shed light on a few important differences amongst CSOs but these efforts have failed to adequately describe the variation that exists within both the development and democracy-promotion CSO sectors. Few scholars have

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127 Cavatorta and Durac, *Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World: The Dynamics of Activism*. Ibrahim and Sherif, eds., *From Charity to Social Change: Trends in Arab Philanthropy*.

128 LaTowsky, “The Organizations and Financing of Egypt’s PVO Sector.”

129 Ibid., 7.
provided any further typology of the CSO sector and no scholar to date has devised a specific typology of the development CSO sector. Several reports outlining the Egyptian civil society sector do exist, but these lack specific figures or a useful typology.\(^\text{130}\) Part of the reason for this is that specific facts and figures regarding the civil society sector in Egypt are difficult to pin down. While the Ministry of Social Solidarity technically maintains a database of all registered CSOs in Egypt as well as its own *Statistical Indicators*, this information is not publicly available. The only official Egyptian database of the CSO sector as a whole is the MOSS listing of all registered CSOs, the governorate in which they are registered and their general area of activity. These records are not kept up to date, however, and do not reflect the actual number of active CSOs (one-third to one-half of all registered CSOs are active on paper only and numerous CSOs are not officially registered).\(^\text{131}\) Additionally, this database does not include any financial information or specific information regarding the activity area for the individual CSOs. Furthermore, records kept by State Security on the activities of civil society actors and organizations were largely destroyed during the February 2011 revolution and its aftermath, when the State Security agency was officially disbanded and consequently looted and many of its documents burned by revolutionaries. Further complicating any attempt to create a comprehensive picture of the civil society sector as a whole is general lack of reliable statistical data on Egypt (and the Arab world as a whole). The Central Agency for Public Mobilization and

\(^{131}\) Abdel Rahman, *Civil Society Exposed: The Politics of NGOs in Egypt*, 37. LaTowsky found that one-quarter of all CSOs in his study were inactive and another 7% were private member associations. LaTowsky, “The Organizations and Financing of Egypt’s PVO Sector.”
Statistics (CAPMAS), Egypt’s official statistical agency, provides very few statistics to the public and those that they do provide are not always accurate. CAPMAS does not provide a comprehensive database on Egyptian CSOs, but does have limited information regarding CSOs that receive government grants through its Funded Charitable Associations publication.

CAPMAS and MOSS cover different subsectors of civil society because they are based on different definitions of civil society – where MOSS’ database includes all CSOs funded by the government, CAPMAS includes only charitable associations funded by MOSS.

A few scholars have made successful attempts to depict the Egyptian civil society sector as a whole. The most comprehensive and credible of these is LaTowsky’s “Egypt PVO Sector Study,” a series of five reports prepared for the World Bank in the mid-1990s and published between 1995 and 1998. LaTowsky divides the civil society sector into six categories: community development associations, Muslim welfare associations, Christian welfare organizations, private member associations, scientific and public cultural associations and non-religious social welfare organizations. LaTowsky’s study is a detailed examination of CSOs in three Egyptian governorates, Giza, Sharqiya and Sohag. He provides a breakdown of the number of CSOs in each of his six categories for these three governorates combined (see Table 1) and notes that the distribution of CSOs by type in Giza, Sharqiya and Sohag mirrors the

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133 LaTowsky, “The Organizations and Financing of Egypt’s PVO Sector.”
distribution nationwide. Thus, he is able to extrapolate his findings within these three governorates to all of Egypt. 134

Table 1. Distribution of Egyptian CSOs according to LaTowsky’s Typology: Giza, Sharqiya and Sohag Governorates, 1993135

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSO Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Development Associations</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>30.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim Welfare Associations</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>29.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Welfare Associations</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Member Associations</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific and Cultural Associations</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Religious Social Welfare Associations</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>2120</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Comparative Non-Profit Sector Project of Johns Hopkins University, carried out in Egypt in 1989-2005, has a similar classification of Egyptian CSOs, dividing organizations into six types: “associations and private foundations governed by Law 32,” professional groups, business groups, foreign foundations, advocacy organizations, and Islamic waqf and Christian charities. 136 This classification is not very useful for multiple reasons. First, it fails to differentiate between Muslim and Christian organizations, grouping them both into a single category. Second, it provides no differentiation between non-religious development CSOs.

A more comprehensive overview of Egyptian civil society is a 900-page volume published in Arabic by the Ahram Center for Strategic and Political Studies, Egypt’s premier 134 Ibid.
135 Ibid., 9.
think tank. This volume divides the 11,000 CSOs officially registered with MOSS in 1991 into 16 categories, which largely reflect the MOSS categories (see Table 2).\footnote{Amani Kandil and Sara Ben Néfissa, \textit{Al-Jama'iyaat Al-Ahliya Fi Masr (Private Voluntary Associations in Egypt)} (Cairo: Al-Ahram Center for Strategic and Political Studies, 1994), 111.}

**Table 2. Civil Society Groups in Egypt (1991)**\footnote{Ibid.}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>2996</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>558</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minorities</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Businessmen</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family help</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clubs</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional societies</td>
<td>827</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student societies</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savings Funds</td>
<td>843</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>2996</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charity</td>
<td>1104</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>11,313</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While both LaTowsky and Kandil and Ben Néfissa’s typologies provide much-needed nuance to the description of the Egyptian civil society sector, neither adequately differentiates between types of development CSOs, in particular. Kandil and Ben Néfissa’s categories are simultaneously too broad and too narrow. They include a single category for “development”, failing to describe the vast variation amongst development CSOs. However they also include several separate categories that most other scholars, including this author, would include within

\footnote{Ibid.}
the “development” category including Christian, Muslim, family help and charity CSOs.
LaTowsky’s typology is much more useful, but despite his inclusion of six separate categories, in reality he fails to go beyond basic secular-religious differentiation used by earlier scholars. Two of his categories, private membership associations and CDAs, should not be considered development CSOs. As described above, the vast majority of CDAs are a form of GONGO, or government-organized non-governmental organizations. GONGOs are those CSOs that are created by the government and run by the government both at the advisory level as well as the day-to-day level. This is a CSO type well-documented in the literature and particularly prevalent in the Arab world.139 Because these groups (GONGOs) are completely controlled by the government and are in no way autonomous, I do not include them as development CSOs in my theory. Private membership associations are also not part of the development CSO sector as they are private, members-only organizations that serve as mutual aid societies, collecting dues and providing benefits including financial aid, to their members, with no support to the community at large. LaTowsky’s biggest contribution comes in the differentiation of Muslim, Christian and non-religious social welfare organizations, rather than grouping all non-Muslim CSOs into a single category.

Due to the lack of an empirically useful and comprehensive typology of development CSOs in Egypt, I have devised a typology of the development CSO sector in Egypt. This typology does not include or apply to democracy promotion CSOs. This is an explanatory typology, in which DCSOs are grouped based on where they fall on three indicators: level of outside rhetorical support, level of perceived threat to the regime, and level of access to foreign

139 Carapico, “NGOs, INGOs, GO-NGOs and DO-NGOs: Making Sense of Non-Governmental Organizations.”
funding. Based on the interaction of these three variables, I have divided the development CSO sector into four categories: Muslim CSOs, Protected Minority groups, Charity and Development CSOs and Single-Issue CSOs (see Table 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSO Type</th>
<th>Outside Rhetorical Support</th>
<th>Level of Perceived Threat</th>
<th>Access to Foreign Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protected Minority</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High or Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charity &amp; Development</td>
<td>Low or Medium</td>
<td>Low or Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-Issue</td>
<td>Low or High</td>
<td>Low, Medium or High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Muslim Groups**

Muslim CSOs are somewhat difficult to define. Because of the harsh regime crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, all Muslim CSOs are suspected by the regime as connected to the Brotherhood. Thus, Muslim CSOs (both those groups affiliated with the Brotherhood and those that are not) do not regularly self-identify as Muslim. Muslim CSOs are therefore defined not as groups that call themselves Muslim, but rather as groups whose message and guiding principles are clearly rooted in Islam, whose activities include some form of religious practice (such as having a mosque on the premises or teaching Qu’ran to beneficiaries) and whose leaders refer to Islam and Islamic principles when describing their mission and activities. Muslim CSOs are differentiated from Charity and Development or Single-Issue CSOs by their medium level of perceived threat combined with high access to non-state funding. This is due to the legal
provision that donations to houses of worship (both churches and mosques) are exempt from MOSS supervision. Thus, Muslim CSOs have a stream of funding that is not subject to the lengthy and restrictive bureaucratic oversight that other CSOs must deal with.

Muslim CSOs are very active in Egypt, particularly in the area of development. Muslim groups are frequently the most well-organized of all development CSOs and most effective at providing goods and services to Egypt’s poor. Thus the government and Muslim CSOs maintain a symbiotic relationship, to a point. The government, shrinking in its ability to alleviate poverty in Egypt, needs the Muslim CSOs to provide food, shelter, healthcare and other basic goods and services to the increasing numbers of impoverished Egyptians. However, the government also recognizes that Muslim CSOs are frequently tied to the Muslim Brotherhood, perhaps the strongest, most well-organized political opposition to the regime. This is further complicated by the high level of state control of religion. Thus, as Sara Lei Sparre and Marie Juul Petersen, in their study of Muslim CSOs in Jordan and Egypt, note, “Muslim civil society organizations are tolerated by the state, but only if they manage to keep within the red lines.” And when they do cross those red lines (e.g. they become overtly political or flaunt ties to the Muslim Brotherhood), they are quickly dealt with by the regime.

Protected Minority Groups

I use the term “Protected Minority” to refer to groups that are both de jure protected by state laws and regulations and are de facto protected by their connections to large and powerful international organizations and diasporas. Protected Minority CSOs are differentiated from the other three types of DCSOs by their high level of outside rhetorical support and high or medium

\[140\] Sparre and Petersen.
level of access to foreign funding. High levels of international protection allow this type of DCSO financial autonomy and visibility not afforded to other types of DCSOs. Protected Minority DCSOs have access to sufficient foreign funding to cover their expenses and are thus not reliant on state funding. Additionally, the de jure legal protection in addition to rhetorical support and pressure by their international supporters, allows Protected Minority DCSOs to take risks that non-protected groups cannot.

The two main types of Protected Minority groups in Egypt are Coptic and other Christian organizations and women’s groups. Christians make up 8-12% of the Egyptian population.\textsuperscript{141} Coptic CSOs have existed in Egypt since the 1930s and continue to flourish, particularly in the areas of health and education. The practice of the Coptic faith is legally protected under the Egyptian constitution and Copts occupy numerous positions within Egyptian government and society.\textsuperscript{142} The Egyptian Christian community is also closely connected to and supported by a vast network of Christian organizations worldwide. The Coptic and larger Christian community has also suffered discrimination historically. While they remain protected under the law, this de facto discrimination has contributed to the interaction of Coptic CSOs with the state. Because they face hurdles in entering the playing field, Coptic CSOs generally favor strategies for regime interaction that allow them to circumvent official channels, rather than attempting to cooperate with the regime.


\textsuperscript{142} The State Department report on International Religious Freedom characterizes religious freedom in Egypt as “poor” due to an increase in Christian-Muslim violence in Egypt in 2009-2010 as well as claims of employment and social discrimination by Christians. However, the theoretical categorization of Copts as “protected minorities” refers to their legal standing and, more importantly, to the influence of the larger Coptic diaspora on the ability of Coptic CSOs to raise money and carry out their activities without government support.
Like Coptic groups, women’s groups are legally protected under Egyptian law. Development CSOs are the most common type of women’s CSOs and both Coptic groups and women’s groups are connected to a grassroots, domestic constituency as well as to large movements supporting their cause abroad. Women’s groups have long been the darling of the international donor community, who readily provides grants to secular women’s organizations, thereby relieving much of these groups’ financial dependence on the state. This is both a blessing and a curse, as CSOs that receive foreign funding often raise red flags with the regime. However, due to the diplomatic and rhetorical protection provided by the international community and international NGOs, the government is less likely to overtly interfere in the daily activities of women’s groups, provided they focus on social, not political issues.

**Charity and Development CSOs**

I define Charity and Development CSOs as those groups that take on a broad spectrum of activities related to basic development. These are groups that provide food, clothing and blankets to the poor; they run soup kitchens; they provide adult literacy programs; they develop water sanitation systems in rural villages. This category also includes organizations focused on the capacity-building of other CSOs, such as networks or training organizations that address a wide variety of development CSO needs. The goal of these groups is simply to improve the lives of Egyptians. While most Muslim CSOs and Christian CSOs could also be defined as Charity and Development CSOs, Charity and Development CSOs are secular. They are different from Muslim CSOs or Christian CSOs in that they do not have a religious message and do not engage in religious activities. Their founders may be all Christian or all Muslim, but they have no

143 Chatty and Rabo, eds.
political or religious motives, rather their only goal is to distribute charitable goods and services, and as such they see themselves as partners with the state, not as antagonistic to it. They are also seen by the state as representing either a low level of threat, or, if they choose to include an issue that the regime has not openly addressed within their activities (such as street children or homosexuality), a medium level of threat. They rely on funding both from the Egyptian government as well as from international NGOs and they frequently employ large staffs of either paid employees or volunteers to tackle their myriad activities and oversee their multiple locations. They are different from Single-Issue CSOs in that they tackle multiple issues.

**Single-Issue CSOs**

Single-Issue CSOs share many characteristics of Charity and Development CSOs, however they focus solely on a single problem, such as education, the environment or homelessness. These organizations are generally smaller than Charity and Development CSOs and focus on one town or village. Due to the wide variety of area of focus within this category of CSOs, there is also large variation in the level of potential threat they pose to the regime. However, regardless of their area of focus, they tend to stay off the radar of the regime as long as they remain small and do not have overt ties to international NGOs. Single-Issue CSOs draw regime attention when they partner with CSOs in other Arab states, with foreign CSOs or when they appear to be expanding into large organizations with multiple sites. They usually have low outside rhetorical support, but can have high outside rhetorical support if they address an issue that is highlighted by the international community. They usually rely on foreign funding and they may receive US or European embassy funding or grants from international foundations.

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144 This characterization is based on interviews with civil society actors conducted in October 2010. Cairo, Egypt.
145 Interviews with civil society actors. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
(such as the Ford Foundation). But, due to their secular nature, they do face the legal hurdles to receiving that support that Christian and Muslim CSOs do not.

It is important to note that these categories are not all mutually exclusive (see Figure 1). All DCSOs can be divided into either Single-Issue CSOs or Charity and Development CSOs, depending on the number of issues and activities that they engage in. Thus, no DCSO can be both a Single-Issue and a Charity and Development CSO but Protected Minority CSOs and Muslim CSOs also fall into the category of either Single-Issue or Charity and Development CSOs. Protected Minority CSOs can be either type. Muslim CSOs are exclusively Charity and Development CSOs. All Muslim CSOs are Charity and Development CSOs but not all Charity and Development CSOs are Muslim CSOs. Similarly, all Protected Minority CSOs are either Charity and Development CSOs or Single-Issue CSOs, but not all Single-Issue CSOs and Charity and Development CSOs are Protected Minority CSOs.

The differentiation of development CSOs into four types, instead of the two broader categories of Single-Issue and Charity and Development CSOs is theoretically important to understanding CSO strategy choice. A DCSO’s behavior is influenced first and foremost by whether it is religious\textsuperscript{146} or secular (see Figure 2). Religious CSOs, regardless of whether they are Muslim or Christian (Protected Minority), behave significantly differently than secular CSOs. Thus, a DCSO’s identification as Muslim or Protected Minority takes precedence over its identification as a Single-Issue or Charity and Development CSO. Second, CSOs are divided based on the qualities described above into one of four types: Muslim CSOs, Protected Minority

\textsuperscript{146} The category “religious” includes Muslim and Christian organizations as well as women’s groups for the reasons explained in the section on Protected Minority CSOs.
CSOs, Charity and Development CSOs or Single-Issue CSOs. This classification eliminates “hybrid” CSOs. Every DCSO can be clearly classified into one of the four categories.

**Figure 1. Relationship of CSO Types**
The Argument: What Determines DCSO Strategy Choice?

Typology of Strategies

Within this backdrop, I have developed the three aforementioned strategies available to development CSOs. The first strategy, pluralism, describes DCSOs that are totally independent of the state. They choose to rely on foreign donors for funding which is seen as potentially threatening to the regime and thus they are frequently branded as Western puppets and thus illegitimate by the regime. They choose to maintain ties to outside social groups or organizations that offer them protection from the regime. Their board and professional staff members are not part of the ruling elite and may be prominent opposition figures. Although they work on
development issues, they may choose to highlight issues that the regime finds embarrassing or does not want to bring attention to, even, at times, crossing red lines.

The second strategy, co-optation, is used by DCSOs that do not wish to fully confront the state, but still want to maintain some form of autonomy either for financial or political purposes. Co-optation is the most common strategy sought by DCSOs as it provides them some cover from the regime, but also allows them to maintain a modicum of freedom to achieve their goals. DCSOs that choose co-optation usually do receive some (if not all) foreign funding, but they have a tacit agreement with the state that they will avoid red line issues. Co-opted DCSOs may have one or more board members from the ruling elite and will be subject to frequent government attention. They maintain a stable equilibrium with the government by allowing some government control and refusing to take on issues or employ individuals that the government sees as a potential threat.

This category can be further divided into two forms of co-optation: ideological co-optation and administrative co-optation. Ideological co-optation is a more strict form of co-optation in which DCSOs change their ideological or political agenda in order to conform to regime requests. For example, a DCSO may initially choose to take on an issue the regime has not previously acknowledged (such as HIV prevalence amongst youth), but after receiving pushback, the DCSO changes its agenda to instead address a less potentially threatening, but related issue (such as youth prostitution). By allowing itself to be ideologically co-opted, the DCSO is less likely to receive regime pushback, but it is no longer explicitly addressing the issue that it had sought to address. Another form of ideological co-optation occurs when a DCSO shifts from advocacy to charity. For example, a DCSO that wants to work with the zabaleen (the
community of garbage collectors that live in the Moqattam Hills of Cairo) may initially choose to work on both improving the lives of the zabaleen through traditional charity (food, clothing, healthcare, etc.) as well as through advocating for improved working conditions for the zabaleen, including a media campaign advertising the poor health conditions of the zabaleen due to their harsh working environment. However, MOSS would likely create obstacles for the advocacy work of the DCSO, withholding funding or shutting down the media campaign. Thus, the DCSO might anticipate this problem and choose, instead, to focus solely on the charity side of their project.

Administrative co-optation is closer to pluralism than capture. A DCSO that opts for administrative co-optation will decide to allow for regime-friendly administrative measures, such as only accepting specific sources of funding, partnering with regime-friendly or government-sponsored DCSOs, or allowing regime allies to sit on their board and participate in their meetings. Administratively co-opted DCSOs may even seek out regime allies to support them and participate at an official level in order to alleviate regime opposition to their activities, but knowing that they will then have to self-censor their discourse. This strategy is common to CSOs in China, as noted by Kin-Man Chan, where CSOs put regime members on their boards in order to gain legitimacy and have access to state resources.147

The final strategy, capture, applies primarily to GONGOs. DCSOs that are “captured” maintain virtually no autonomy from the regime. The majority of their professional staff and board members are regime allies (if not members of the ruling elite, themselves). They rely on the state for funding. They are fully non-political and thus they do not challenge the state in any

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way, thereby removing any threat to the regime. The inclusion of capture as a strategy choice may seem counterintuitive. Capture is, in fact, endogenous to the category of GONGOs – a CSO that forms as a GONGO is, by definition, captured by the regime. Nevertheless, this strategy is included in the dissertation for two reasons. First, some non-GONGOs do, in fact, choose capture. In a handful of cases, a DCSO that would otherwise choose administrative or ideological co-optation, chooses capture as a way to ensure full and complete regime protection. As Chapter Five, “Capture”, will explain, when a DCSO that should choose administrative co-optation (based on my theory) picks a very high-level regime official (most notably former First Lady Suzanne Mubarak) as its way of allowing itself to be administratively co-opted, it is, in reality, choosing capture. That is, by placing Suzanne Mubarak’s name (or another high-profile regime ally or series of regime officials) on your website or at the top of your board of directors, a DCSO is inviting a very high level of regime supervision and control that other administratively co-opted DCSOs do not possess. This is different from the myriad organizations that Mrs. Mubarak has founded herself, which are GONGOs and are in no way at all free from regime control. In reality, the small number of non-GONGO CSOs that choose capture fall along the CSO strategy continuum in Figure 3 somewhere between ideological co-optation and capture, closer to capture. Their behavior is not fully explained by ideological co-optation or administrative co-optation, warranting the inclusion of the strategy of capture.

A second reason for the inclusion of capture is that while the CSO type of “GONGO” is not included in my typology, GONGOs play an important role in service provision, women’s rights and advocacy throughout the Arab world. While not technically part of civil society, as they are an arm of the state, they are separate from the official government bodies charged with
these tasks. For example, to fully understand the way in which the issue of child protection has
been dealt with in Egypt, it is not sufficient to look at the official policies put forth by the
National Council on Childhood and Motherhood as well as the multiple CSOs that have
addressed this issue. Rather, a full examination of child protection policies also requires an
examination of the work of the Suzanne Mubarak Women’s International Peace Movement, a
GONGO. Therefore, I have included capture as a strategy for regime interaction both to
acknowledge the role of GONGOs within the state-society relationship in the Arab world and to
fully explain the behavior of DCSOs. These strategies represent ideal types along a continuum
(Figure 3). Thus, DCSOs may fall somewhere in between each of the three strategy types.

Figure 3. Continuum of CSO Strategies
Possible DCSO Paths

The variable that determines which strategy DCSOs choose is DCSO type. As explained above, every development CSO can be categorized into one of four sub-types (Muslim CSOs, Protected Minority CSOs, Charity and Development CSOs, and Single-Issue CSOs). These sub-types represent a unique interaction of three sub-variables: outside rhetorical support, access to foreign funds and perceived threat to the regime. It is this interaction that determines both the range of possible strategies available to a DCSO and the strategy the DCSO is most likely to choose (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. Possible DCSO Paths
“Outside Rhetorical Support” refers to whether a DCSO has an international NGO (or NGOs) or diaspora community that provides rhetorical support for the DCSO’s primary issue area, granting it political cover from the regime. For example, Christian CSOs are vocally supported by Christian organizations outside of Egypt and will make noise if a Christian CSO’s rights are violated. Outside rhetorical support is a dichotomous variable. A DCSO either has outside rhetorical support (designated as “high”) or does not have outside rhetorical support (designated as “low”). However, a multi-issue DCSO may have outside rhetorical support for one or more of their issues, but not all of their issues. These DCSOs are designated as “medium”.

“Level of perceived threat” describes how threatening the regime’s issue area is in the mind of the regime. It does not take into account the actual threat posed by the DCSO or the level of threat perceived by the DCSO. This is a passive variable, not to be confused with the action of threat. That is, a DCSO actively choosing to threaten the regime is a strategy a DCSO might choose, not the passive issue area the DCSO is focused on. “High” refers to DCSOs whose issue area is a “red line” as identified by scholars of civil society in Egypt and CSO actors. These include some religious issues, some national unity and minority affairs, human rights, defaming the regime (especially the president and his family), defaming the military and social issues the regime has previously not identified.148 “Medium” refers to traditional regime targets (Islamists and leftists)149 that are not addressing explicit red lines, as well as groups addressing issues the

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148 These are taken from interviews with CSO actors and experts in Cairo, Egypt, June 2010 and October 2011 as well as from Albrecht, “How Can Opposition Support Authoritarianism? Lessons from Egypt.” Redlines do shift over time, and individual CSOs have each identified what they perceive to be redlines, but the examples above are consistent redlines that most CSOs would acknowledge and that have existed during the time period of this study (1990–2010).

149 Gubser. The traditional regime targets have shifted over time. Leftists were the primary targets during the 1970s and 1980s, leading to the rise of more conservative and religious groups, which then became the regime targets.
regime has identified but has not formally highlighted. And “low” applies to groups addressing issue areas the regime has openly addressed.

“Access to foreign funding” refers to the ability of DCSOs to acquire funding outside of the Egyptian government. This variable is also dichotomous, with DCSOs having either unlimited or restricted access to foreign funding. “High” refers to organizations that have unlimited access to foreign funds, in that they do not need to have their foreign funds approved by MOSS. These include both Christian and Muslim organizations with a connection to a house of worship. “Medium” refers to DCSOs that have the ability to accept funds from foreign donors, but that need to have those funds approved and disbursed by MOSS (i.e. restricted). The designation “low” is reserved for GONGOs which do not have access to foreign funds due to their level of government control.

Other independent variables that could explain DCSO strategy are time period, regime, legal environment, size and location of DCSO operations. This study holds time period, regime and legal environment constant in order to control for their effect. All the DCSOs that I examine were active at some point during the time period of 1990-2010 and thus were all active during the presidency of Hosni Mubarak, who was in power from 1981-2011. Law 84 of 2002 was enacted during this time period.\textsuperscript{150} However, it did not drastically alter the legal environment in place for civil society thus I do not believe that any of the DCSOs in this study could be characterized as operating under a markedly different legal environment.

\textsuperscript{150} Law 84 of 2002 was passed in 2002 and replaced Law 32 of 1964. It is known as the “Associations Law” and includes all legal restrictions on associations and organizations. Law 84 of 2002 is described in further detail in Chapter One.
The other independent variables that could explain DCSO strategy include size and location. Molly Schultz Hafid argues that smaller, rural CSOs “rarely enter into a challenging relationship with government agencies” because they are “reliant on the local government for a significant level of financial and staff support for their work.” However, an alternative argument is that smaller DCSOs are more likely to challenge the regime because they are under the radar and thus unlikely to draw the attention of the regime. Chan discusses the issue of CSO size in determining the level of state control in China, arguing that “larger NGOs that operate at the municipal or provincial level and those that serve beneficiaries across regions [are] more difficult to control.” Thus, size could offer some explanatory power. The DCSOs that I have chosen for case studies vary in regard to size. I have categorized them as “small, medium and large.” Small is defined as having a professional or volunteer staff of 50 people or less. Medium is defined as having a professional or volunteer staff of 51-250 people. And large is defined as 251 or more professional or volunteer staff members. Regarding location, the vast majority of CSOs are located in the urban governorates of Cairo, Giza and Alexandria. It could be argued that physical proximity to the Egyptian national government in Cairo would discourage a DCSO from confronting the government and thus encourage DCSOs based in Cairo or Giza to adopt strategies of co-optation or capture. In interviews with civil society actors, DCSO projects in Upper Egypt (geographically distant from Cairo) were generally described as

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151 Hafid, 14.
152 Chan.
153 The definitions for small, medium and large are based on European Union standards for small, medium and large businesses.
154 Mahi Khallaf argues that 70% of CSOs are located in the urban governorates, while a survey conducted by the Center for Development Studies in 2004 found that 60% of CSOs surveyed were located in Cairo, Giza or Alexandria while the Delta region made up 30% of CSOs and Upper Egypt only 9%. Khallaf; An Overview of Civil Society in Egypt: Civil Society Index Report for the Arab Republic of Egypt.
“easier” to administer due to the lack of central government control and lack of knowledge by local authorities of central government policies. However, DCSOs operating in rural and distant regions described the same forms of government harassment and interference as DCSOs operating in Cairo, Alexandria and Giza due to the massive Egyptian bureaucracy with offices spread throughout the country.\textsuperscript{155} Despite the possible explanatory power of size and location it is clear that DCSO size and strategy and DCSO location and strategy do not co-vary. Thus, I do not hold DCSO size or location constant, but they are taken into account in the case studies in the following chapters.

Another possible explanation for DCSO strategy is internal factors. These include the personal relationship of the DCSO founder(s) to the regime, generational issues, and the leadership characteristics of the DCSO leaders. Generational issues have become more prevalent in discussions of civil society in the Arab world during the Arab Spring, where youth-led CSOs were more active and adopted different strategies of regime interaction than CSOs led by older generations. While this argument may offer some explanatory power for the success of the democracy promotion CSOs in bringing about the mass gatherings and revolts of the Arab Spring,\textsuperscript{156} it does not shed light on the activities of the development CSO sector. The DCSOs that make up my study include both youth-led and older generation CSOs. I found no difference in the strategy choice related to generation. Individual leadership characteristics of DCSO leaders do, in some cases, influence DCSO strategy. While structural factors are not explanatory, in that

\textsuperscript{155} Interviews with civil society actors. Cairo, Egypt. June 2010 and October 2011.
\textsuperscript{156} The argument that CSOs were influential in the Egyptian revolt remains untested. Thus, I am not arguing that democracy promotion CSOs were responsible for bringing about the mass protests in Tahrir Square. Rather, I am acknowledging that this argument has been introduced by some scholars and that generational factors played a major role in the (possible) ability of youth-led CSOs to succeed where older generations of CSOs have failed.
CSOs across the board display similar leadership structure, as other scholars have shown, individual characteristics such as a DCSO founder’s relationship to the regime, can play a role, as is discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven. This is captured partially in the variable “level of perceived threat” as individuals that are, themselves, a threat to the regime because of their close ties to political opposition groups, tend to take on issues that are also a threat to the regime. In certain cases, however, individuals with a past experience of political opposition may, at a later time, found a non-overtly threatening DCSO. This is rare, but in cases where it occurs as well in cases where individual characteristics matter, this is reflected in the situations where predicted strategy does not match actual strategy (see Table 6, Appendix). These outliers will be explained in depth in the following three chapters of the dissertation.

An examination of the interaction of outside rhetorical support, level of perceived threat and access to foreign funding reveals clear patterns in the types of DCSOs and the strategies they choose (see Table 4). Muslim CSOs, which have low outside rhetorical support, medium perceived threat and high access to foreign funding, tend to adopt a strategy of ideological co-optation. Protected Minority CSOs, which display high outside rhetorical support, medium perceived threat and high or medium access to foreign funding, tend to choose pluralism. Charity and Development CSOs follow one of two paths. All Charity and Development CSOs have a low or medium level of outside rhetorical support and a medium level of access to foreign funding. Some Charity and Development CSOs represent a low level of perceived threat to the regime and thus opt for administrative co-optation while those with a medium level of perceived threat choose ideological co-optation. Finally, Single-Issue CSOs choose one of three paths, depending on the issue they address. Those that address issues with outside rhetorical support (i.e. an issue
that the international community has chosen to highlight) tend to adopt pluralism, regardless of
the level of perceived threat to the regime. Single-Issue CSOs that address issue with a low level
of outside rhetorical support (i.e. an issue that has not been taken up by any other body), either
adopt ideological co-optation (if their level of perceived threat is either high or medium) or
administrative co-optation (if their level of perceived threat is low).

Table 4. CSO Strategies by Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSO Type</th>
<th>Outside Rhetorical Support</th>
<th>Level of Perceived Threat</th>
<th>Access to Foreign Funding</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Ideological Co-optation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protected Minority</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High or Medium</td>
<td>Pluralism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charity &amp; Development</td>
<td>Low or Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Administrative Co-optation</td>
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<td>Charity &amp; Development</td>
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<td>Single-Issue</td>
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<td>High or Medium</td>
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<td>Single-Issue</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Administrative Co-optation</td>
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A DCSO’s source of funding is correlated to its strategy. As Abdel Rahman argues, “the
Egyptian state’s ability to control NGOs resides to a large degree in its absolute power over the
financial resources available to them, be they direct government funds, foreign funding, income-
generating activities or public donations.”157 While government and foreign funding only
account for one-third of CSO income,158 the regime not only controls government funding, but

157 Abdel Rahman, Civil Society Exposed: The Politics of NGOs in Egypt, 139.
158 LaTowsky, “PVO Social Assistance: Direct Aid to the Poor.”
also disburses all foreign funding that domestic CSOs receive and has oversight over all CSO spending, regardless of the funding source. The one caveat to this is that MOSS has no supervision over donations made to religious houses (churches or mosques). This provision allows one type of Protected Minority CSOs, Christian CSOs, to adopt the strategy of pluralism. Without government oversight of their funding, they are able to avoid perhaps the most harmful form of government interference: freezing access to foreign funds. In addition to financial freedom, Christian CSOs (and women’s CSOs) have strong ties to large international organizations, which protect them from government interference. Both women’s rights and religious freedom are issues championed and carefully watched by the West and by international NGOs, thus making it very difficult for the regime to crackdown on Protected Minority CSOs without repercussions. Therefore, the combination of high outside rhetorical support and medium or high access to foreign funds allow Protected Minority CSOs to choose pluralism. Both women’s rights and Christian groups do pose a medium level of threat to the regime, particularly to the concept of national unity, which is highly valued in Egypt. As Abdel Rahman argues, “At the core of nationalism has always been the projection of an image of a homogenous group whose strength emanates from the convergence of interests of a people whose share similar characteristics such as language, history, religion, race and ethnicity.”159 Groups that promote the identity of a specific group (i.e. women’s groups and Christian groups) challenge that image.

The second type of DCSOs likely to choose pluralism is certain Single-Issue CSOs. The groups that choose pluralism do so for similar reasons as Protected Minority groups. Some DCSOs have high outside rhetorical support. These are groups that champion an issue that is also

vocally supported by the international community. Due to this outside support, the Single-Issue CSO is aware that it can more easily operate outside of regime constraints than other Single-Issue CSOs lacking such support. Single-Issue CSOs have access to foreign funds but those funds must be vetted by the regime. The level of perceived threat for these groups can vary from high (DCSOs that address red line issues) to medium (DCSOs that address embarrassing issues or issues the regime has failed to acknowledge) to low (DCSOs that address non-threatening issues that the regime has already outwardly acknowledged). Regardless, the high level of outside rhetorical support provides cover to this subset of Single-Issue CSOs, guiding them towards pluralism.

The remaining Single-Issue CSOs have low outside rhetorical support in that they are addressing an issue that has not been taken up by the international community. These groups choose one form of co-optation. Here the level of perceived threat is most determinant in their choice. Unlike Charity and Development CSOs, which shine a low light on a broad spectrum of issues, Single-Issue CSOs shine a brighter light on a single item, such as a red-line or an issue that other DCSOs are not addressing and that the regime has not addressed openly. DCSOs that both highlight an issue and successfully attack it bring government ire, not support. These DCSOs are perceived as somewhat threatening to the regime because they cause the regime embarrassment. Nicola Pratt argues, “The non-threatening appearance of an organization’s work can mean that the ministry bureaucracy leaves you alone. However, once the government’s suspicion is aroused, it can use its powers to limit an association’s activity.” L. David Brown and Archana Kalegaonkar argue that “as long as they work on the margins of important problems

160 Gubser.
161 Ben Néfissa et al., eds.
or at a small scale, NGOs can operate largely undisturbed by their limitations.”
Thus, Single-Issue CSOs within this subset that have a medium or high level of perceived threat choose ideological co-optation. They will continue to address the general issue area of initial interest, but from a less politically-threatening standpoint. These groups are aware that their small size makes them easy to shut down and eliminate. Single-Issue CSOs that have a low level of perceived threat, on the other hand, adopt a strategy of administrative co-optation. They welcome regime allies onto their boards and into their meetings in order to make it clear to the government that they are not, in fact, a threat.

Muslim CSOs easily recognize the precarious position they occupy in society. While they are highly effective at distributing goods and services to the population, they represent a strong perceived threat to the regime, even if that threat is not real. As Wiktorowicz argues, Muslim CSOs threaten the legitimacy of the government because they “offer concrete, visible examples of what Islam can provide, in contradistinction to the state’s secular modernization failures.”

Muslim organizations are suspected of supporting the Muslim Brotherhood (or other Islamist political groups), whether or not that support exists. The state therefore attempts to neutralize the political power of Muslim CSOs through co-optation. Recognizing that this is preferable to capture, Muslim CSOs adopt the middle-ground strategy, particularly ideological co-optation, wherein they are subjected to frequent government scrutiny but allowed to continue their charitable activities, as long as they remain wholly apolitical. In my interview with a founder of a

164 Sparre and Petersen.
Muslim civil society organization, this need to distance the organization and its members from politics was perfectly clear. He became visibly nervous when I asked about the organization’s political and advocacy work and he was adamant that none of his members engage in any sort of political activity.\textsuperscript{165}

Charity and Development CSOs are also likely to choose co-optation. Their goal is to distribute basic goods such as food, clothing and blankets and to alleviate poverty. They do not have overt political motives and as such are willing to partner with the regime to obtain their goals. However, there is differentiation in the level of threat Charity and Development CSOs represent to the regime. Those DCSOs with a low level of threat tend to be more focused on service-delivery and traditional charity. These groups choose administrative co-optation as they are not concerned about regime infiltration, and in fact welcome regime partnerships. One professional staff member of a Charity and Development CSO whom I interviewed said that they would be happy to partner with the regime more than they already do, as government buy-in is more likely to lead to long-term change and sustainability of their projects. But, she noted that because they do partner with the government on some projects, they have to be very careful about who they receive money from.\textsuperscript{166} Charity and Development CSOs can also be a medium threat to the regime. While focused on a wide variety of charitable and development activities, these groups may engage in one or more programs that potentially threatens the regime. For example, a large charity that has a domestic violence shelter may start a program focused on increasing awareness of the inequality of divorce laws for Muslim and Christian women. While this may only be one out of dozens of programs offered by this DCSO, the inclusion of this

\textsuperscript{165} Interview with civil society actor. October 2010. Cairo, Egypt.
\textsuperscript{166} Interview with civil society actor. October 2010. Cairo, Egypt.
controversial program could bring regime attention, causing the DCSO to choose ideological co-optation. Charity and Development CSOs that serve as networks of multiple CSOs also represent a medium level threat to the regime. As described in Chapter One, the Mubarak government made it clear that it was not nearly as threatened by individual CSOs as it was by groups or networks of CSOs acting together. All Charity and Development CSOs have access to foreign funds that must be vetted by the regime, but they may choose not to apply for or accept funds from certain sources, depending on their level of co-optation.

Case Selection

For the purposes of my research, I use Brady and Collier’s definition of a case: “the units of analysis in a given study. Cases are the political, social, institutional, or individual entities or phenomena about which information is collected and inferences are made.”

Thus, a “case” is not a country, but rather a civil society organization. In order to show that DCSO strategy is determined by DCSO type, I have conducted eight in-depth qualitative case studies of development CSOs in Egypt operating between 1990 and 2010. These cases represent two examples of each of the four DCSO types identified above: Muslim CSOs, Protected Minority CSOs, Single-Issue CSOs and Charity and Development CSOs. The full universe of cases would include all development CSOs in the liberalized autocracies of the Arab world. I limit my scope conditions to those development CSOs operating in Egypt during the period 1990-2010. I have already explained why I have limited my case selection to the country of Egypt (see Chapter One). I have selected 1990 as a start point because there was a marked change in the CSO environment at this time. During the 1990s there was a “rapid and sustained growth” in the

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numbers of CSOs across the globe. The end point of 2010 reflects the end of the presidency of Hosni Mubarak.

The eight cases that comprise the case studies in the bulk of the dissertation were selected from a list of 34 active and representative DCSOs compiled by the author from annual reports and databases of grant agencies, directories compiled by local CSOs, scholarly reports and interviews with scholars familiar with the civil society arena in Egypt (see Table 6, Appendix). As described above, it is impossible to develop a comprehensive, accurate picture of the number or typological distribution of CSOs in Egypt. However, I have attempted to select the number and distribution of cases in Table 6 to mirror the distribution of DCSO types throughout Egypt. Most CSOs in the table operate in Cairo, Giza or Alexandria to reflect the fact that 70% of CSOs in Egypt operate in these urban areas. Several CSOs that operate and are headquartered in Cairo also have projects throughout Egypt. These are designated as “throughout Egypt” in the location column in Table 6. Additionally, according to a UN study, there are about twice as many “service delivery or welfare” CSOs as there are “development” CSOs. The study defines “service delivery or welfare” CSOs as those “that provide care for the family, the elderly, special groups or needs, and motherhood/childhood care.” “Development” CSOs are defined as organizations that “focus on raising the quality of life of citizens and families, including their economic wellbeing through activities for income generation, or by participating in local development projects.” The same study notes that about one-third of development CSOs are

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168 Najam, “The Four-C’s of Third Sector-Government Relations: Cooperation, Confrontation, Complementarity, and Co-optation.”
169 Egypt’s Social Contract: the Role of Civil Society.
170 Ibid.
faith-based, but fails to differentiate between Christian and Muslim CSOs within this category.\textsuperscript{171}

The selection of cases in Table 6 reflects these numbers. As Table 6 shows, there is wide variation amongst development CSOs in Egypt across all indicators. As this table also shows, the actual strategy that some DCSOs choose does not always match the strategy predicted by my theory. This table was constructed by first determining a CSO’s predicted strategy based on where the CSO falls on my three primary independent variables: their level of outside rhetorical support, level of perceived threat to the regime, and access to foreign funding. Following interviews with CSO actors and data obtained through secondary sources, I then determined the actual strategy that the CSO chose. While most of the CSOs that I interviewed did chose the strategy that I predicted, in five out of the 34 CSOs in the table, the CSO actors have chosen to pursue a strategy different from the strategy that I have predicted they would choose based on their DCSO type. In one of the cases the National Egyptian Development Association (NEDA), the CSO chose a different strategy than predicted due to the CSO leadership’s relationship to the regime. NEDA is run by wealthy Egyptian business leaders who chose ideological co-optation in order to provide cover for their business interests. Choosing to confront the state could have a negative impact on their business relationships due to the high level of corruption and patronage under Mubarak. Two other CSOs that behaved in a surprising way are Alashanek Ya Balady and the Federation of Youth NGOs. Both chose pluralism, a less restrictive strategy than predicted. This is due to the fact that both are youth-run and youth-focused NGOs with strong personal and financial ties to the West. Both CSOs are well-connected to both Western donors as well as Western activists and civil society

\textsuperscript{171} Ibid.
actors. Thus, both were more protected than other CSOs might be. And two CSOs chose strategies that are more restrictive than predicted. Both the General Federation of NGOs and the Integrated Care Society chose capture. The General Federation of NGOs was created by Egyptian law to coordinate and oversee all NGO activity in the country, but it was intended to be a non-governmental organization. Some of its board members would be appointed by the Egyptian government while the majority would be elected by the NGO membership. However, the appointment of regime allies to the board and oversight by these individuals made it virtually impossible for truly independent CSO actors to be elected to the board. This body has since become “unofficial” in name only. The Integrated Care Society (ICS) was also intended to be a non-governmental CSO, with the strategy of administrative co-optation. However, ICS chose to ally itself with the strongest of regime allies - Suzanne Mubarak, the first lady of Egypt. Mrs. Mubarak’s oversight of the organization altered the strategy choice from simply administrative co-optation to capture. The experience of these six CSOs will be explained further in Chapters Three, Four, and Five.

From the 34 cases described in Table 6, I have selected the eight CSOs in Table 7 as case studies. As Table 7 shows, these cases vary on all of the relevant variables for this study (the dependent variable: strategy, and the independent variables: level of outside support, level of perceived threat, access to foreign funding, size, and location). These eight cases were chosen to provide the most comprehensive overview of development civil society in Egypt. In addition to these eight case studies, the following three chapters, which explain each DCSO strategy in detail, will also provide explanations for the five DCSOs in Table 6 (in bold) whose actual strategy does not match my predicted strategy. These DCSOs shed additional light on what
motivates development CSOs in Egypt to choose whether to cooperate with the regime or maintain full autonomy.

**Conclusion**

The development sector of civil society in the Arab world has been vastly understudied. Contrary to conventional wisdom, development CSOs have a dynamic and varied relationship with the authoritarian regime. By examining the relationship of civil society and the state from the perspective of civil society, it is possible to determine why some development CSOs choose to operate outside of the regime, while some DCSOs choose to allow themselves to be fully co-opted by the regime, and others choose a combination of full co-optation and autonomy. Examining the development CSO sector in Egypt during the time period of 1990-2010, it is clear that DCSOs behave in predictable ways. When development CSOs are divided into four types: Muslim organizations, Protected Minority organizations, Charity and Development organizations and Single-Issue organizations, a clear pattern of DCSO-state relations emerges. As the next three chapters will show, the interaction of three independent variables (level of outside rhetorical support, level of perceived threat to the regime and level of access to foreign funding), which combine in different ways to make distinct DCSO types, determines which strategy a DCSO is most likely to choose.
CHAPTER III: PLURALISM

The strategy of pluralism is utilized by development civil society organizations (DCSOs) in the Arab world in their effort to operate independently of the state. These organizations rely almost exclusively on non-state funding, instead supporting their activities through individual private donations, grants from local foundations and frequently accepting foreign funding. The individuals that make up the DCSOs’ board and paid staff are not part of their country’s ruling elite and may include active members of the political opposition. Like all DCSOs, organizations that choose pluralism work on development issues. However, when choosing pluralism, a DCSO may choose to highlight an issue that the regime has not previously dealt with, including issues that the regime finds embarrassing or does not want to bring attention to, even, at times, crossing red lines. Red lines include some religious issues, some national unity and minority affairs, human rights, defaming the regime (especially the president and his family), defaming the military and social issues the regime has previously not identified. Due to the combination of seeking and accepting foreign funding and focusing on controversial issues, DCSOs that seek pluralism are seen as potentially threatening to the regime, representing either a medium or high level of potential threat. DCSOs that represent a high level of threat to the regime are those that address redline issues (explained above) while DCSOs that represent a medium level of threat include traditional regime targets (Islamists and leftists)172 that are not addressing explicit red lines, as well as groups addressing issues the regime has identified but has not formally highlighted. DCSOs that choose pluralism have a high or medium level of access to foreign

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172 Gubser. The traditional regime targets have shifted over time. Leftists were the primary targets during the 1970s and 1980s, leading to the rise of more conservative and religious groups, which then became the regime targets during the more recent decades. Angrist, ed.
funding and protect themselves from regime interference by allying themselves with outside social groups or international NGOs, defined as a high level of outside rhetorical community support. This sort of international support matters both because of the actual level of protection that outside rhetorical support provides and because of the amount of protection that the DCSO believes outside rhetorical support provides. A DCSO that is supported by a diaspora community (such as the international Coptic community) or allied with one or more vocal international NGOs (such as women’s organizations) decides to choose pluralism in part because these DCSOs believe that if they run into trouble with the regime, the diaspora community or international NGO(s) will make noise on their behalf. For example, if the Egyptian regime interferes heavily in the activities of a Coptic CSO, the CSO believes that the American and European Coptic communities will bring up their issue with the local Egyptian embassy and will pressure their own governments to address the problem with the Egyptian government through their bilateral relationship. This belief is not entirely unfounded. While the actual level of support that a diaspora community or international NGO provides a DCSO does not always match the level of support the DCSO believes it will receive, in most cases, when a DCSO with a high level of outside rhetorical support is treated harshly by the regime, the diaspora community or international NGO will speak up, making it more difficult for the Egyptian government to hide its actions or ignore the issue that the DCSO is addressing.

This chapter will first describe the strategy of pluralism in more detail, explaining why Protected Minority CSOs and some Single-Issues CSOs are most likely to choose pluralism. The relationship of DCSO type and DCSO strategy will be further analyzed with the use of three case studies, two Protected Minority CSOs (the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services
and the Association for the Development and Enhancement of Women) and one Single-Issue CSO (the Egyptian Association to Support Street Children). By describing the history of each CSO’s relationship with the Egyptian regime and analyzing their strategy for regime interaction, I will show that CSO type best explains each CSO’s choice of pluralism. That is, CSOs with a combination of high outside rhetorical support, medium or high level of perceived threat to the regime and medium or high access to foreign funding are most likely to choose pluralism. The variable of outside rhetorical support (high) provides a DCSO the necessary protection from the regime to choose pluralism, a strategy in which the organization operates outside of the regime. The variable level of perceived threat (either high or medium) explains why a DCSO would choose not to cooperate with the regime. The issues that DCSOs that choose pluralism address are those that the regime has not previously addressed openly and thus the DCSO chooses pluralism so as not to dilute its area of focus. Finally, the variable access to foreign funding (medium or high) enables the DCSO to financially operate without relying on government grants.

Finally, I will briefly discuss two of the outliers from Table 6 (Appendix). Alashanek Ya Balady and the Federation of Youth NGOs both chose pluralism, which differs from the strategy that my theory predicts for them. An excerpt of this table including the five cases discussed in this chapter can be found in the appendix (Table 8). I will explain why their actual strategy does not match with my prediction, and how these outliers can aid in a better understanding of the strategy of pluralism.
What is Pluralism?

The strategy of pluralism is most basically defined as operating outside of government control. Under a liberalized autocracy, however, operating either under government control or outside of government control is not a simplistic exercise. Thus, for an organization to be considered as having adopted the strategy of pluralism it must satisfy each of the following three conditions. First, a DCSO that chooses pluralism cannot be owned or operated by a member of the ruling regime. Second, a DCSO that chooses pluralism must accept a majority of its funding from outside (non-Egyptian governmental) sources. Third, a DCSO that chooses pluralism must represent a medium or high level of threat to the regime (defined as DCSOs that address red line issues (high level of threat) or embarrassing issues or issues the regime has failed to acknowledge (medium level of threat)).

By choosing the strategy of pluralism, a DCSO is inviting an increased level of regime pushback and scrutiny. By accepting foreign funding, a CSO risks being branded a Western “puppet” by the regime and must go through extra bureaucratic steps in order to access the grants that it has won. Egyptian CSOs are prohibited from receiving money directly from a foreign NGO or embassy through Law 84 of 2002. All foreign grants received must be reported to the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MOSS). The money is then funneled through MOSS, who disburses the money back to the CSO through a government-approved bank. This process is rarely carried out expediently and it frequently takes several months for a CSO to receive funds that have been granted by a foreign entity. In some cases funds are held indefinitely for either political reasons or due to bureaucratic mismanagement. The notable exception to the funding rule is money received by mosques and churches. Donations made to religious establishments are
exempt from MOSS oversight, thereby allowing Christian and Muslim CSOs that are connected in some way to a church or mosque to circumvent the funding hurdles that other CSOs must face.

In addition to funding issues, by choosing to address an issue representing even a medium level of perceived threat, the DCSO has actively chosen to draw the attention of the regime. Thus, the choice of pluralism is not an easy choice nor is it the most common choice for DCSOs. DCSOs that choose pluralism do not always weather the regime pushback successfully. As the case of the Egyptian Association to Support Street Children, described below, will show, in the most extreme cases DCSOs that choose pluralism can end up being shut down by the government and will be unable to continue their work. Given the difficult road the DCSOs that choose pluralism must walk, why would a DCSO choose such a strategy? The answer lies in the explanatory variable of DCSO type. DCSOs that choose pluralism do so because they believe they are protected from the regime by outside powers. With very few exceptions, the only DCSOs that choose the strategy of pluralism are those that have a high level of outside rhetorical support that shields them from some of the regime’s attempts at manipulating the DCSO or shutting down its activities. As the case studies will show, even though outside support is not always successful at protecting the DCSO, it is the DCSO’s belief that they are protected that causes them to choose pluralism.

As will be shown in the case studies below, DCSOs choose to adopt the strategy of pluralism due to a combination of three factors: the level of protection they believe they will receive from the rhetorical support provided by the international community, the ease with which they are able to receive non-governmental grants and the level of threat that their issue(s) represent to the regime. Protected Minority CSOs which, by definition, possess a high level of
outside rhetorical support are therefore most likely to choose pluralism. As described in Chapter Two, Protected Minority CSOs are “protected” on two levels – by *de jure* legal regulations and by *de facto* connections to large, powerful and vocal international NGOs and/or diaspora communities. This category includes Christian groups and women’s groups. Both types of Protected Minority CSOs have financial autonomy from the regime due to their connections to international NGOs and individual donors from outside of Egypt. Christian CSOs have an even higher level of financial freedom than other CSOs in that MOSS does not have supervision over donations made to religious houses (churches or mosques), as explained above. This provision allows Christian CSOs to avoid one form of government interference: freezing access to foreign funds. While most Christian CSOs do still receive some foreign (non-church) funding, the bureaucratic process of disbursal of foreign funds that can paralyze other CSOs does not harm Christian CSOs as drastically because they have access to a second source of funding – that which is funneled through the local church.

Additionally, both Christian groups and women’s groups benefit from consistent and loud rhetorical support by the international community. Christian causes and women’s causes have long been championed by Western NGOs, Western governments and the Egyptian diaspora as well as by large international NGOs including the various UN bodies. While not always enforced, the protection of women’s rights and minority rights in Egypt was frequently a point of discussion by American and European leaders with the Mubarak regime and has, at times, been a condition of foreign support for Egypt. ¹⁷³

¹⁷³ See, for example, Barack Obama, *President Obama’s Speech in Cairo: A New Beginning* (2009).
Despite being called “protected” many Christian groups and women’s groups choose pluralism because they are not, in fact, protected. *De facto* discrimination of both Copts and women has shaped the decision of Protected Minority CSOs to choose pluralism in order to avoid official regime channels for participation where these groups are not always welcome. Choosing a strategy of co-optation is much more dangerous for CSOs whose mission and constituency do not mesh with the behavior of the ruling regime. Although both Christian and women’s groups are legally protected under Egyptian law, Christians and women are frequently subject to harassment, unequal job opportunities and other forums of cultural discrimination.

As discussed above, CSOs that choose pluralism do so in part because they represent a medium or high level of threat to the regime. Protected Minority CSOs by definition represent a medium level of threat to the regime, as their existence threatens the concept of national unity, which is highly valued in Egypt. Because both women’s groups and Christian groups promote a specific sub-group of Egyptians, they counter part of the Egyptian national myth of a homogenous people.174 Additionally, in both the cases where a DCSO is protected through outside rhetorical support and in the rare cases where a DCSO that chooses pluralism does not have that protection, the choice of pluralism is related to the issue area that the DCSO is addressing. By choosing to address an issue that represents a medium or high level of threat to the regime, a DCSO is making a conscious decision to counter the regime and is therefore unlikely to choose co-optation, a strategy that would require sustained interaction and cooperation with the regime. Thus, both Single-Issue CSOs that represent a high or medium level

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of perceived threat and Single-Issue CSOs that possess high levels of outside rhetorical support are also likely to choose pluralism.

Single-Issue CSOs that choose pluralism do so for similar reasons as Protected Minority groups. Some Single-Issue CSOs address issues that are vocally championed by international NGOs (such as human trafficking or children’s rights). These groups are afforded the same protections as women’s and Christian DCSOs. The issues that these Single-Issue CSOs address tend to represent a high or medium level of threat to the regime. In most cases they are issues that the regime has not openly acknowledged or in some cases has actively tried to hide. Thus, the cover provided by international NGOs pushes these organizations towards pluralism.

Case Study: Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services

Type: Protected Minority    Strategy: Pluralism

The Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS) is a Protected Minority CSO that has chosen the strategy of pluralism due to its high level of outside rhetorical support, medium/high level of perceived threat to the regime and high level of access to foreign funding. CEOSS is one of the largest CSOs operating in Egypt and carries out a variety of development projects throughout Egypt (discussed in more detail below) with the goal of promoting Christianity in Egypt and improving Muslim-Christian relations. CEOSS is one of the oldest and most successful CSOs in Egypt. Today, CEOSS works in 120 communities in Egypt, employs over 500 full time staff, and serves two million Egyptians annually.

History of the CSO
CEOSS was founded in 1952 by Rev. Samuel Habib, an ordained Protestant minister. Habib was a major figure in the Egyptian Christian community throughout his life, having served as the president of the Protestant Churches in Egypt from 1980 until his death in 1997, overseeing all 16 protestant denominations within Egypt, the largest of which is the Evangelical (Presbyterian) Church of Egypt, of which Habib became an ordained minister in 1952.

Following his graduation from seminary, Habib spent five months in the village of Herz in the Upper Egypt district of Minya with the goal of teaching the mostly Christian villagers literacy skills, in order for them to be able to read the Bible.175 After spending a few years working with the Herz community, he expanded his project to include health and agriculture projects in addition to literacy. Aided by American Presbyterian missionary Davida Finney and Protestant Egyptian Pastor Rev. Menis Abdel-Nour, the project eventually spread to the surrounding communities, incorporating leadership training so that local leaders could continue Rev. Habib’s efforts on the ground.176 Habib “was profoundly touched by the crushing poverty and deplorable living conditions which he witnessed [in Minya]” and once he returned to Cairo he decided to pursue a career in development, rather than preaching.177

Habib’s initial efforts received negative feedback both from the Egyptian government and the Egyptian Evangelical Church. The government asked Habib to discontinue his work, uncomfortable with a Christian group taking on tasks traditionally reserved for the government. The church was also uneasy about Habib’s work, as this was the first major effort by an

175 Peter E. Makari, Conflict and Cooperation: Christian-Muslim Relations in Contemporary Egypt (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2007).
176 Ibid.
177 Otto Meinardus, Christians in Egypt: Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant Communities Past and Present (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2006), 126.
individual pastor to engage in community development outside of official church activities. To circumvent problems with the church, Habib formally dissolved his organization’s relationship with the Egyptian Evangelical Church, working instead as an independent pastor. To address the government’s concerns, Habib officially registered his work with the Egyptian government in 1960, the year that MOSS first began registering organizations, formally creating CEOSS. The initial goal of CEOSS was to serve Muslim and Christian communities through community development in the areas of literacy, health and agriculture. However, the Egyptian security services remained suspicious of CEOSS, accusing Habib of engaging in illegal missionary work due to the religious nature of his organization. CEOSS was further criticized by the security services as engaging in foreign missionary work, despite the fact that all of CEOSS’ staff members were Egyptian citizens.

Other early hurdles that Habib faced included convincing the local community of his goals and motives. Habib moved his family to Minya to show the local people that he was serious about his work. CEOSS has continued his model of CEOSS staff living amongst the local community in the early stages of a new project throughout its more than 55-year history. As CEOSS began to grow and to develop a positive reputation amongst the communities of Upper Egypt, the organization started taking on new projects. In the 1990s CEOSS started a rights-based approach to development, partnering with over 200 smaller Egyptian CSOs to engage in small projects to educate the public and the poor about their rights. They were the first large

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178 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.  
179 Makari.  
180 Ibid.  
181 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.  
182 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.  
88
CSOs to introduce the relationship between development and human rights. In 2005, CEOSS began taking this a step further, developing partnerships between human rights CSOs and development CSOs throughout the Middle East. Funded with a two-year Ford Foundation grant, CEOSS created a platform for dialogue and learning for the major players in both human rights and development CSOs from across the region.

Today the mission of CEOSS is “to promote the sanctity, equity and harmony of life. It seeks to contribute to the transformation of society by nurturing moral and spiritual awareness, enhancing a sense of belonging, promoting respect for diversity, addressing conflict, and advancing social justice for individuals and communities.”183 The work of CEOSS is divided into five sectors – the development sector, small and micro enterprise sector, Dar el Thaqafa Communications House, cultural development sector, and self supporting sector.

Through its three main pillars of gender, good governance and capacity-building, the development sector engages in issues of health, education, community-based rehabilitation, economic development, agricultural development, working children, and environmental preservation in order to improve the quality of life of all Egyptians - Muslim and Christian.184 When engaging with a community for the first time, CEOSS conducts development studies to determine the areas of greatest need on which CEOSS will focus its activities within that community. CEOSS’ work must engage the three main pillars, but is also willing to take on other activities as long as they are at least tangentially related to the three pillars. Examples of a few of the projects within the development sector include “Rights of the Children”, a project that aids

183 Raise Up Your Head... You are EGYPTIAN, (Cairo, Egypt: Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services 2010), 2.
184 Ibid.
working children in returning to school, provides legal status to working children, provides national ID cards and health cards for children and works with “girl-friendly” schools; “Vision 2020 Eye Program” which provides eye exams for children and the elderly as well as eyeglasses and eye care for children and adults; “Health Program” which works to raise awareness of citizens of reproductive health issues, family planning and female circumcision; and “Bible Study Program for Christians”, which works with churches to provide Bible study programs to the community.

Within the Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Sector, CEOSS provides loans for around 50,000 poor women and men including both individual and group clients (73% of SME clients were women in 2010). The Dar el Thaqafa Communications House produces original books, CDs, DVDs and films in Arabic and translates books from English to Arabic. The majority of the books are theological or spiritual in nature. The Dar el Thaqafa sector also includes peace building and conflict management workshops that train religious and civil society leaders in those skills, as well as the Global Media Monitoring Project, which monitors media across the world for gender indicators and uses the data gathered to advocate for gender-responsive media policies.

The third sector, Cultural Development, engages most notably in the Forum for Intercultural Dialogue, which brings together CSOs, religious leaders, media professionals, opinion-makers and academics throughout the year in multiple settings both within Egypt and across the Middle East. The Cultural Development Sector also includes a curriculum department that develops educational resources on a variety of development issues including reproductive

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185 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011; ibid.
health and training manuals as well as publication of a monthly magazine, *Risalat el Nour* ("Letter of Light") for development practitioners. Topics covered in the 2010 magazine included “accepting others, the role of Egyptian women, orphans in Egypt, spirit of victory and unifying aims.”

The Self-Supporting Sector provides 30-40% of CEOSS’ annual income. The sector includes a wood furniture factory, plywood factory, conference and training center, and a farm. All of these enterprises provide income for CEOSS and give jobs to unemployed Egyptians. CEOSS receives the addition 60-70% of its annual income ($59,566,606 in 2010) from grants and foreign donations. CEOSS had early success in attracting foreign funding. The first grant they received was $25,000 from a women’s Presbyterian group in the United States. Since then, CEOSS has received grants from Egyptian foundations (such as the Sawiris Foundation for Social Development), local Egyptian CSOs, US and European aid-granting organizations (including USAID, the European Union, the Ford Foundation, the Canadian International Development Agency, the Embassies of Switzerland and Netherlands, and the World Bank), and church-related donors, primarily from the United States, Europe, Canada and Australia.

*Methods*

Due to the wide variety of their activities, CEOSS engages in several different types of programs, from small-scale training sessions for a handful of individuals within a specific village to large conferences with individuals from multiple countries across the region. CEOSS’ primary

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186 Ibid.
188 *Raise Up Your Head... You are EGYPTIAN.*
189 The Sawiris Foundation is Egypt’s largest and most prominent local foundation. It is headed by the Sawiris family - a Coptic family that is one of Egypt’s wealthiest families and who runs the Orascom Group, which invests in telecom, tourism and other industries.
190 *Raise Up Your Head... You are EGYPTIAN.* Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
work is spread throughout 120 communities within eight Egyptian governorates (Cairo, Helwan, Qalubiyya, Giza, 6th of October City, Beni Sueif, Minya, and Assuit), ranging from small villages of 10,000 residents to the large slums of Cairo. Regardless of the location and size of CEOSS’ work, they follow the same philosophy and structure when initiating a new project. Part of CEOSS’ philosophy is that it must be invited by a village in order to conduct work there.\textsuperscript{191} Thus, CEOSS follows a three-step plan in individual communities: first, they send a CEOSS team (usually two people) to live in the community for up to seven years, in order to best assess the community’s needs and get to know community members.\textsuperscript{192} The CEOSS team creates a steering committee of community leaders (both men and women) who decide on the main problems within the community and the best approach to solve those problems. Once the needs are determined, CEOSS staff adopts the leading role in creating and overseeing community development and participation programs. Second, local community members take over the leadership of the CEOSS projects. The CEOSS staff stays on for advice, supervision and follow-up. Third, the local leadership supervises and operates the development programs on their own and establishes their own local development programs and agencies to oversee the projects. As one scholar notes, “Development projects, regardless of content (literacy, agricultural production, health and family planning, road building) are almost fully staffed and supported by the village within four years of initiation.”\textsuperscript{193}

\textsuperscript{191} Makari.
\textsuperscript{193} Judith Bruce, “Women’s Organizations: A Resource for Family Planning and Development,” \textit{Family Planning Perspectives} 8, no. 6 (1976).
This is part of CEOSS’ greater philosophy of CSO-public-state partnership, in which CEOSS engages key regime allies and organizations to both advocate for improved government services to better the lives of Egyptians and to reach the greatest number of beneficiaries possible. An example of CEOSS’ methods in action is their effort to eradicate female circumcision and female genital mutilation (FGC/FGM), an issue that the Egyptian regime had intentionally ignored and attempted to keep out of the public eye. CEOSS’ work on family issues began in May 1965 through publication of articles in its own newsletter *Risalat al-Nur*, which is provided to those in the literacy program to help increase their awareness of social issues. Habib also published a book in 1969 on family planning from a Christian perspective. Between 1964 and 1995 CEOSS worked in 80 communities on the issue of family planning and the number of women who practiced family planning in those communities rose from 10,547 to 55,013. While women have always been included in CEOSS programs, in the 1980s CEOSS began to more fully incorporate women into their community partnerships and “began to address gender directly as well.” Part of this push was to address the issue of FGC/FGM, particularly in Upper Egypt. CEOSS’ work in this area has been the subject of numerous case studies on how to effectively eliminate FGM in traditional communities. In 1991, CEOSS organized community leaders in Deir el Barsha in Minya, Upper Egypt, to sign a “written agreement with local *dayas* [village midwives] and health barbers banning the performance of circumcisions in the village. As a result of the agreement, and together with other community organization

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194 Makari.
195 Makari.
197 See, for example, Nahla Abdel-Tawab and Sahar Hegazi, *Critical Analysis of Interventions Against FGC in Egypt* (Cairo: FRONTIERS Project, 2000); Abusharaf, ed; Lancaster.
activities conducted by CEOSS, the incidence of [female circumcision] dropped to minimal levels in the village.”

CEOSS also uses its religious orientation to aid in convincing traditional Christian villages that female circumcision is not found in the Bible and is thus not a religious requirement. In the village of El Taiyiba, a devout Christian village of 17,000 people, CEOSS staff convinced community leaders to address circumcision only after first entrenching themselves in the community with “a wide range of other development projects.” CEOSS has also used advocacy as a tool to engage local government and policymakers in the fight against female circumcision. “For example, the governor and other policymakers are invited by CEOSS to attend the community meetings at which they hear about FGC-related problems and issues from the women themselves. According to CEOSS, ‘this is a strong advocacy tool when the policymaker hears for himself what the people say about FGC.’”

CEOSS’ efforts to eliminate FGC/FGM are often at odds with the Egyptian government’s programs. The Egyptian government has always acknowledged and at least minimally addressed the issue, but the government has traditionally downplayed the prevalence of FGC/FGM and has not been interested in addressing it on the public and international stages. Despite the early work of CEOSS, beginning in the 1960s, the practice of FGM was not banned in Egypt until the mid-1990s. The United Nations began a campaign to try to end FGM around the world in 1998. These formal, top-down efforts have been largely unsuccessful compared to CEOSS’ work,

198 Abdel-Tawab and Hegazi.
200 Abdel-Tawab and Hegazi.
which “demonstrates the need to attack the problem at its roots -- educating not only women but also religious leaders and unmarried men -- and in the broader context of enhancing women’s status in society, such as improving access to education and health care.”\textsuperscript{202} As a result of the CEOSS method, studies have found that in the eight Coptic villages of Upper Egypt where CEOSS has engaged in FGM eradication, up to 70\% of girls remain uncircumcised after the age of 12, compared to close to 0\% prior to CEOSS’ efforts.\textsuperscript{203}

A second successful area of CEOSS’ work is in Muslim-Christian relations. This was one of Rev. Habib’s main goals in founding CEOSS – to engage in charity and development with an interfaith focus. Habib said, “There is no Muslim relief or Christian relief. Relief is for a person in need....We are all sons and daughters of the Creator, the One God.”\textsuperscript{204} CEOSS regularly engages in charity and development activities with Muslim CSOs and has organized iftar (fast-breaking) meals during Ramadan for Muslims and Christians. However, CEOSS remains a Christian organization that carries out much of its work in largely Christian communities.

\textit{The Issue}

CEOSS’ work falls in to two main issue areas: charity and development in general, and the promotion of Christianity in Egypt. Because the issue of poverty alleviation and charity and development will be explained in the following chapter, this section will only address the issue of Christianity in Egypt. The first Christian association was founded in Egypt in 1881 by Butros Ghali. It was called the Coptic Christian Service Association. A note on terminology here is important. The term “Coptic” is generally used to refer to all Egyptian Christians. Officially,

\textsuperscript{202} Lancaster.
\textsuperscript{203} Ibid.
95% of Egyptian Christians are Coptic Orthodox while an additional 2.5% are Coptic Catholic.\textsuperscript{205} Thus, 97.5% of Egyptian Christians are “Coptic”. However, as Paul Rowe notes, “the term ‘Copt’ is synonymous with ‘Egyptian’ and is typically used by Christians of all stripes to describe themselves, underscoring their connection to the historic land of Egypt.”\textsuperscript{206} Thus, I use the term “Coptic” as synonymous with Egyptian Christians of all denominations.\textsuperscript{207}

The relationship of Coptic CSOs and the state is both positive and problematic. The Coptic minority in Egypt has traditionally faced \textit{de jure} protection and \textit{de facto} persecution. Copts are considered “protected peoples” under Islam but Muslims are given preferential status over Copts in government positions as well as the military, resulting in significant access to economic resources and patronage for Muslims over Copts. Furthermore, in times of social upheaval, Copts tend to face physical persecution.\textsuperscript{208} However, Coptic CSOs have traditionally been both tolerated and at times supported by the Egyptian government. Coptic CSOs were established, in large part, as a response to a crackdown on the restriction of building churches. Egyptian law has always heavily restricted the building of churches, requiring permission from the government for the building of every new church and limiting the number of churches built per year. Beginning in 1934, the law has made church building conditional on factors such as the distance of the proposed church to the nearest mosque as well as the location of homes of the

\textsuperscript{207} In addition to Coptic Christians, other denominations of Christianity in Egypt include Greek Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox, Catholic, Episcopal, Evangelical Church of Egypt, and several other smaller Protestant congregations. For a detailed examination of the differences between the various Christian denominations in Egypt see Meinardus.
\textsuperscript{208} Rowe.
Muslim population and the size of the Christian population in the area.\textsuperscript{209} To get around some of these restrictions, in the 1970s Coptic organizations began to spring up that provided social services while simultaneously operating as underground churches.\textsuperscript{210} These CSOs thus offered both religious worship as well as the kinds of services that “usually would be expected from the government” including healthcare, education, clean water, provision of food, blankets and clothing and other typical charitable activities.\textsuperscript{211} Coptic CSOs thus became “indispensable to the state through their valuable contributions in sectors like health and education.”\textsuperscript{212} The Egyptian government relies heavily on the role of CEOSS, the largest of the Coptic CSOs, in providing social services to needy Egyptians due, in particular, to CEOSS’ “financial independence and managerial and technical expertise.”\textsuperscript{213} CEOSS undoubtedly stands out as a giant in the Coptic CSO field. However, CEOSS’ efforts can be compared to other smaller Coptic CSOs as “similarities between the mission and implementing strategies of CEOSS and those of other Christian voluntary organizations in Egypt are striking.”\textsuperscript{214}

\textit{Interaction with the Regime}

The relationship of CEOSS with the Egyptian regime is directly related to the issue of Christian-state relations in Egypt. One of the most contentious periods of Coptic-state relations in Egyptian history occurred during the Sadat regime. In June 1981, sectarian clashes caused over 18 deaths and 100 injuries, mostly of Copts, in the Cairo suburb of Zawiya al-Hamra. As a result, American Coptic activists mobilized demonstrations in the United States in favor of

\textsuperscript{209} Abdel Rahman, “The Politics of ‘Uncivil’ Society in Egypt.”
\textsuperscript{210} Abdel Rahman, \textit{Civil Society Exposed: The Politics of NGOs in Egypt.}
\textsuperscript{211} Makari.
\textsuperscript{212} Abdel Rahman, “The Politics of ‘Uncivil’ Society in Egypt.”
\textsuperscript{213} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{214} Kathryn M. Yount, “Symbolic Gender Politics, Religious Group Identity, and the Decline in Female Genital Cutting in Minya, Egypt,” \textit{Social Forces} 82, no. 3 (2004).
Coptic rights, purchasing ads in the *New York Times* and *The Washington Post* to advocate their cause. This was timed with President Sadat’s visit to the United States shortly following the June deaths. In September 1981, church-state relations fell to their worst point when Sadat decertified the Coptic pope and sent him into exile.\(^{215}\) Under Mubarak, the church-state relationship improved, with Mubarak’s regime adopting a more pluralist stance toward the church. For example, Coptic Christmas was introduced as a national holiday, and the government began to support the revitalization and refurbishment of Christian buildings and cultural artifacts (including monasteries and cultural centers such as the Coptic Museum in Old Cairo), due in part to the tourist influx for the millennium celebrations of the birth of Christ.\(^ {216}\) The government also allowed for public celebrations throughout the country. Most notably, as part of the lead up to the millennium, the Egyptian government approved the inclusion of a book on Coptic culture in the state education curriculum in 1998.\(^ {217}\)

During the Mubarak regime the Coptic Church also strengthened its ties to both the diaspora Coptic communities worldwide, as well as international NGOs, bolstering Coptic CSOs politically and financially. “The relatively tolerant attitude expressed by the regime has enabled the growth of Coptic organizations as well.”\(^ {218}\) CEOSS in particular, and Coptic CSOs in general, have succeeded in operating vibrant CSOs with limited state interference due to “a

\(^ {215}\) Rowe.
\(^ {216}\) Ibid.
\(^ {217}\) Ibid.
\(^ {218}\) Ibid.
combination of communal solidarity, adept political maneuvering, foreign pressure, and operating as a less threatening proxy for the secular opposition.”

From its early days CEOSS drew the attention of the Egyptian government. While MOSS initially did not understand what CEOSS was trying to accomplish, CEOSS has carefully cultivated its relationship with the Egyptian government over time. Rev. Habib made it clear that while CEOSS has a national agenda, they are not trying to replace the government and thus do not see themselves as a substitute for the government’s own services. Thus, CEOSS operates in parallel to the government – providing social services to the needy, while mostly targeting the Coptic community. As Abdel Rahman notes, although Coptic CSOs are only a small percentage of the CSO landscape (9% in 1991), “some of them are among the largest and most important in the country because of their size and operational extent. Moreover, some have managed to make themselves indispensable to the state through their valuable contributions to certain sectors such as health and education.”

Overall CEOSS has had a relatively positive experience dealing with MOSS and the Security Services. At times they have had funding withheld by MOSS, but they have generally had a much better experience than other CSOs because of the protection they receive from the large and vocal Coptic diaspora. The greatest government pushback has come from CEOSS’ attempts to bring together human rights groups and development groups. While the government

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219 Ibid. Approximately one million Copts reside outside of Egypt, primarily in the United States and Europe. Ariel Zirulnick, “Egypt’s Copts: A Closer Look at Coptic Christianity,” Christian Science Monitor, January 5, 2011. The first Coptic Orthodox churches outside of Egypt were founded in the 1960s in Germany and England, followed shortly by Coptic churches in the United States and Canada, then Australia and New Zealand. As of 2006, there are 125 Coptic Orthodox churches served by 163 parish priests in the United States. Canada has 27 parishes, Central and South America 4 parishes, Central Europe 54 parishes, the United Kingdom has 17 parishes, Australia and New Zealand have 37 parishes and Sub-Saharan Africa has 24 parishes. Meinardus.
220 Abdel Rahman, Civil Society Exposed: The Politics of NGOs in Egypt, 141.
221 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
initially objected to these programs, CEOSS leaders met with MOSS and explained that they are not trying to criticize the government, but rather they see the government as necessary to regulate services and provide an increased quality of services. But, they also see an essential parallel role for both development and human rights CSOs. By working with human rights CSOs directly, CEOSS took a step that most development CSOs would not try.

CEOSS’ success has also been a problem at times. Because CEOSS is one of the largest CSOs in Egypt, they have often drawn the attention of politicians who want to “use” CEOSS for their own political purposes. This is particularly due to CEOSS’ strong connections to the international community. CEOSS has multiple linkages with many different types of organizations, which has placed them under the close scrutiny of the Egyptian government. Additionally, CEOSS not only receives a large percentage of its income from foreign donations, but also was the first Egyptian CSO to qualify to contract directly with USAID without an American intermediary. This direct contact with the US government and US funding has both drawn regime scrutiny and provided them some cover from that scrutiny. Because of this unique arrangement with USAID and the large amounts of income flowing in from abroad, Abdel Rahman notes the vast financial resources of CEOSS “have gained them a relatively strong bargaining position in negotiations with the State.” CEOSS’ strong and close relationship with the West has not always been an asset. Like many Coptic CSOs, CEOSS’ partnerships with the West invite suspicions that they are beholden to Western interests. One of the government’s fears is that CEOSS uses its international connections to denigrate the government to outsiders.

222 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
224 Abdel Rahman, Civil Society Exposed: The Politics of NGOs in Egypt, 141.
However, it is these exact connections that have “made it more difficult for any Egyptian regime to attack the Coptic Church without repercussions.”\footnote{Rowe.} Additionally, the government has tried to use CEOSS to cultivate its own relationships with the international community. Thus, CEOSS is seen as both an asset and a competitor to the government.\footnote{Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.}

Because of the fine line that CEOSS walks in its relationship with the Egyptian government, CEOSS trains its staff on how explicitly to deal with the government. They teach them to stick to their values and ethics but be aware that there are certain redlines that cannot be crossed. These redlines include associating outwardly with a political party and trying to replace the government. They also teach their staff the value of mutual respect – CEOSS should respect the government and they will get respect in return. Finally, they teach their staff to maintain a certain distance from the government.\footnote{Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.} CEOSS has thus made the decision to remain apolitical- dissolving its official relationship with the Coptic Church and refusing to support any single political party.\footnote{Even though CEOSS is not officially connected to the Coptic Church as an international organization, CEOSS is still able to benefit from its status as a Christian organization, receiving direct donations through individual Coptic churches in Egypt.}

\textit{Why Pluralism?}

CEOSS has chosen the strategy of pluralism due to the interaction of the three independent variables that make up its type as a Protected Minority CSO – high outside rhetorical support, medium/high perceived threat and high access to foreign funding. Coptic CSOs do not threaten the state politically like their Muslim counterparts but they do receive loud and constant rhetorical support from diaspora Christian communities, which makes it difficult for...
the Egyptian government to crack down on Coptic CSOs. Despite the aforementioned restrictions on church-building, the Egyptian government’s official position on the Coptic community is one of support. The Mubarak regime, in part of its effort to appear “democratic” to outside observers, prided itself on a climate of religious (read: Muslim and Christian) pluralism. Thus, it did not benefit the Egyptian government under Mubarak politically to crack down on Coptic CSOs.

Part of CEOSS’ strategy comes from its status as a Protected Minority group. CEOSS needs State Security to protect it from radical Islamists who seek to eradicate the Coptic minority in Egypt. Thus, CEOSS officials are clear that they have no problem with the work of State Security in the civil society arena, as long as they operate transparently and within the law.229 CEOSS leaders developed a relationship with State Security and MOSS from the early days of the organization. Thus, the CEOSS leaders and the State Security and MOSS employees “grew up together.”230 This enabled a long-term relationship of trust to develop between CEOSS and MOSS/State Security. Furthermore, CEOSS benefited from the conflict of the state with radical Islam in the 1980s and 1990s. The crackdown on Islamist organizations created a space for CEOSS to operate that had previously been held by Muslim CSOs. Furthermore, “Christians are unlikely ever to pose a security threat to the regime and instead form a convenient pet concern that justifies a strong security state.”231 Rowe explains the phenomenon clearly:

Christians have chosen to pursue a moderating influence in Egyptian politics and are therefore a useful pillar of internal stability. Their social service organizations are largely self-supporting and take care of community needs while also reaching out to the Muslim majority. Coptic civil society has come to occupy a liberal space that is otherwise limited

229 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
231 Rowe.
in Egyptian politics. While the secular opposition to the regime such as the Kifaya movement and individual dissident bloggers are rounded up, prosecuted, or otherwise harassed, Christian organizations tend to dodge such restraints under the protection of religious freedom. While Christians largely support the liberal viewpoint represented by the secular opposition, they do not pose an electoral or majoritarian challenge to the status quo. Even when it is most assertive, as in the case of riots and demonstrations that took place in the late Sadat era or over the past few years, Coptic agitation is no more than a mild domestic concern.232

Despite the relative degree of religious freedom under Mubarak, CEOSS represents a medium/high level of threat to the regime. As stated above, CEOSS was one of the first CSOs in Egypt to develop a rights-based approach to development, openly working with human rights CSOs, which represent a high level of threat to the regime. Additionally, CEOSS has taken on several issues that represent a medium threat to the regime including FGM and national unity – openly advocating for more recognition of the Coptic presence in Egypt. CEOSS’ connection to the West (and the United States in particular) has also drawn regime ire. Receiving 60-70% of its funding from foreign sources, CEOSS is clearly closely connected to both the Coptic diaspora as well as the international NGO community. Finally, CEOSS’ size is a potentially threatening issue. CEOSS not only is an extremely large CSO, with over 500 full time staff, but also works with more than 200 small CSOs, functioning as a CSO network of sorts. Thus, the combination of CEOSS’ size, issue areas, and connections to the West make it potentially threatening to the regime.

Abdel Rahman argues that the state-CSO relationship of Coptic CSOs is determined by three factors: “the considerable financial independence of some of these NGOs, the connections of the local Coptic community with emigrants outside Egypt, and the growing power of Islamic

232 Ibid.
militant groups.”¹²³ Law 32 includes a provision that excludes donations to religious institutions (both mosques and churches) from MOSS supervision. This is particularly important to Coptic CSOs who receive “a major share of their income from donations allocated to them by the Church as well as from individuals and institutions both inside the country and from the large and often well-off Coptic community in the West.”¹²⁴ This results in a high level of access to foreign funding, allowing CEOSS to function without relying at all on state money. In the case of CEOSS, while one-fourth of CEOSS resources are from foreign donors, three-fourths of CEOSS funds come from abroad.¹²⁵ Abdel Rahman notes that “Coptic communities abroad, especially in the USA, Canada and Australia, provide financial support to NGOs in Egypt while at the same time using their lobbying power in their new countries to gain political backing for campaigns against the Egyptian State.”¹²⁶ She notes, “These associations do not seem to realize that the far-reaching nature and scope of their work, as well as their connections with international organizations and donor governments, especially in the case of CEOSS, makes them indispensable to the State.”¹²⁷

CEOSS has chosen to pursue the strategy of pluralism due to three primary reasons: its strong connection to the Coptic diaspora community worldwide, its high level of foreign and other non-state funding, and its large size. These three factors have allowed CEOSS to pursue several issues that represent a medium/high level of threat to the government. While CEOSS has avoided redline issues, they have highlighted multiple issues over time that the regime has tried

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¹²⁴ Ibid., 143.
¹²⁵ Sullivan, 85.
¹²⁷ Ibid., 146.
to keep under the radar, including female genital mutilation, women’s education and leadership, the connection of human rights and development and Christian issues in general. While many of the issues that CEOSS addresses are no longer considered threatening to the government (such as women’s education and Christian-Muslim relations), it is only because CEOSS addressed them early on that the government has now been forced to acknowledge and address them.

Case Study: Association for the Development and Enhancement of Women

Type: Protected Minority Strategy: Pluralism

The Association for the Development and Enhancement of Women (ADEW) is a medium-size Protected Minority CSO that operates in Greater Cairo and focuses on women’s development issues. ADEW has chosen the strategy of pluralism due to its combination of high outside rhetorical support, medium level of perceived threat and medium level of access to foreign funding.

History of the CSO

ADEW was started in 1985 by a group of upper class young Egyptian male and female professionals. They were officially recognized as a CSO by the Egyptian government in 1987. The founders wanted to use their newly acquired university skills to help assist the squatter community of Manshiet Naser, a slum community of about 500,000 people on the outskirts of Cairo. The group initially ran a needs-assessment of the community and determined that the most needed program would be a microcredit initiative for the female heads of households\(^{238}\) in the

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\(^{238}\) Female-headed households are defined as those in which “a woman is the primary economic contributor to the family.” *The Association for the Development and Enhancement of Women (ADEW) Annual Report* (Cairo, Egypt: ADEW, 2006).
community. The female heads of household were recognized as the most marginalized members of society and, up until this point, no other CSO in Egypt was dealing specifically with female heads of household. The microcredit program was based on a group lending system (“gamiaya”) so that each individual woman would be responsible to a larger group of five women to pay back her loan. The loan program did not require a guarantor or collateral, rather the women simply had to sign a receipt that is legally and individually binding. This was the first group lending program in Egypt.

After the founders gained the trust of the local community residents they began scaling-up their projects in the same squatter community, eventually expanding to other squatter communities throughout Greater Cairo. Starting in 1995 they took on women’s legal empowerment through legal assistance and microcredit, although they had begun studying the issue of legal documents as early as 1987. The legal assistance program, called “Legal Assistance and Women’s Awareness,” was designed to strengthen women’s legal rights and identity. The women of this community did not have any legal documents, including birth certificates or identity cards, so it was very difficult for them to enroll their children in school, to access social services such as free medical care, or to obtain formal employment. ADEW therefore provided women with access to these legal documents (identity cards and birth certificates) and conducted legal skills training sessions to teach the women their civil rights and filed lawsuits on behalf of women relating to the personal status law. This included providing

239 Ibid.
240 Ibid.
241 Ibid.
242 Egypt’s Social Contract: the Role of Civil Society.
legal advice to women regarding marriage, divorce, alimony and employment and raising the
awareness of the Egyptian population as a whole as to women’s legal status.244

The third project that ADEW took on was illiteracy. This project was aimed both at adult
illiteracy (targeting women) as well as childhood illiteracy. Today ADEW’s mission is “to create
suitable conditions for Egyptian women especially female heads of households on two levels:
personal and societal. On a societal level we seek to change the culture of the community,
change laws and policies and change women’s image in society and on a personal level we seek
to empower women by giving them life skills in various areas through our programs and
activities.”245 ADEW therefore works on several areas of development, including health, political
participation, community mobilization, domestic violence, youth loans and advocacy. Additional
programs that ADEW has tackled include the “Arab Women Speak Out” program, which
identifies Egyptian women to serve as community leaders and helps train them on how to best
engage with the government. This is a community mobilization program in which female leaders
are recruited and selected by ADEW fieldworkers who study the needs of the community in
which they are working and determine how best to serve those needs.

Another program addresses violence against women. ADEW opened the first women’s
shelter in Egypt (the House of Eve) where abused women can stay for 3-6 months and are then
given the skills to return to her community. A woman who stays in the shelter may receive a
microcredit loan or learn a craft to help sustain her income. ADEW also has a health program
aimed at both men and women, providing beneficiaries with medical examinations, free

244 Egypt’s Social Contract: the Role of Civil Society.
medicine, eye glasses, and health education on issues such as reproductive health, female genital mutilation, the dangers of early marriage, diet, breast cancer, disabilities, and menopause.\textsuperscript{246}

ADEW also works with Egyptian youth in squatter areas. One youth-targeted program is the Youth Lending Program. This program began in 2006 to help youths by providing them loans to start small businesses. Each youth received a small disbursement to begin the business and could receive a larger sum of money if the business was successful.\textsuperscript{247} Both male and female youth could qualify for loans. Another youth-targeted program is “Girls’ Dreams”. This program, which targets only young girls in the squatter communities, works on improving the confidence and self esteem of these girls by teaching them life skills, improving personal relationships and teaching them about health and nutrition as well as about the legal rights of women and children. The program also works to provide young girls with skills that they can later use in income-generating projects such as handicrafts.\textsuperscript{248}

Additionally, ADEW works on issues of advocacy and political participation. The “Women are Full Citizens” program, started in 2004, both supports women candidates for local elections and trade unions and supports the women’s right to vote.\textsuperscript{249} ADEW has a media and advocacy training unit that helps their staff learn how to become better advocates for women’s issues and how to work with the media. One of ADEW’s greatest successes has been in changing the nationality law so that children of non-Egyptian mothers can become Egyptian citizens.

ADEW has 150 full time staff members and 16 branches spread throughout Egypt, but concentrated in the areas surrounding Cairo (Manial, Helwan, Qalubiyya and Gharbiyya). All

\textsuperscript{246} The Association for the Development and Enhancement of Women (ADEW) Annual Report.
\textsuperscript{247} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{248} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{249} Ibid.
ADEW programs take place in squatter areas and each individual branch office has services for individual women as well as project staff to carry out ADEW’s programs. ADEW also partners with 25 smaller CSOs that deal with youth issues and women’s issues. These smaller CSOs are based throughout Egypt.

ADEW is democratically governed, headed by an executive director. They have 16 “street committees” in their offices throughout greater Cairo, who work directly with the squatter communities that they serve. They also have a steering committee to oversee the more administrative side of their work. ADEW does not call itself a “grassroots” organization, but they regularly tap into the street committees to get feedback on their projects on ideas on what new projects to start, speaking directly with their beneficiaries.250

Methods

ADEW uses an innovative case-study methodology to develop their programs. Using volunteers and paid staff, ADEW creates a field team to conduct of a survey of potential beneficiaries before starting a program. During the survey phase, ADEW also identifies local leaders and other local male and female volunteers and paid staff to implement the program, in order to help gain the trust of the local community.251

ADEW is a self-labeled “feminist” CSO however they do not work solely with women.252 As of 2011, ADEW works with 80% women and 20% men. This is based on the philosophy that empowering women requires the support of the men of the community as well.253 In 2003, after ADEW had achieved considerable success in their programs aimed at women, they discovered

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250 Interview with civil society actors. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
251 Egypt’s Social Contract: the Role of Civil Society.
252 Interview with civil society actors. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
253 Interview with civil society actors. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
that they had unintentionally created a gap between the men who were “left behind” and the
women they were empowering.  

Additionally, ADEW staff came to realize that if they wanted to work with young girls, they needed the permission of the girl’s father to allow her to participate in the programs. Thus, ADEW began working with the fathers in addition to the female heads of household and children to help empower them and educate them about the rights of their daughters and wives. Men were first included in only the microfinance projects, but today they are included in all ADEW programs.

As part of ADEW’s mission to provide Egyptian women with full citizenship rights and access to government services, ADEW has instituted several partnerships with their beneficiaries and local government councils. These partnerships have both given marginalized women access to the government services (such as free healthcare and education) that they are owed as Egyptian citizens and given women the channels through which they are able to voice their concerns and seek representation.

ADEW also organizes conferences with the aim of informing the government and the general public about the issues of women’s rights and responsibilities. For example, a 2006 conference “Homeless Women” both shed light on the problem of homelessness among Egyptian women and highlighted the legal problems that homeless women face, specifically calling on the government to institute women’s rights to housing, allocate 10% of the state housing and Mubarak housing project to homeless women and to include a motherhood pension in insurance...

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254 Interview with civil society actors. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
companies.\textsuperscript{255} This conference was attended by several members of the People’s Assembly, the Shura Council and the National Council for Women.

ADEW has received funding from a wide variety of sources. They target local, international and individual grants, and have applied for grants from USAID and the European Union.\textsuperscript{256} They have also received funding from foundations, embassies, banks, international NGOs, individual donors and bank loans that they have paid back.\textsuperscript{257} However, ADEW is emphatic that they will only accept grants that meet their principles and priorities. ADEW’s 2006 Annual Report states that “ADEW has not received any funding from the American government, USAID, nor from any U.S. federal grants because of ADEW’s absolute rejection of the American government’s position in Iraq and its partisan position regarding the Palestinian issue.”\textsuperscript{258} However, an interview with ADEW staff revealed that ADEW had, in fact, applied for USAID funding. Because ADEW is a large organization with a variety of programs operating at any one time, they are able to be somewhat selective in appealing to donors and accepting funding. Naturally, ADEW targets grants that are aimed at women’s empowerment.

\textsuperscript{255} The Association for the Development and Enhancement of Women (ADEW) Annual Report.
\textsuperscript{256} Interview with civil society actors. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
\textsuperscript{257} ADEW has received funding from a large number of foundations, embassies and organizations. These include: Barclays Women, the British Council, the British Embassy, Church Development Services (EED), Drosos Foundation, the European Commission Delegation of the European Commission to Egypt, the Sawiris Foundation for Development, the Flora Foundation, the Swiss Development fund, the Ford Foundation, the Embassy of Japan, the Royal Netherlands Embassy, the Dutch Organization for International development Co-operation (NOVIB), the German Technical Co-operation (GTZ), the German Embassy, the Global Fund for Children, the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood, the Open Society Institute, Save the Children, the Italian Debt Swap Program, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Virginia Fund, the World Bank, Vodafone, the Australian Embassy, the Embassy of Finland, and the Arab Gulf Program for United Nations Development Organization (AG Fund). The Association for the Development and Enhancement of Women (ADEW) Annual Report; “The Association for the Development and Enhancement of Women: Women are Citizens Too”.
\textsuperscript{258} The Association for the Development and Enhancement of Women (ADEW) Annual Report.
ADEW has faced the normal hardships of operating during the financial crisis of 2008-2011. During the crisis, it has become much more difficult to find foreign grants. Thus, they began to expand their donor strategy in 2009 by reaching out to banks (such as HSBC, Barclay’s and Citibank) and the corporate social responsibility sectors of national and international companies in an effort to diversify their funding.

The Issue

Women in Egypt have faced a somewhat paradoxical situation. On the one hand Egypt today is home to some of the most progressive laws regarding women’s rights in the Arab world, second only to Tunisia. Egypt’s former First Lady Suzanne Mubarak was a vocal and effective champion for women’s rights in Egypt and across the globe during the 1990s and 2000s. And Egypt was the first Arab country to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in 1987 (but with reservations). However, Egyptian women face both *de facto* and *de jure* discrimination. The Family Law, discussed in more detail below, significantly limits the ability of women to have control over their home lives including their relationships with their husbands and their children. Furthermore, there exists a large gap between women’s and men’s educational opportunities, achievement and employment opportunities and access to healthcare. Thus, the permissive legal environment for women in the public sphere combined with Egypt’s desire to appease the international community has provided women’s CSOs with the space needed to develop organizations and voice their concerns. However, the restrictive legal environment in the private sphere and *de facto* discrimination has given these CSOs much fodder for their organizations.
In response to the legal issues confronting Arab women, women’s CSOs began to proliferate across the Arab world in the 1970s and 1980s. One of the largest and most successful women’s CSOs was founded in Egypt by Nawal Saadawi, a prominent Egyptian feminist and physician who started the Arab Women’s Solidarity Association in 1985 to improve the Egyptian family law. While the 1952 constitution, written after the Egyptian revolution, granted women equal opportunities with men and the post-revolutionary government “made conscious efforts to promote women’s participation on the social, economic and political levels,” the Egyptian government did not alter the pre-revolutionary family law thereby significantly limiting women’s rights. Women’s rights were further eroded during the Sadat era, due to the influence of the rise of Islamist movements across Egypt. The 1971 constitution reaffirmed the basis of Egyptian law within Shari’a and declared the state’s commitment to helping women reconcile their obligations to the family with their legal equality to men in the public sphere.

During the 1980s, as Egypt faced a rise in poverty and an economic crisis, women suffered from a diminishing level of access to health services, education and job opportunities. A few statistics help illustrate the gap between men and women in Egypt that remains today. The literacy rate for females, age 15 and above is 58% while the literacy rate for males age 15 and

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259 Chatty and Rabo, eds.
260 Ibid.
262 President Sadat issued a revolutionary decree for women’s rights in 1979 (PSL No. 44 of 1979) which granted women the right to judicial divorce if their husband took a second wife, gave women the right to stay in the home if granted custody of the children after divorce and gave women indemnity after a divorce that was not their desire or fault. However, this law was overturned by the Supreme Court in 1985 after it was found to have been passed unconstitutionally. PSL No. 44 was replaced by a new “reform” to the Family Law in 1985, which significantly watered down the reforms in PSL No. 44. Mulki Al-Sharmani, Recent Reforms in Personal Status Laws and Women’s Empowerment: ‘Family Courts in Egypt’ (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Social Research Center and Pathways of Women’s Empowerment, 2008).
263 El Baz.
above is 75%. And the rate of female unemployment is 24%, compared to the rate of male unemployment of 6.8%.\textsuperscript{264} The 2005 Arab Human Development Report, which focused on the situation of women in the Arab World, points out several significant problems facing women in the region, in addition to the legal challenges described below. These include the undervaluing of women’s economic contribution and productive capacity, high levels of morbidity and mortality rates associated with maternal and reproductive issues, a lack of opportunities to acquire knowledge, exclusion from the political sphere, higher levels of human poverty than men and the impairment of personal liberty.\textsuperscript{265}

As mentioned above, the Egyptian Family Law (or Personal Status Law) is the most restrictive legal document impacting women. The Family Law covers issues such as marriage and divorce, polygamy, child custody, paternity disputes, family property and alimony. Amendments were made to the family law in 2000 and 2004. Law 1 of 2000 granted women the right to a unilateral request for no-fault divorce (\textit{khul}) in exchange for forfeiting their financial rights.\textsuperscript{266} Also in 2000, a new state marriage contract was issued containing a blank space in which men and women could add specific stipulations to the contract.\textsuperscript{267} Reforms passed in 2004 include Law 10 of 2004, which created a new family court system that was designed to be more

\textsuperscript{264} “World Development Indicators,” World Bank (Washington, DC: 2006).
\textsuperscript{266} Law 1 of 2000 also granted women the right to file for divorce from ‘urfi (unregistered) marriages, under which they had no legal rights. Law 1 of 2000 contained a draft provision that would allow women the right to travel internationally without written permission from their husbands, but that was removed from the final draft of the law. Al-Sharmani.
\textsuperscript{267} Ibid.
accessible and affordable and Law 11 of 2004, which established a Family Fund through which women could collect court-ordered alimony and child support.268

However while Egyptian laws have advanced significantly to protect many women’s rights not afforded elsewhere in the region, the implementation and practice of those laws does not always protect women and women remain significantly behind men in levels of development. Reports following the implementation of the 2000 and 2004 laws have found that the legislation on paper is strong, but has failed to greatly impact the lives of Egyptian women.269 For example, one report states, “Because some of the substantive family laws that are being implemented in the new courts continue to reflect gender inequality and biases against women, the new legal system is limited in its ability to strengthen the legal rights of women.”270 And a second report notes that because the reforms to the Family Law are negotiations between Islamists and women’s rights activists, these reforms have failed to address the basic inequality and entrenched gender roles that exist between men and women in the act of marriage in Egypt.271

While the primary issue that ADEW addresses is women’s development, a secondary issue that motivated the beginning of ADEW is the issue of squatter communities in Egypt. Prior to 1992 the government denied that squatter areas existed in Cairo, only acknowledging their presence in Upper Egypt.272 ADEW therefore shed light on an issue that the government had tried to sweep under the rug. A second issue that ADEW has highlighted is that of female-

268 Ibid.
270 Al-Sharmani, Recent Reforms in Personal Status Laws and Women’s Empowerment: ‘Family Courts in Egypt’.
271 Abu-Odeh.
272 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
headed households. According to the National Council for Women’s Statistics, in 2003 23% of families in Egypt were financially supported by women, with 57% of families in slum areas (including the area of Manshiet Nasr, where ADEW began its work) supported by women.273 Despite these numbers, ADEW was the first organization to both recognize female-headed households and to work to help this large group. ADEW also approached the issue of women’s development from a new perspective. ADEW’s founders were secular young feminists. Thus, they did not simply want to help women to fiscally improve their lives, they also wanted women to learn their rights and become full citizens.

Interaction with the Regime

On the surface it appears as if ADEW has a positive partnership with the Egyptian government. ADEW regularly invites government officials to attend its conferences and public events and has, in fact, partnered with the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood on some projects targeting youth.274 However, despite ADEW’s inclusion of government officials at their conferences and in their networks of local government and citizens, ADEW should not be seen as co-opted. Rather, the purpose of ADEW’s conferences is to criticize the government and call for change, not to acquiesce to government demands. ADEW’s mission is to be the voice of women to “national consciousness to help decision makers recognize the problems faced by women.”275 ADEW sees its role as linking marginalized women to their government. ADEW does not, therefore, work with the government in the way that co-opted CSOs do; rather ADEW confronts the government and brings attention to issues the government has ignored.

274 Ibid.
275 Ibid.
ADEW’s leadership argues that the biggest problem for CSOs in Egypt is not the lack of money or freedom of association, but rather the relationship of CSOs with the government. The government’s constant interference with CSO activities including providing “seconded staff” (MOSS staff that are assigned to a CSO to “help” the CSO) is detrimental to the ability of CSOs to operate and carry out their work.276 Thus, ADEW has had a somewhat rocky relationship with the regime. ADEW staff reports that security service “spies” attend all of their meetings and that they are particularly targeted by the regime.277 As one ADEW staff member said, they are “always under the eyes and hands of the government.”278 This is despite the fact that they “offer services that the government can’t provide.”279 One of the reasons that ADEW had attracted a high level of government attention is that the organization was started by young, secular feminists. The founders were accused of being “Americanized” because they took only foreign funding at the beginning.280 Although they reached out to several donors, initially the only organizations to give them money were Environmental Quality International (EQI) and the Ford Foundation. And they had to make the mother of one of the original members (an older, Christian woman) the first chairperson of ADEW so that they would be taken more seriously by both the donor community and the Egyptian government.

ADEW employees expressed the same sorts of frustrations with the donor process as most CSOs. The grant disbursal process is lengthy. The process for receiving a grant takes anywhere from one month to a year. They have had problems with donors withdrawing their

276 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
277 Interview with civil society actors. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
278 Interview with civil society actors. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
279 Interview with civil society actors. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
280 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
funding after getting impatient with the lengthy disbursal process. They try to get around this by starting project preparation as early as possible, but they cannot disburse a single pound until they get MOSS approval. In one case, they received grant approval in July 2010, but did not get permission to disburse the money until March 2011.\textsuperscript{281} There was nothing specific that ADEW could point to as to why the project was targeted. Rather, ADEW believes that their projects are always delayed because they are highly visible to the regime and the regime looks into all of their projects much more closely than they do with other CSOs.\textsuperscript{282}

The biggest problem that ADEW has had with the regime was their attempt to start a large microfinance and community bank similar to the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh. The government prohibited ADEW from starting this project. ADEW does not know why the project was stopped or what the government’s objection was. Another problematic case was that they tried to start the only feminist shelter for abused women in Egypt, but could not get funding for it. Both donors and the government saw this as “subversive”, in that the shelter not only protected women but also empowered them through democratic skills-building.\textsuperscript{283}

ADEW staff describe their relationship with the government as “pragmatic”. They are “non-partisan and nonpolitical” but they are not aligned with the government. One ADEW member described most government officials as “more moronic and inefficient than sinister.”\textsuperscript{284} Thus, ADEW’s relationship with the regime has been 80\% inefficiency/bureaucratic problems and 20\% pushback/political problems.\textsuperscript{285} ADEW has been able to operate despite dealing with

\textsuperscript{281} Interview with civil society actors. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
\textsuperscript{282} Interview with civil society actors. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
\textsuperscript{283} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
\textsuperscript{284} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
\textsuperscript{285} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
taboo issues and unconventional methods due to their manipulation of government procedures and their consistent backing by foreign funders and rhetorical support of women’s issues by the international community. While they have, at times, addressed human rights issues, they have not used the terminology “human rights” in their project proposals or media campaign. When they worked to change the nationality law, as described above, they said they were working on the “protection and survival” of Egyptian children, not the “rights” of Egyptian women and children. ADEW is careful to state that this sort of behavior is neither illegal nor unethical, but they also state that in order to achieve their goals “they had no scruples.”286

Part of the reason for government backlash on development CSOs, according to ADEW, is that government and society are unable to separate human rights and development CSOs, thereby lumping all of them together. ADEW finds this problematic, despite the fact that ADEW conflates the two issues within their own organization. The government has also shifted its tactics over time. During the past ten years (2000-2010), the government has stopped attacking CSOs on human rights issues, instead denouncing them all (both human rights and development CSOs) as “corrupt.”287 To deal with government pushback, ADEW has had to learn the laws and bureaucratic procedures governing civil society, as these are not readily available and no one within MOSS will explain them to CSO actors. ADEW staff have learned how to circumvent some procedures by directly contacting MOSS staff by phone and checking up on the status of their projects. Nevertheless, every step of the registration and funding processes takes much longer than it should. This problem was been exacerbated in recent years (2008-2010), with any sort of government approval taking even longer than in the past.

286 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
287 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
Why Pluralism?

ADEW has chosen the strategy of pluralism based on the combination of a high level of outside rhetorical support, a medium level of perceived threat to the regime and a medium level of access to foreign funding. ADEW has been able to succeed and continue operating for over 25 years in part because they are protected by their ability to access to foreign and other non-state funding and the loud rhetorical support for women’s issues by the international community. International NGOs including the United Nations and the World Bank and foreign governments including the United States and European Union have consistently focused on women’s rights and supported women’s organizations in the Arab world. ADEW’s leaders have regularly visited the United States and Europe and spoken at international conferences on women’s issues in the Arab world, cultivating relationships with international NGOs. These relationships have enabled ADEW to attract a wide variety of foreign donors, ensuring that they are not reliant on the state for funding.

ADEW has chosen the strategy of pluralism primarily because of the issues that they address and their high level of non-state funding. ADEW represents a medium level of threat to the regime because of the issues that they work on. They have dealt with several taboo issues including violence against women and female genital mutilation. ADEW staff notes that they “have tackled all of the issues that are supposedly taboos.” They do stay away from religion and politics, as these are illegal under the Associations Law. While ADEW is a development

288 For example, see Fund for Gender Equality Announces More than US $27.5 Million in Grants to Accelerate Action to Advance Women’s Empowerment, (UN Women, 2010); The Middle East Partnership Initiative Support Women (Washington, DC: US Department of State, 2010); Obama; “We Can End Poverty 2015: Millenium Development Goals”, United Nations: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/ (accessed December 1, 2011); Women and Work in Egypt: Case Study of Tourism and ICT Sectors (European Training Foundation 2009).

289 Interview with civil society actors. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
CSO, it has taken on a more active advocacy role than many other development CSOs, thereby representing a higher level of threat to the regime. As stated above, ADEW has tackled many issues that the regime would prefer to keep quiet, including pointing out the prevalence of squatter areas in Cairo, informing women of their legal rights, addressing violence against women and working to change laws impacting women’s rights (most prominently, the nationality law).

ADEW has also drawn regime attention due to the vocal nature of its work. ADEW does not attempt to stay under the radar, rather operating out in the open with large, public conferences and speaking to the Egyptian and international press about women’s development. Furthermore, ADEW’s focus on educating individual Egyptian women about their rights and legal empowerment has brought the issues that ADEW champions under an even brighter spotlight. ADEW would not be able to accomplish its goals of education, legal empowerment and the linking of human rights and development had it chosen a strategy of co-optation. The types of issues that ADEW addresses and the way that it addresses them has necessitated a strategy of pluralism. Combined with the protection offered by ADEW’s connection to the international community and vocal outside rhetorical support for women’s issues, the choice of pluralism has allowed ADEW to succeed in advocating for women’s development and pressuring the government on controversial issues.

Case Study: Egyptian Association to Support Street Children

Type: Single-Issue     Strategy: Pluralism
The Egyptian Association to Support Street Children (EASCC) is a small Single-Issue CSO operating in Giza and focusing on the issue of street children. It chose the strategy of pluralism due to the combination of high outside rhetorical support, high level of perceived threat and medium access to foreign funding.

History of the CSO

EASCC began in 1993 as a joint effort by Dr. Kamal Fahmi, a sociology professor at the American University in Cairo, and individuals from Social Development Consultants, a private consultancy firm in Egypt working on issues of development. The CSO started as a participatory action research (PAR) project run by Dr. Fahmi with the goal of addressing what Fahmi and his co-founders saw as “a need for both understanding and action regarding a worrying and escalating social phenomenon - that of street children perceived as children at risk.” The initial research project evolved into a formal CSO registered with the Egyptian government in 1998 under the name “The Egyptian Association to Support Street Children (EASSC)”. From 1993-1998 the CSO was not a formal CSO, but rather was set up as part of the Egyptian Association for Development, an umbrella organization overseeing many development projects. The EASSC was formally dismantled by the Egyptian government in April 2001 through a decree by the local governor under whom the CSO was formally registered and thus the CSO ceased to exist in 2001. The government’s decree stated that the decision was made at the suggestion of MOSS, which had “allegedly observed 16 administrative and financial infractions in EASSC’s

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291 For the ease of discussion, throughout this case study, I will refer both to the PAR project conducted from 1993-1998 and the official NGO, in place from 1998-2001, as the EASSC, although the project did not take on this name officially until 1998.
registries.” The CSO fought the decision through the formal judicial appeals process and was unsuccessful as of this writing.

The main projects undertaken by the CSO were the development of relationships between street children and the PAR project researchers to determine the causes and consequences of the issue of street children, and the creation of a drop-in center, located in Giza, whose activities consisted of a wide array of cultural, educational, vocational, recreational and sports activities in addition to basic life skills such as preparing meals, offering shower and laundry facilities, and formal and informal meetings of the children and the street workers. The drop-in center also contained a health clinic, and later developed a literacy program, created at the request of the street children themselves. One of the most successful projects carried out by EASSC was an arts program, which led to an official art show and touring exhibition supported by the British Council of Egypt where the children presented their art work in person to a variety of patrons including invited guests from MOSS. EASSC dealt with children ranging in age from newborn to 18 years of age.

The Issue

The definition of “street children” has been controversial in the academic and policy literatures, most notably differing on whether “street children” are those children who work on the street during the day and return home to their families at night or those children who both work and live on the street, with little connection (if any) to their families. Thus, taking both of these concepts into account, a commonly accepted definition is “Groups of children,

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292 Fahmi, 6.
293 Ibid., 84-85.
adolescents and young adults who develop a special relationship to the street, whereby they make it a living space.”

The number of street children in Egypt varies widely amongst reports, with no official number available. International organizations that work with street children estimate the number of Egyptian street children at anywhere from 83,000 up to 1,000,000, while the Associated Press reported the number of street children between ages 6-17 at 1.5 million in 2008. The majority of these children congregate in the slums of Cairo, although there is a preponderance of street girls in rural Upper Egypt as well.

The law dealing most directly with street children is the Child Law (Act 12 of 1996). The purpose of this law is to define the criminal behavior of children under age 18. Under this law, street children, by definition, are considered criminals. The Child Law defines as a criminal offense “begging, vagrancy, prostitution, drug use, running away from a reform institution, rebelling against parental authority, sleeping in public areas, having no legal source of income or reliable source of support or being mentally ill.” Thus, “a major threat to the security of street children is being arrested by the police for vagrancy, and although in need of protection, the police regularly see street children as criminals and a nuisance to public order.”

Prior to the formation of the EASSC, the Egyptian government failed to recognize street children as a social problem facing Egypt. Other than arresting and prosecuting street children

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294 Ibid., 84.
296 Embracing the Spirit of the Millennium Declaration.
297 Fahmi, 8.
298 Ibid., 88.
299 Embracing the Spirit of the Millennium Declaration.
for crimes defined in the Child Law, the Egyptian government did not acknowledge the degree of severity of the problem or the large numbers of street children roaming Egypt’s streets. While a few small CSOs existed to aid street children during the time that EASSC operated, most of the attention on the issue came from the international community through organizations such as UNICEF and the International Labor Organization. Despite estimates as high as 1.5 million street children, official governmental reports in the 1980s and early 1990s stated that the issue of street children was “under control” in that there were only a small number of street children in Egypt and those children were well-known to government officials.\(^{300}\) Furthermore, in 1993, when government officials and officials from the only CSO working on the issue of street boys at the time were asked about street girls, “they claimed there were not any street girls, only prostitutes!”\(^{301}\) Thus, EASSC’s founders were advised by the Egyptian government “not to adopt the concerns of foreign organizations, which they viewed as intent upon defaming Egypt.”\(^{302}\)

Due in part to the work by EASSC, the issue of street children was eventually taken up formally by the Mubarak regime. While in the years prior to the formation of the EASSC, even the term “street children” was not uttered by the regime, in 1998 Suzanne Mubarak, the first lady of Egypt, was pressured by UNICEF to use the term “street children” for the first time in public in a formal address. From then on, it was adopted by the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) and was taken on as one of the Council’s primary social issues.\(^{303}\) Prior to the Egyptian Revolution of February 2011, the issue of street children fell under the Council’s program on “Children at Risk”, one of the eight priority areas highlighted by the Council. Far

\(^{300}\) Fahmi, 89.
\(^{301}\) Ibid., 191.
\(^{302}\) Ibid., 191. Author’s emphasis.
\(^{303}\) Ibid., 191.
from denying the existence of the problem of street children, the Council stated, “Believing that street children warrant the same rights as other children for a childhood free from hunger and fear, NCCM believes that it is the collective responsibility of parents, government, NGOs and society to provide care, shelter, food, education, health care and future prospects for these children.”\textsuperscript{304} The Council’s work is based on the National Strategy for the Protection, Rehabilitation and Reuniting of Street Children in Egypt, launched by Suzanne Mubarak in 2003, which gave the NCCM the primary role of coordinating domestic and international civil society activity with government activity on street children and “aims to change prevailing stereotypes, prepare qualified personal to deal with the issue, provide and mobilize national resources to finance protection, care and rehabilitation programs.”\textsuperscript{305}

It should be noted that despite the focus of the NCCM on the issue of street children and the positive relationship between the NCCM and EASSC, the Council “did not do much to prevent the dismantling of the [EASSC]” thereby co-opting the issue of street children away from the CSO and capturing it in a GONGO.\textsuperscript{306} In fact, the NCCM has adopted many of EASSC’s activities and strategies and implemented them through their own government-controlled shelters, centers and projects.

\textit{Interaction with the Regime}

EASSC had a tense and confrontational relationship with the regime throughout its operation. From the very beginning of the PAR project through the life of the official CSO, the

\textsuperscript{305} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{306} Fahmi, 160.
regime was suspicious of the project, accusing the CSO staff of “defaming Egypt.”

This relationship worsened over the life span of the CSO, eventually becoming aggressive and resulting in the decision by the regime to abruptly shut down EASSC in 2001. The interaction between the EASSC and the regime stemmed from two types of issues: “normal” bureaucratic hurdles, such as registration with different government bodies and obtaining government permission for activities or funding; and substantive complaints by the government over the content and methodology of the CSO’s work.

**Bureaucratic and Logistical Hurdles**

Despite the extreme nature of the forced closing of the CSO, which will be discussed in more detail below, most of the negative interaction of the EASSC and the regime was due to the first category of logistical and bureaucratic issues. As Dr. Fahmi notes in his book, and as echoed by many CSO activists in Egypt, the bureaucratic structures that guide all CSO activity in Egypt impede, both intentionally and unintentionally, the daily work of CSOs. Thus, one of the early hurdles the PAR project had to overcome was “working out the intricacies of how to obtain approval for our activities from the relevant Egyptian authorities in a context that did not encourage the undertaking of such research.”

The first formal interaction the CSO had with the Egyptian government was through the permitting process, which began in the Spring of 1993. Because EASSC initially developed out of an academic research project, they were required to obtain a research permit from the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) to carry out the participatory action research on the street. CAPMAS has the discretion to deem projects as dealing with “sensitive

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307 Interview with CSO actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
308 Fahmi, 106.
issues,” thereby requiring the permit applicants to obtain approval from both the City Governor and the State Security Intelligence Department. The issue of street children was, in fact, deemed “sensitive”, and the required approval was sought and obtained through the help of the Social Development Consultants (SDC). Because of SDC’s resources and experience they were able to obtain the necessary approval and final permit relatively quickly. The alliance with SDC was of further strategic value as any research project in Egypt must be affiliated with a “recognized and politically approved research institution.” And the SDC researcher affiliated with Dr. Fahmi was, herself, a Ph.D., further adding to the project’s academic credibility in the eyes of the government.

During the permitting process, recognizing that their methodology could be perceived as “foreign” and aware that they were officially tackling a politically sensitive issue, the researchers chose to manipulate their permit application to make it more appealing to the CAPMAS reviewers. This manipulation was not related to the content of the research project, as they had already received approval from multiple governmental authorities to carry out work on street children. Rather, Dr. Fahmi and the other researchers were concerned that their methodology – ethnographic street research through participatory action – would be perceived as too innovative and foreign to the CAPMAS reviewers. So, a decision was made to present a “typical” research project involving questionnaires and standard interview methods rather than ethnographic research. As Dr. Fahmi notes in his explanation of the early years of the project, “the Egyptian state apparatus has a strong aversion and suspicion of anything ‘foreign’.”

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309 Ibid., 92.
310 Ibid., 96.
311 Ibid., 90.
process is a lengthy one, taking a year on average. Thus, the researchers decided to go ahead and start their work prior to receiving the official permit. According to Dr. Fahmi, “the fact that we had obtained preliminary permission from the relevant Egyptian security officials convinced us that major problems were unlikely to occur.”

When EASSC evolved from a research project to a CSO, they faced a second registration process, this time through MOSS. EASSC was able to successful register officially as a CSO, but the process was long and arduous. After registering as a CSO, EASSC opened itself up to a second area of regime harassment: financial issues. Regime oversight of CSO financial activity is notoriously picky and rigid in Egypt, as has been discussed in detail in Chapters One and Two. In the case of the EASSC, the regime expressed significant concern over the CSO’s funding sources. EASSC received funding almost exclusively from foreign sources, including small European embassy grants and larger grants from international NGOs. The political implications of this are discussed in the section below on substantive and methodological issues, but it is important to note that any CSO that receives foreign funding must have that funding approved by MOSS as well as disbursed by MOSS, two bureaucratic hurdles that can (and typically do) significantly delay the receipt of funds by a CSO. This was certainly the case with the EASSC, where “getting funding approval was a long and hectic procedure.”

The second financial issue faced by the EASSC was record-keeping. As an EASSC staff member explained, in order to avoid government interference “you must keep your records the

\[312\] Ibid., 93.
\[313\] Interview with CSO actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
\[314\] Interview with CSO actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
way the government does – you need receipts for everything.”315 Because the EASSC was operating a drop-in center providing food and supplies for the street children it served, this often became an issue. For example, EASSC staff would regularly buy fruit or bread for the drop-in center at a small market or street stand out of convenience and cost issues. However, these sorts of vendors do not provide receipts, forcing the EASSC to commit a financial infraction in the eyes of the regime. This is just one example of the rigidity of the bureaucratic management of CSOs. And this rigidity was part of the explanation for the eventual shut down of the EASSC.

Substantive and Methodological Issues

In addition to typical bureaucratic hurdles, the EASSC-regime relationship was marred by government interference and verbal harassment. Most notably, the regime was unhappy with EASSC’s decision to use trained laypersons, instead of accredited social workers, as the street workers who were responsible for carrying out the fieldwork required by the project to infiltrate the street children’s communities. MOSS did not approve of this method, arguing that only accredited social workers should be allowed to work with the street children.316 Fahmi notes that “the street workers’ lack of professional accreditation was one of the main justifications provided by [MOSS] for dismantling the program in 2001.”317 In the initial years of the PAR, the government would frequently harass the researchers over this and other issues. The harassment was through dialogue and discussions and thus did not make it impossible for the PAR to continue operating; rather it was simply “annoying.”318

315 Interview with CSO actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
316 Fahmi has an interesting theoretical explanation for his decision not to use social workers and rather to train community members to serve as workers. Fahmi.
317 Ibid., 100.
318 Interview with CSO actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
Another issue to which the government objected was the subject matter of the children’s paintings, which were eventually exhibited throughout greater Cairo through the help of the British Council of Egypt. The regime officials wanted the children to only paint scenes of nature, rather than more controversial images depicting their lives and experiences, a demand that EASSC did not heed. Again, the interaction was based on dialogue and discussion, resulting in hassle but no substantive change to the subject matter of the paintings.319

One of the other ways in which the EASSC was forced to interact with the regime was through the local community. Because a large part of the CSO was the drop-in center, located in a middle class apartment building outside the Giza Rail Station, the CSO was connected to the local community and the local community had the power to complain to the local government about the CSO and its activities. Thus, before beginning the project, it was necessary to introduce the project to the neighborhood in a way that would alleviate their fears and dispel their prejudices against street children. EASSC’s founders therefore presented their project as one that helped poor children and attempted to reunite them with their family. “In so doing, the strategy was to capitalize on a deeply cherished value in Egyptian society, charitable assistance, which is also an obligation in Islam.”320 A second community perception issue was that of gender relations. Due to traditional Egyptian values that would look down upon a center that allowed intermingling of boys and girls, the center initially chose to have separate days for boys and girls.321

319 Interview with CSO actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
320 Fahmi, 132.
321 Ibid., 133.
The first highly negative interaction with the regime occurred six months after the opening of the drop-on center in April 1997, when 80 armed police officers along with the municipal authorities arrived to enforce a court order to demolish two make-shift rooms the center had built in the courtyard of the apartment building in which the center resided. The justification for this demolition was that the construction of the courtyard rooms violated municipal regulations. The municipal officials were informed about the violation when a tenant in the apartment building had been cited by the landlord for illegally opening a window overlooking the courtyard. In retaliation against the landlord, the tenant filed a formal complaint about the courtyard rooms.

The relationship with the local community was further complicated by the fact that a local councilwoman developed a personal and political vendetta against the EASSC. She was planning to run for parliament and her political career would benefit from dissolving the CSO, due to its controversial nature. She started a smear campaign against the EASSC, accusing them of feeding the children spoiled eggs and exploiting them, taking her claims to the media who publicized the accusations of exploitation.322 Thus, the CSO’s relationship with the local community soured very quickly. This experience highlights the role different levels of government have in controlling CSO affairs. It is not only the MOSS officials in their offices in Cairo who have the power to prevent CSOs from carrying out their activities, but also the local government officials in whose jurisdictions the CSOs actually operate. Particularly in the case of a small, Single-Issue CSO like the EASSC, the local government can, in fact, have more control over the CSO than the national government.

322 Interview with CSO actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
As stated above, financial issues fall into both the bureaucratic/logistical category as well as the substantive/content category of regime interaction. The EASSC had no problem raising money, particularly as their research began to show very positive results. In fact, in the later years of the CSO’s operation, they had donors “running after them” trying to fund them and had to turn down money that they did not think they could use.\textsuperscript{323} And when the CSO would submit a request to MOSS to disburse the funds that had been granted to them by various foreign funders (such as UNICEF, Ford Foundation, Oxfam and several European embassies), the regime would frequently respond by saying that the EASSC was getting too much money and questioning why they would need so much money.\textsuperscript{324} In the end, foreign funding was the primary justification used by the regime for shutting down the EASSC. At the time, the EASSC was about to receive a major cash infusion in the form of Swiss debt forgiveness to the Egyptian government. This money would have allowed the EASSC to expand and open up a permanent shelter for street children.\textsuperscript{325} It appears that this large grant was the straw that broke the camel’s back in the eyes of MOSS. While not technically foreign funding (the EASSC would be given money that the Egyptian government owed the Swiss government, rather than receiving a typical grant), this large amount of money offered by a foreign source caused a great deal of suspicion in the eyes of MOSS. Furthermore, MOSS seemed to be willing to tolerate the EASSC, as long as they remained small and contained in one small area of Cairo. Once they started to grow both physically and vocally, through the travelling art exhibition and an increased interest in the issue of street children in Egypt both locally and internationally, they became a threat to the regime.

\textsuperscript{323} Interview with CSO actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.  
\textsuperscript{324} Interview with CSO actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.  
\textsuperscript{325} Interview with CSO actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
Thus, the decision was made in 2001 to shut down the EASSC without warning. EASSC staff note that there was no single factor responsible for the shut down, rather it was due to a combination of factors such as foreign funding, growth described above, the interference of the local community (particularly the councilwoman mentioned above) and logistical and financial issues.\(^{326}\) The EASSC founders did appeal the decision to shut down the CSO in court. They were unsuccessful as of this writing. However, some of the CSO staff decided to restart the project on their own in the form of a new CSO, which began work in 2004.

*Why Pluralism?*

The EASSC chose the strategy of pluralism due to a combination of high outside rhetorical support, high level of perceived threat to the regime and medium access to foreign funding. As stated above, at the time that EASSC began operating the issue of street children was of particular important to multiple international NGOs, particularly UNICEF and the International Labor Organization. These two organizations not only publicized the issue of street children on an international scale, but also worked to address the issue with the Egyptian government. The International Labor Organization has had an office in Cairo since 1959 and UNICEF has consistently worked with the Government of Egypt to advocate for increased child’s rights. Once both of these organizations began to focus on the specific issue of street children, EASSC as one of the only CSOs working on the issue was able to more easily advocate for an issue that the regime had previously ignored.

However, EASSC did represent a high level of threat to the Egyptian regime because of the initial lack of attention on this issue. As stated above, the Egyptian government frequently

\(^{326}\) Interview with CSO actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
accused EASSC of “defaming” Egypt by highlighting the issue of street children. EASSC was also seen as a foreign collaborator for taking all foreign funding and for its connections to the international organizations mentioned above. EASSC was also threatening because of its success. As the organization grew and drew even more international (and domestic) attention, the Egyptian government saw EASSC as a growing threat, resulting in the eventual closing down of the CSO. Despite the eventual failure of the EASSC, the strategy choice of pluralism is logical and theoretically sound. EASSC recognized the potential threat they represented to the government and believed that a combination of their small size and high levels of outside rhetorical support would protect them from the extreme levels of government pushback that they in fact faced. This only serves to highlight that a DCSO’s strategy choice is made with imperfect information and without the ability to see the future. A DSCO chooses the strategy that they believe will provide them with the best chance of success. As the case of the EASSC shows, they are not always correct.

Why do DCSOs Choose Pluralism?

In all three case studies, the CSO chose to adopt the strategy of pluralism due to a combination of three factors: the level of protection they believed they would receive from the rhetorical support provided by the international community, the ease with which they were able to receive non-governmental grants and the level of threat that their issue(s) represented to the regime. While all three CSOs chose the same strategy for the same basic reasons, these three particular cases were selected because they each explain something slightly different about the application of the strategy of pluralism. In all three cases, the CSO was addressing an issue that
the government chose to ignore or made clear it did not want highlighted in the public sphere, but in the case of EASSC that issue was a high level of threat as the government had failed to address the issue; in the case of ADEW the issue of women’s development was only a medium level of threat due to the rights-based approach to the issue; and in the case of CEOSS the combination of a few medium level threat issues (such as FGM) combined with a redline issue (national unity) provided a level of medium/high threat. Regardless of these differences, in order to effectively address their issues, each CSO had to adopt the strategy that gave it the greatest level of freedom from regime control: pluralism.

Despite the controversial nature of each CSO’s issue area it is important to recognize that none of the CSOs choose to adopt an overly antagonistic relationship with the regime. EASSC, for example, chose to adopt a strategy of what Fahmi calls “soft advocacy.” While they did have an advocacy goal of changing the way the Egyptian regime dealt with the issue of street children, their primary goal was to improve the lives of Egypt’s street children. Thus, they did not seek out antagonistic interactions with the regime, but rather attempted to highlight the issue of street children in a positive way, most notably through the art exhibition. During the art exhibition, which was initially displayed in 1998 at the British Council in Cairo, MOSS staff and other regime members were invited and welcomed to meet the children and see the positive work of the drop-in center. The exhibition was reported by the BBC in both Arabic and English, highlighting the issue further. The EASSC strategy of “soft advocacy” did not succeed in the end, as the CSO was shut down by the regime. Fahmi notes:

> This raises a question regarding the appropriateness of soft advocacy in light of escalating conservativism in the North and repressive regimes in the South... It would

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327 Fahmi.
thus seem that today’s activities increasingly need action strategies at the local level that aim at resisting the trickle down of oppressive tendencies with a view to saving some of the essential values of the humanist project.328

EASSC’s choice of soft advocacy was similar to CEOSS and ADEW. Both CEOSS and ADEW address controversial issues, but are also quick to note that while they seek to improve the lives of their beneficiaries and, particularly in the case of ADEW, to change the way the state deals with their issue (Christian-Muslim relations in the case of CEOSS and women’s development in the case of ADEW), they are not seeking to replace the state. Each CSO has a strong advocacy side to its actions, but they are also involved in a dialogue with the regime that makes it clear to the regime that the services they provide are essential to the Egyptian public but are not meant to bring about the regime’s downfall.

Each of the CSOs discussed in this chapter also believed that due to the international attention on their issue area they would be sufficiently protected from regime backlash. In the case of CEOSS, connection to a large diaspora community was very important in allowing CEOSS to address controversial issues. Additionally, CEOSS’ access to individual donations and large influx of foreign grants, starting with its initial seed grant, has enabled CEOSS to operate continuously. In the case of ADEW, the significance of the women’s rights movement to the international community, an issue that is frequently brought up in bilateral discussions with the Egyptian regime and her foreign benefactors, has successfully provided ADEW cover for its work. But in the case of EASSC, despite vocal international NGO support for the issue of street children, EASSC was not sufficiently protected from regime interference.

328 Ibid., 168-9.
As described above, the two primary ways in which the work of EASSC was perceived as a threat to the regime was its connection to foreign donors and the fact that the CSO chose to take on an issue that the government failed to acknowledge. EASSC had access to foreign funds, receiving funding from UNICEF, CIDA, the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives, Oxfam-GB, Doctors without Borders, the Ford Foundation, the Air France Foundation as well as small grants and in-kind support from multiple European embassies in Cairo including the French, British, German, and Dutch embassies. ^329 None of these funding sources is “fishy” ^330 and all of these organizations regularly fund Egyptian CSOs and have done so for decades. However, the regime used the issue of large influxes of foreign money to attempt to discredit the CSO.

It is clear that not only did the Egyptian regime hope to keep the problem of street children quiet, but also they were very threatened by the increasing attention paid to the issue by large international NGOs such as UNICEF. Thus, EASSC, by both highlighting the issue and taking money from those who were embarrassing Egypt, set off alarms to MOSS in ways that ADEW and CEOSS were able to avoid. Throughout the history of the CSO, EASSC was “persistently dismissed by the bureaucrats as being culturally alien to Egyptian society.” ^331 Despite the overwhelming size of the problem and the incredible success EASSC achieved in changing public perception about street children and aiding the individual children with whom they worked, the Egyptian government refused to acknowledge the problem for many years. When, in 1998, the government finally began to address the issue out of pressure by both local and international NGOs, it was in the government’s interest to maintain control over the

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^329 Ibid., 5.
^330 This term was used by a CSO official whom I interviewed in Cairo in October 2010.
^331 Fahmi, 141.
problem, thereby necessitating strict control over the few CSOs that dealt with the issue. Thus, the regime eventually shut down the EASSC when it became clear the CSO was not willing to play the government’s game. Other CSOs who deal with street children do continue to operate, but they have allowed themselves to be partially co-opted and thus are not as threatening to the regime as the EASSC, which refused to change its strategies and activities to suit the government. As Fahmi notes in the end of his book about his experience starting the CSO, “both governmental and non-governmental organizations know about the abuses and exploitation of street children, yet a law of silence prevails; the threat of the counter-accusation of defaming Egypt is too intimidating.”

Another area where the three case studies differ is their size. CEOSS has been successful for over 50 years in part because of its very large size. Size is not sufficient to explain CEOSS’ success or strategy choice, but the fact that CEOSS is so large makes it much more difficult for the government to have any real impact on the organization. Unlike EASSC, which was easy to shut down due to its very small size, the Egyptian regime would face significant bureaucratic and logistical hurdles if it tried to shut down an organization as large as CEOSS. ADEW, while medium-sized, is very vocal and active in the public sphere. Shutting down ADEW would represent similar challenges to the regime as shutting down a larger organization.

It is clear from the three case studies of CEOSS, ADEW and the EASSC that diverse CSOs choose pluralism for the same reason: a combination of high outside rhetorical support, a medium or high level of perceived threat and a medium or high level of access to foreign funding. While in some cases (such as ADEW) access to a steady stream of foreign funding and

332 Ibid., 146.
strong international connections is more important than the issue area in selecting pluralism, in other cases (such as CEOSS) the existence of a vocal and powerful diaspora or other international community supporting your cause is more important than access to foreign funding. Nevertheless, when a DCSO has high levels of outside rhetorical support and is perceived as threatening to the regime, it is most likely to choose pluralism.

**Outliers**

As Table 6 (Appendix) shows, a few CSOs have made strategy choices that do not match the predicted strategy based on my theory. This section will explain the two CSOs that chose pluralism, despite a different predicted strategy in an attempt to further elucidate the strategy of pluralism.

*Alashanek Ya Balady*

Type: Charity and Development Strategy: Pluralism

According to my theory, Alashanek Ya Balady Association for Sustainable Development (AYB-SD) should have chosen a strategy of administrative co-optation based on its low level of outside rhetorical support, low level of perceived threat to the regime and medium level of access to foreign funding, but rather has chosen a strategy of pluralism (see Table 6, Appendix). AYB-SD is a medium-sized Charity and Development CSO that was started as a student club in 2002 by Raghda El Ebrashi, a then-student at the American University in Cairo (AUC). El Ebrashi wanted to change the relationship of CSOs with their beneficiaries from that of charity to that of development. Thus, the club asked its volunteers to donate their time through educating poor children, providing vocational training and establishing income-generating projects for their
beneficiaries. The initial project was successful and opened branches at Ain Shams University and Cairo University in 2003. AYB-SD registered with MOSS as a CSO in 2005.

The general goal of AYB-SD is to “break down the wall of separation” between the classes within Egypt. Within this greater goal, AYB-SD has four major priorities: learning, entrepreneurship, employment and activism. Thus, AYB-SD carries out several types of projects including training for youth and women on life skills and vocational skills, a technical assistance and loans program for underprivileged communities, employment opportunities for youth through partnerships with the private sector, and a franchise system where youth can start their own branch of AYB-SD at their university and receive seed funding, capacity building and access to AYB-SD’s materials to start the organization. Today there are 10 branches of AYB-SD on campuses throughout Egypt.

AYB-SD is coded as a low level of outside rhetorical support because they are not represented by a diaspora community and the organization does not address issues that are widely championed by the international community. As stated above, AYB-SD works on basic development issues that represent a low level of threat to the regime, including job skills training, loan programs and unemployment for youth and women, in particular. AYB-SD relies on a variety of funding sources and does accept foreign funding. The organization received its first institutional grant in 2007 from the International Youth Foundation, an international NGO based in the United States. AYB-SD has also received monetary and in-kind donations from several Egyptian and international companies including Vodafone, Aramex, Shell, Booz Allen

334 Ibid.
Hamilton, Pachin, Samsung, Abercrombie and Kent, Link dot Net, Nissan and Ahl Cairo Magazine. AYB-SD also partners with international foundations and organizations including Drosos, UNDP, the Near East Foundation, the Global Fund for Children, and the Sawiris Fund for Social Development. AYB-SD has worked with three Egyptian public sector groups – the Egyptian Cabinet’s Information and Decision Support Center, the Social Contract Center, and the National Council for Youth.\(^{336}\) These partnerships should not be construed as co-optation, however, as AYB-SD generally provides the government bodies with advice, knowledge and support and does not allow for government interference in their projects.

Based on the interaction of the three variables that make up AYB-SD’s type of Charity and Development (low outside rhetorical support, low level of perceived threat and medium level of access to foreign funding), AYB-SD should choose administrative co-optation. A DCSO that opts for administrative co-optation will decide to allow for regime-friendly administrative measures, such as only accepting specific sources of funding, partnering with regime-friendly or government-sponsored DCSOs, or allowing regime allies to sit on their board and participate in their meetings. Administratively co-opted DCSOs may even seek out regime allies to support them and participate at an official level in order to alleviate regime opposition to their activities, but knowing that they will then have to self-censor their discourse. None of this behavior is exhibited by AYB-SD. Rather, AYB-SD has chosen to pursue a strategy of pluralism, operating outside of government control.

The primary explanation for AYB-SD’s strategy choice of pluralism instead of the predicted strategy of administrative co-optation is due to its leadership. El Ebrashi is a prominent

\(^{336}\) “Story”.
youth activist, recognized for her work by several Egyptian and international organizations.  

This recognition has provided her with close ties to many influential international NGOs and put a spotlight on her work in Egypt. Thus, while AYB-SD has a low level of outside rhetorical support, El Ebrashi herself has a high level of outside rhetorical support. AYB-SD is not a one-woman operation, however. In addition to Ebrashi, several of AYB-SD’s board members are also well-connected to the international community, many of whom have worked and/or studied in the United States. Thus the AYB-SD board’s strong and numerous connections to the international community and El Ebrashi’s notoriety have provided her the same types of protection afforded to Protected Minority CSOs, allowing AYB-SD to choose pluralism instead of administrative co-optation.

**Federation of Youth NGOs**

Type: Charity and Development  
Strategy: Pluralism

According to my theory, the Federation of Youth NGOs should have chosen a strategy of ideological co-optation based on its low level of outside rhetorical support, medium level of perceived threat to the regime and medium level of access to foreign funding, but rather chose pluralism (see Table 6, Appendix). The Federation is a small CSO started in 2006 as one of the incubator projects of Nahdet el Mahrousa (discussed in detail in Chapter Four, “Co-optation”).

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337 Ebrashi was named one of the 65 most influential social entrepreneurs and future leaders in Egypt by *Al Ahram Newspaper*, one of the 35 most influential international social entrepreneurs under 35 by Shell International and *World Business Magazine* in London, one of the 100 influential global young social entrepreneurs by the UNDP and Microsoft Malaysia and one of the 30 most influential social entrepreneurs in Egypt by First Lady Suzanne Mubarak. El Ebrashi has also been selected as an advisor for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in Egypt, one of 20 YouthActionNet Global Fellows in the United States, the Synergos Fellowship (also in the United States) as an Arab World Social Innovator. She received the King Abdullah Award in Jordan for Youth Innovation and Achievement, and was selected as a Young Global Leader by the Schwab Foundation and the World Economic Forum, as well as an Ashoka Fellow. Safaa Abdoun, “Award-Winning El Ebrashi Stresses that Egypt Needs Development, not Charity,” *Daily News Egypt*, August 22, 2008; “Story”.

338 “Story”.

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The idea to start a federation of youth CSOs came out of a 2004 workshop organized by the Goethe Institute, which brought together 25 Egyptian CSOs working on youth development. It is an umbrella organization for youth CSOs in Egypt that had 14 organizational members as of 2011. While the primary goal of the Federation is to strengthen the capacity of youth-led CSOs by providing technical and human resources as well as financial management and legal advice, it also works to coordinate between CSOs and donors to aid youth-led CSOs in finding and receiving funding, coordinate amongst CSOs to help them learn best practices from one another and to resolve disputes between youth-led CSOs, and to promote the concept of youth-led CSOs in Egypt and around the world. Federation board members regularly attend international conferences on civil society activity and youth development in order to network and promote the concept of Egyptian youth CSOs.339

The Federation values diversity and works with CSOs that are engaged in a wide variety of development projects with the overall mission of improving all youth-led CSOs in Egypt. Federation staff note that youth-led CSOs face particular problems implementing their work due to a lack of experience.340 While youth-led CSOs face the same problems as other CSOs such as surveillance and interference by MOSS, bureaucratic hurdles and funding issues, youth-led organizations are not as equipped to deal with these problems as their non-youth CSO counterparts due simply to the fact that youth-led CSOs by definition are led by younger individuals who do not have the same level of experience starting and running CSOs as more experienced, older CSO actors.

Each project and CSO that makes up the Federation receives its own separate source of funding. The vast majority of this funding comes from foreign donors and the Federation explicitly states that it does not accept Egyptian state funding.\(^{341}\) The Federation helps coordinate the funding, match donors and recipients and does receive its own operational grants to help offset Federation costs associated with recruitment, workshops and coordination of CSOs. The Federation has partnered with UNICEF, the Danish Youth Council, the British Council, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, GIZ (the German Society for International Cooperation), Microsoft, EFG Hermes (an Egyptian foundation) and the Goethe Institute.\(^{342}\) The Federation has had some pushback from the government, and complains about the amount of time it takes to get money and projects approved by MOSS and the Security Services. Federation staff note that they have had projects that were completely rejected by MOSS and thus never implemented and other projects that were effectively stopped because it took multiple years for their funding to be released to the Federation.\(^{343}\) However, the Federation continues to support issues and activities of all varieties, as long as they do not cross the redlines of religion and politics.\(^{344}\) Some of the projects that they have supported have dealt with youth entrepreneurship, social and political awareness, and development of slum areas. The Federation deals with the difficult relationship of CSOs and the state by employing a full time lawyer and financial adviser to make sure that the organization is following the Associations Law and meeting all administrative requirements. Nevertheless, the law is “vague” and application of the law “irregular”, according to Federation

\(^{341}\) “El-Itihad El Nowae l’Jamaeat El Shabab (Federation of Youth NGOs)”.
\(^{342}\) Ibid.
\(^{343}\) Interview with civil society actors. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
\(^{344}\) Interview with civil society actors. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
staff.\textsuperscript{345} The Federation also operates transparently and democratically, with one-third of the seven board members (selected from the member organizations) up for election every three years. The Federation has a small staff of four paid employees and a handful of volunteers.

The Federation is predicted to choose ideological co-optation, due to their low level of outside rhetorical support, medium level of perceived threat and medium level of access to foreign funding. Although some Federation members may deal with issues that are supported by the international community, the Federation itself does not have a vocal outside supporter. The level of perceived threat that the Federation represents to the regime is medium because the Federation is a network of multiple CSOs. As discussed previously, the regime is more willing to tolerate single CSOs than networks of CSOs, which the regime finds more threatening to its interests. Thus, while the Federation does not address specific issues that the regime finds threatening, it does threaten the regime through its very existence. Despite a low level of outside rhetorical support, the Federation has chosen pluralism rather than ideological co-optation primarily because the Federation believes that despite its network of CSOs, it is able to avoid regime interference by keeping a low profile. According to the Federation’s website, the Federation is not well-known in Egypt and chooses not to advertise its activities publicly, instead encouraging the individual member organizations to advertise their projects.\textsuperscript{346} Nevertheless, as discussed in Chapter One, CSO networks are perceived as particularly threatening by the Egyptian state. Furthermore, the Federation aids and supports projects that themselves are considered a medium level of threat to the regime. The Federation does not have a high level of outside rhetorical support, the variable common to all other CSOs that have chosen pluralism.

\textsuperscript{345} Interview with civil society actors. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
\textsuperscript{346} “El-Itihad El Nowae l’Jamaeat El Shabab (Federation of Youth NGOs)”.
Rather, it chooses pluralism out of a perceived level of protection afforded by its off-the-radar status.

**Conclusion**

As the three case studies above demonstrate, development CSOs are most likely to choose the strategy of pluralism when they have a combination of a high level of outside rhetorical support and represent a medium or high level of perceived threat to the regime. Pluralism is a risky strategy for a CSO that can result in significant regime pushback or, as was demonstrated with the case of the Egyptian Association to Support Street Children, shutting down the CSO altogether. For other CSOs that choose pluralism, such as ADEW and CEOSS, the protection afforded by high levels of outside rhetorical support is enough to sustain the CSO and allow it to continue its activities without having to resort to either administrative or ideological co-optation. When pluralism works, it is the optimal strategy choice for a DSCO that chooses to address medium- or high-level threat issues, and for a DCSO that relies exclusively on outside funding. By choosing pluralism, a DCSO is able to address the issues of its choice in the manner of its choice. But in the rare cases where the regime is willing and/or able to crack down on a DCSO that chooses pluralism, the strategy of pluralism backfires. Thus, CSOs make their decisions based only on the knowledge they have at the time. They choose pluralism because they *believe* they are protected or because they are passionate advocates for an issue and they refuse to give in to government pressure to co-opt that issue. Either way, the strategy choice of pluralism within the context of liberalized autocracy, when state-society relations frequently shift and bureaucratic and legal rules and regulations are arbitrarily applied, is a risky choice,
best explained by the combination of high levels of outside rhetorical support and medium or high levels of perceived threat to the regime.
CHAPTER IV: CO-OPTATION

The strategy of co-optation is a middle ground strategy between pluralism and capture which enables DCSOs to simultaneously provide themselves with a modicum of protection from the Egyptian regime and operate with some level of autonomy. Co-optation is the most common strategy choice of DCSOs because it enables them to achieve most, if not all, of their goals while guaranteeing some level of cover from the regime. This cover is necessary because co-opted DCSOs lack the high levels of outside rhetorical support that protect their counterparts that choose pluralism. DCSOs that choose co-optation are not supported by or connected to a diaspora community or one or more international NGOs that advocate on their behalf. The exception to this is the subset of Charity and Development CSOs with a medium level of outside rhetorical support. These organizations address a wide variety of issues, one or two of which is supported by the international community, providing them with a medium level of outside rhetorical support, still far less than DCSOs that choose pluralism.

DCSOs that choose co-optation usually receive most of their funding from non-governmental sources, but some may choose to not accept traditional sources of foreign funding, relying instead on individual donations, Egyptian foundations or Egyptian and international corporations for support. Muslim CSOs, which choose co-optation due to the medium level of threat they possess to the regime, have a high level of access to foreign funding due to their access to direct donations through the mosque (which are not overseen by MOSS) and thus rely almost exclusively on individual donations for financial support, while the remaining CSOs that choose co-optation have medium access to foreign funding, but are likely to carefully select their
funding sources, depending on their level of co-optation. DCSOs that adopt a strategy of co-optation maintain a stable equilibrium with the Egyptian government by allowing for some explicit government control of and interference in their activities, refusing to take on issues that the government finds threatening and refusing to employ individuals that the government sees as a potential threat. By cooperating with the government by allowing for regime allies to sit on their boards or inviting regime officials to attend their meetings, co-opted DCSOs choose to invite a high level of government attention and open themselves up to close scrutiny. However, because these organizations have a tacit agreement with the regime that they will avoid redline issues and will stay within acceptable behavioral standards set by the government, they are confident that this government interference will not prevent them from carrying out their agendas.

In order to show why DCSOs choose co-optation this chapter will first describe the strategy of co-optation in more detail, explaining the two types of co-optation – administrative co-optation and ideological co-optation – and why Muslim CSOs and some Charity and Development and Single-Issue CSOs are most likely to choose ideological co-optation while some Charity and Development CSOs and some Single-Issue CSOs are most likely to choose administrative co-optation. This will be further explained through the use of five case studies: two Muslim CSOs (Resala and Dar al Orman), two Charity and Development CSOs (Nahdet el Mahrousa and the New Horizon Association for Social Development) and one Single-Issue CSO (the Education for Employment Foundation). Each case study will explain the history of each CSO, their relationship with the Egyptian regime and their strategy for regime interaction. These case studies will show that ideological co-optation is most desirable to CSOs with a combination
of low outside rhetorical support and high or medium level of perceived threat, while administrative co-optation is most desirable to CSOs with a combination of low outside rhetorical support and low level of perceived threat. DCSOs that lack the protection afforded by outside rhetorical support must take proactive measures to ensure their safety and survival. The level of co-optation varies depending on the level of perceived threat a DCSO represents to the regime. Thus, DCSOs choose ideological co-optation when they are a high or medium threat because they believe they need a higher level of protection from regime interference. Their level of threat has the potential to bring regime ire and could prevent them from achieving their goals. DCSOs choose administrative co-optation when they represent a low level of threat to the regime. These organizations are still vulnerable to regime pressure and pushback, due to their lack of outside rhetorical support, but due to their lack of threat, they do not require as much protection as organizations representing a medium or high level of threat to the regime.

Finally, I will discuss one outlier from Table 6 (Appendix), the National Egyptian Development Association (NEDA), which chose a strategy of ideological co-optation despite the fact that it is predicted to choose pluralism based on its type (Protected Minority). In explaining why NEDA chose ideological co-optation over pluralism, I will shed further light on the strategy of co-optation. An excerpt of Table 6 including the five case studies and one outlier discussed in this chapter can be found in Table 9, Appendix.

**What is Co-optation?**

Co-optation describes a strategy used by DSCOIs that do not want to confront the state head on (as in pluralism) but do not want to be fully subsumed by the state (as in capture). Co-
opted CSOs want to maintain some form of financial, administrative or political autonomy. Co- 
opptation can be divided into two types: ideological co-optation and administrative co-optation. 
Ideological co-optation describes DCSOs that change their ideological or political agenda in 
order to conform with regime requests or to preemptively prevent regime interference in their 
activities. A DCSO that chooses a preemptive form of ideological co-optation may wish to focus 
on a high threat issue (such as discrimination against religious minorities) but will instead choose 
 to focus on a less threatening version of the same broader issue (such as social service outreach 
to all members of a community that is populated by a minority group). A DCSO might also 
 choose to take on the more highly threatening issue, but after finding it difficult to register with 
 MOSS or receive disbursal of funds, the DCSO might then choose to adopt ideological co-
 optation by downgrading the threat level of the issue that they are addressing (such as shifting 
 from highlighting discrimination against minorities in the Egyptian military to highlighting 
 exceptionally high levels of youth unemployment of minorities). Thus, by allowing itself to be 
 ideologically co-opted, a DCSO is less likely to receive government interference and pushback 
 but is no longer explicitly addressing the original issue that it had sought to address.

Another form of ideological co-optation occurs when a DCSO shifts from advocacy to 
charity. For example, the same DCSO that wishes to address discrimination against religious 
minorities might initially want to work on changing the law to allow for a parliamentary quota 
for religious minority groups to help address the issue of official discrimination of minorities in 
 government hiring, but after receiving MOSS pushback, the DCSO might choose to instead 
 focus on providing youth in religious minority communities with tutors in order to aid them in
acquiring suitable employment after graduation. Thus, ideological co-optation can take the form of both changing one’s issue area and changing one’s method of addressing that issue.

Administrative co-optation describes DCSOs that do not change their ideological or political agendas, but rather allow for regime-friendly administrative measure such as inviting regime members and allies to sit on their boards and participate in their meetings, only accepting specific sources of funding, or partnering with government agencies, GONGOs or government-friendly DCSOs. DCSOs that choose administrative co-optation expect that this strategy will alleviate regime opposition to their activities, but recognize that it requires them to self-censor their discourse but will not require them to change their issue area or method of addressing that issue.

As the case studies below will show, DCSOs that choose co-optation do so due to their type – the combination of their level of outside rhetorical support, level of perceived threat to the regime and level of access to foreign funding. DCSOs that are most likely to choose ideological co-optation are Muslim CSOs, which have a low level of outside rhetorical support, medium level of perceived threat and high access to foreign funding, Charity and Development CSOs with a low or medium level of outside rhetorical support, medium level of perceived threat and medium access to foreign funding and Single-Issue CSOs with a low level of outside rhetorical support, high or medium level of perceived threat and medium level of access to foreign funding (see Table 4, Appendix).

Muslim CSOs represent a medium level of threat to the regime for multiple reasons. They are highly effective at service-delivery and charity, frequently eclipsing the official government
efforts to undertake the same projects.\textsuperscript{347} Regardless of their actual position, they are suspected of supporting the Muslim Brotherhood or other illegal Islamist political opposition groups.\textsuperscript{348} Muslim CSOs also tend to be large with hundreds (and in some cases up to hundreds of thousands) of volunteers and a highly visible presence and are frequently the most well-organized of all development CSOs. Recognizing the threat that they pose to the Egyptian government, Muslim CSOs preemptively allow themselves to be ideologically co-opted. Because they see their mission as providing goods and services to the Egyptian people and improving their human development, Muslim CSOs have actively refrained from engaging in politics and make a concerted effort to separate themselves, at least rhetorically, from Muslim political organizations. Furthermore, Muslim CSOs do not self-identify as such. Because of the consequences of associating with the Muslim Brotherhood (discussed in further detail in the case studies below), Muslim CSOs are very careful to avoid using any terminology that might connect them to this and other opposition groups. Therefore, Muslim CSOs are defined as those whose message and guiding principles are clearly rooted in Islam, whose activities include some form of religious practice, and whose leaders refer to Islam and Islamic principles when describing their mission and activities. Muslim CSOs choose ideological co-optation because they need a high level of regime protection but are unwilling to allow themselves to be fully captured by the regime. As Sparre and Petersen argue, Muslim organizations are able to operate with relatively

\textsuperscript{347} Wiktorowicz, ed. \textit{Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach.}

\textsuperscript{348} Sparre and Petersen. The Muslim Brotherhood was legally allowed to operate as a political party following the Egyptian Revolution of 2011, however prior to 2011, the organization remained illegal.
little regime interference as long as they stay within red lines and avoid any sort of political activity, thus necessitating a strategy of ideological co-optation.349

Charity and Development CSOs, defined as organizations that take on broad spectrum of activities related to basic development, can represent a medium of level of threat to the regime, thereby requiring some level of protection from regime interference. This subset of Charity and Development CSOs tackle one or more issues that the regime has acknowledged, but not openly addressed or has tried to minimize in public discourse and on the international stage, such as homosexuality, AIDS, minority issues or discrimination against women. Because these organizations focus on a wide variety of activities, including one or more controversial programs does not place them in the category of high level of threat, but rather, their inclusion of some controversial subject matter combined with their large size does draw regime attention. Thus, Charity and Development CSOs with a medium level of threat and medium or low level of outside rhetorical support, tend to choose ideological co-optation as the strategy they believe is most likely to ensure sufficient regime protection while still allowing them to address one or more general issues that the regime has failed to adequately address. By adopting ideological co-optation, Charity and Development CSOs must alter their desired ideological orientation or method of addressing the controversial issue(s), however, because their long term goal, by definition, is to improve the overall development of the Egyptian people, they are willing to accept this higher level of co-optation as they believe it will provide them a better opportunity to achieve their goals.

349 Ibid.
Single-Issue CSOs, which are defined as organizations that focus solely on a single problem such as the environment, street children or youth unemployment, by their nature shine a bright light on a specific issue, frequently one that the government has either failed to address adequately or attempted to hide. Thus, successful and vocal Single-Issue CSOs that address medium or high level threat issues are often subject to serious government attacks because they are embarrassing to the regime. Therefore, Single-Issue CSOs that represent a medium or high level of threat to the regime are likely to choose ideological co-optation in order to ensure their safety. In the case of Single-Issue CSOs, their size is both a benefit and a detriment. Many Single-Issue CSOs are able to stay off the regime’s radar as long as they do not have overt ties to international NGOs, partner with other CSOs in Egypt or across the Arab world or appear to be expanding into larger organizations with multiple locations. However, because of their small size, they are much more vulnerable to regime interference than Charity and Development CSOs and are easy to shut down and eliminate. It is thus in their interest to allow themselves to be ideologically co-opted in order to keep functioning and addressing the general issue area that they initially sought to address.

DCSOs that choose administrative cooptation are Charity and Development CSOs and Single-Issue CSOs with a low level of outside rhetorical support, low level of perceived threat to the regime and medium access to foreign funding. Many Charity and Development CSOs represent a low level of perceived threat to the regime. These are groups with a more strict focus on service-delivery and traditional charity that focus on development issues that the regime has openly addressed, rely on funding from both domestic and international sources, and employ large paid and volunteer staffs to carry out their activities. They may receive either low or
medium outside rhetorical support. Those organizations that address one or more issues that are championed by the international community may receive a medium level of support, which enables them to challenge the regime more directly than Charity and Development CSOs that choose ideological co-optation (those organizations that represent a medium level of threat to the regime), however because of their low level of threat to the regime, that protection is often not necessary. Thus, Charity and Development CSOs that are a low level of threat to the regime tend to choose administrative co-optation – allowing the regime and its allies access to CSO meetings and activities that would otherwise be denied. This level of transparency and co-optation does have an impact on the CSOs as it requires them to self-censor their discourse in meetings and does not allow them to openly criticize the regime, however it also does not require them to alter their ideology or methodology. By inviting regime participation in their programs and oversight of their activities, this group of CSOs believes it is making a necessary trade-off that will benefit it in the long term. Furthermore, because of the charity focus of this group of CSOs, they often welcome regime participation in their activities, believing that government buy-in to their projects is more likely to lead to long-term change. These organizations view themselves as working with the regime to improve development, not against it.350

Single-Issue CSOs with a low level of perceived threat to the regime do not need to adopt ideological co-optation like their counterparts with high or medium threat to the regime. Rather, Single-Issue CSOs that address issues the government has openly addressed are not likely to draw high levels of regime criticism and are thus likely to choose the strategy of administrative

350 Interview with civil society actor. October 2010. Cairo, Egypt.
co-optation. This strategy provides them with both the ability to continue to address their issue of interest and a sufficient level of protection from harmful government interference.

**Case Study: Resala**

Type: Muslim  
Strategy: Ideological Co-optation

Resala is a Muslim CSOs that has chosen the strategy of ideological co-optation due to its low level of outside rhetorical support, medium level of perceived threat to the regime and high level of access to foreign funding. Resala is not only the largest CSO in Egypt, it is one of the largest CSOs in the Arab world, with over 100,000 volunteers and more than 50 branches throughout Egypt and plans to expand outside of Egypt as well. Resala carries out a wide variety of Charity and Development activities aimed at improving the lives of Egyptians and eradicating poverty. Resala’s activities and mission are based on Islamic conviction and obligation to help the poor.

*History of the CSO*

Resala (meaning “message”) was founded in 1999 by Dr. Sherif Abdel Azeem, a then-professor of engineering at Cairo University. While teaching a course on engineering ethics, Dr. Abdel Azeem brought up the subject of volunteerism, discussing with his students why the West was more advanced than Egypt in regard to volunteerism. Dr. Abdel Azeem had recently completed his doctoral work in Canada where he noticed a prevalent culture of volunteerism in Canada not found in Egypt. While he did not intend to start an organization, his students were

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351 Dr. Abdel Azeem left Cairo University and became a professor of engineering at the American University in Cairo in 2004.

so inspired by the discussion that they decided to take action, forming Resala.\textsuperscript{353} The organization thus began as a student club focused on volunteerism and charitable work, carrying out activities such as blood drives, cleaning the campus, visiting nursing homes and orphanages. Resala began with 60 student volunteers and officially registered with MOSS in 2000 and greatly expanded their activities to include a wide variety of charitable activities aimed at the poor. A wealthy family of one of the student volunteers donated a parcel of land to the organization in Faisal, outside of Cairo, upon which Resala built its first offices and was able to carry out used clothing donations, computer training, services for the blind, deaf and handicapped, donations of food, blankets and medical supplies, microloans, blood donations, and services for street children. The land donation was made on the condition that the ground floor would be a mosque and that they would be able to get the project going within three years.\textsuperscript{354} While the overall goal of Resala is to promote volunteerism, they have carried out projects addressing almost every aspect of charitable activity. Dr. Abdel Azeem has made clear “that while helping underserved groups in Egypt is a priority, that is in some ways more of a side-effect. Resala’s primary goal is to be a vehicle through which youth can learn and practice contributing to their society.\textsuperscript{355}

Resala was an immediate success, easily attracting volunteers (particularly students and youth). As of 2010 Resala had 120,000 registered volunteers and over 200 staff members, by far the largest volunteer organization in the Arab world. Due to their success, Resala hopes to expand outside of Egypt, opening branches throughout the Arab world.\textsuperscript{356} Because one of their stated goals is to increase volunteerism in Egypt (and across the Arab world), Resala has focused

\textsuperscript{353} Interview with CSO actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
\textsuperscript{354} Interview with scholar of Muslim philanthropy. Washington, DC. June 2011.
\textsuperscript{355} Ibrahim and Hunt, “Youth, Service and Pathways to Democracy in Egypt.”
\textsuperscript{356} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
much of their effort on volunteer recruitment and publicity through word-of-mouth, television advertising, social networking and an impressive English and Arabic website (www.resalacharity.com). Because 90% of Resala’s volunteers are college students, much of the recruitment effort is focused on Egypt’s university campuses.

Methods

Resala relies almost entirely on individual donations for their funding. They have not received any international grants. Part of the reason for this is that Resala staff believes that their organization is not attractive to international donors, arguing that international organizations only want to fund organizations working with women and minorities.357 In reality, Resala has had problems attracting funding from Western donors because they are a Muslim organizations.358 While they initially approached a few international NGOs for funding, they were rejected and expressed some level of offense that international donors have not reached out to them.359 Resala has received a few corporate donations (from Mobinil and Vodafone) but relies mostly on individual donations.

After the success of the first Resala branch, they opened a second branch in Mohandiseen, a suburb of Cairo, in 2003. As each branch became a success, Resala expanded across Egypt, operating 55 branches as of 2011. While the first nine branches are registered with MOSS as part of the original CSO, the remaining branches are registered as independent CSOs, operating technically as franchises. Each branch serves as a full-service center, providing most of Resala’s services to the local community including an orphanage, collection and distribution of

357 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
358 Interview with Western donor organization. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
359 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
used clothing, financial and material help for the poor (food donations, mattresses, furniture, medicine, fees for school and marriage), Braille education and materials for the blind, blood donation campaigns, literacy programs for women, Quranic education, computer training and job skills training for youth and adults, and other education services including tutoring for the poor and teaching English, a recycling center, publicity activities and the sale of Resala merchandise.\textsuperscript{360} Resala does not limit their activities, also staffing a hot line where beneficiaries can call and request a specific service that is not available at the local branch office.

While Resala’s branches address a wide variety of activities, their primary focus is on the orphanages that make up each branch. As one Resala employee stated, all of the other activities are “the icing on the cake.”\textsuperscript{361} Each branch has an orphanage, taking care of 10-15 young children age 3-10 with services such as education, clubs and social activities, a big brother/big sister program and, at times, helping the orphans find full time homes. The orphans attend a regular neighborhood school and are kept away from the public eye, in an attempt to make their lives as normal as possible. The importance for Resala of assisting orphans comes from an Islamic obligation, according to Resala staff.\textsuperscript{362} While Resala’s founders will not describe themselves as a “Muslim CSO”, there is no question that their activities are based on Quranic principles and each of their branches involves Quranic education and houses worship facilities. Resala staff describe each of the organization’s activities, from donating goods to the poor to literacy training as connected to the concept of helping others in Islam.\textsuperscript{363} Because of Resala’s Muslim character, their biggest program is the distribution of Ramadan food and clothing. On the

\textsuperscript{360} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011. Sparre and Petersen.
\textsuperscript{361} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
\textsuperscript{362} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
\textsuperscript{363} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
day before Ramadan each year they distribute one million pieces of clothing to Egyptians who would otherwise not have a clean outfit for the holy day. They also distribute bags of food for the feast ending Ramadan, distributing 120,000 bags in 2010.364

Scholars who have studied Muslim CSOs, like Resala, have found that volunteers:

use Islam as inspiration and motivation for active engagement in society. Like the majority of young Egyptians, they feel marginalized and excluded from important decisions taken by both the regime and the older generation. They want to find their own role and position in society. Furthermore, they see social problems that neither the state nor initiatives from outside have been able to solve… they want to take responsibility for and contribute to the solution of these problems by creating a more just society.365

Most of Resala’s volunteers are youth, particularly young women. Sociological studies of these volunteers have found that the most prominent reason for their decision to volunteer is “religious obligation and reward, or *thawab*.”366 However, these volunteers represent a new generation of Muslim youth whose parents did not consider themselves religious. By volunteering with Resala, the youth believe they are returning to their Islamic roots and helping to repair Egyptian society.367 Thus, Sunny Daly argues that “the volunteers and the few staff who make up Resala are its primary beneficiaries, so its characterization as merely charity is perhaps too narrow. Though the organization provides many needed services to the community, Resala is a consciousness-raising organization in that its participants are transformed by their involvement.

364 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
366 Ibrahim and Hunt, “Youth, Service and Pathways to Democracy in Egypt.”
367 Ibid.
This is especially significant considering that there are few socially acceptable outlets for civic engagement in contemporary Egypt.”368

The Issue

Resala addresses two primary issues: Muslim outreach and charity and development. The issue of charity and development will be addressed in detail in the case study of the New Horizon Association for Social Development below, thus, this section will focus on the issue of Muslim outreach and the place that Muslim CSOs occupy in Egyptian civil society.

Muslim associations first began operating in Egypt in 1878 as a response to the Christian missionary efforts of foreign churches.369 The exact number of Muslim organizations in Egypt is difficult to pin down given that Muslim CSOs do not self-identify. Furthermore, official MOSS records categorize all Muslim, Coptic, cultural and education CSOs into one grouping (“cultural, scientific and religious services”) thereby obscuring the actual number of Muslim CSOs, which some scholars believe is an attempt by the government to underplay the influence of Muslim COS in Egypt.370 According to a 1995 Ahram Center report Muslim CSOs accounted for 34% of all registered CSOs in Egypt, with Coptic CSOs making up 9%. Thus, the Muslim CSO sector in Egypt is substantial.

Carrie Wickham notes that the proliferation of Muslim CSOs coincided with the overall proliferation of CSOs in Egypt during the early years of the Mubarak regime.372 While President

368 Sunny Daly, “Young Women as Activists in Contemporary Egypt: Anxiety, Leadership, and the Next Generation,” Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies 6, no. 2 (2010).
369 Makari.
371 Makari.
Anwar Sadat was the first Egyptian leader to support Islamists, as an effort to counter-balance the powerful leftist movements that had thrived under the rule of Gamal Abdel Nasser, Sadat eventually shifted his strategy to one of repression and containment. Sadat’s strategy failed, resulting ultimately in his assassination by Islamist militants in 1981 and unleashing a strong opposition force that the Egyptian government was unable to contain.

Mubarak’s initial strategy for dealing with Muslim CSOs was an effort to “consolidate his regime” employing what Bianchi calls “selective accommodation and selective repression.” That is, Mubarak cracked down on militant Islamic groups but left alone (and at times even supported) nonviolent Muslim groups, such as development CSOs. As Abdel Rahman argues, “The regime wished to neutralize the power of Islamic NGOs by attempting to co-opt those with no strong political inclinations, while subjecting the more politically active Islamic NGOs… to its most extreme measure of scrutiny.” This strategy allowed for Muslim CSOs to grow and proliferate. Thus, when the Mubarak regime began to crack down on the Islamist opposition in the mid-1990s, it was difficult to overcome the progress and entrenchment of Muslim CSOs carried out during the 1980s and early 1990s. Nevertheless, the relationship

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373 In stark contrast to Nasser, Sadat embraced Islam and called himself the “believer-president”, expanding government support of Islamic institutions and encouraged an increase in personal observance of Islam at home. Sadat also relaxed some of the official political controls over the Muslim Brotherhood, allowing the organization (which remained technically illegal) to publish its own newspaper and releasing many Brotherhood members from prison. Ibid. For a more thorough overview of the relationship of the state with Islamist groups see Denis J. Sullivan and Sana Abed-Kotob, *Islam in Contemporary Egypt: Civil Society vs. the State* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1999).


376 One example of this crackdown is the Mubarak regime’s offensive against the Muslim Brotherhood. In 1995, Mubarak’s government detained 81 leading MB activists, sentencing 54 to up to five years of hard labor. Two of the MB members who received the harshest sentences were Issam al Arayan and Abdel Monem Abu el Futuh, a former member of parliament and assistant secretary general of the Doctors’ Association and secretary general of the Doctors’ Association respectively. During the mid-1990s the regime also severely tightened its control over the
of Muslim CSOs and the state was not always positive. The Mubarak regime kept Muslim CSOs on their toes, interfering in CSO activities to ensure that they do not cross redlines. Abdel Rahman states, “The regime also seems to alternate between allowing moderate Islamists to operate in secondary political and social institutions like syndicates and NGOs, while creating a state of tension and confusion, and contributing to the further polarization of (civil) society.”

The success of Muslim CSOs during this period can also be attributed to the failure of official Egyptian government development programs during a period of economic liberalization. During the 1980s and 1990s Muslim CSOs, many operating out of local mosques, provided charity, health services, and education to millions of Egyptians. Bayat notes that beneficiaries of Muslim welfare services grew from 4.5 million in 1980 to 15 million in 1992, stating that “it is widely agreed that such Islamic community activities often outdo their secular counterparts.”

One of the reasons that Muslim CSOs have fared better than other Charity and Development Organizations is their high level of access to outside funding. Muslim CSOs can access two forms of funding that secular CSOs cannot: zakat (the obligatory payment of 2.5% of one’s income under Islamic law) and direct donations from individuals made through a mosque. However, most Muslim CSOs do not accept funding from Western donors. Rather,

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378 Bayat, “Activism and Social Development in the Middle East.” These organizations operate out of “ahli” mosques, which are built and controlled by the people, not the state.
379 Ibid.
380 Ibid.
they only take funding from “individuals, international Islamic NGOs, or governments of Islamic countries.”

As stated above, by their very nature Muslim CSOs represent a threat to the regime regardless of their actual level of political advocacy and connection to Islamist political groups. Wickham argues that although Muslim CSOs do not see themselves as “political” and do not “advocate a particular political agenda or take part in the competition for political power”, they represent a threat to the regime because they “directly [contribute] to Islamic mobilization” by “providing financial and logistical support to Islamic groups with political objectives” and contribute to “ideological outreach and network building by small clusters of independent activists, expanding the base of reformist and militant Islamic political groups alike.” Janine Clark agrees with Wickham, arguing that Muslim CSOs are “not only an alternative to state institutions: they represent the foundation of an alternative society. They stand in direct contrast to secular states that appear to have lost their concern for the poor. By offering successful social welfare services in the name of Islam to their fellow citizens, they represent an ideological and concrete or practical alternative to the present system.”

Other scholars argue that “contrary to common perception, Islamic social-welfare organizations in Egypt are not sites of Islamist political activity. They simply act as service organizations. The vast majority have no link to political Islam as such. Only a few were affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood and a mere handful with the radical Islamists, notably al-

381 Abdel Rahman, Civil Society Exposed: The Politics of NGOs in Egypt, 7.
382 Wickham, 102.
But whether or not the organizations themselves believe they are political does not seem to matter. As Clark argues, the very existence of these organizations is a threat, “Middle Eastern states are aware that what is at stake is the secular state and the dominant powers that uphold it….Within this context, social activities conducted in the name of Islam become politically charged – even if those working within them may not attribute political significance to their activities.”

Therefore, the regime does not differentiate between Muslim organizations, seeing all groups as a threat. Thus, Abdel Rahman notes, “The activities of Islamic NGOs are heavily scrutinized by State authorities because of their possible association with larger organizations whose aim is to create an Islamic society ruled by an Islamic State. It is impossible to establish which Islamic NGOs are part of such larger groups and which operate independently.”

Despite this level of potential threat, Muslim organizations have been “particularly skillful” at maintaining a symbiotic relationship with the state. By using their financial resources, organizational skills and access to mosques, media (newspapers and publishing houses), professional associations and political parties, Muslim organizations have “succeeded in using [their] resources to gain a large space within civil society.” Furthermore, Muslim CSOs are threatening – and successful – simply because they are neither part of the state nor fully separate from it. Sullivan notes, “Many patients come to Islamic hospitals because the hospitals are Islamic – ‘Islamic’ being seen as something between ‘public’ and ‘private’ and having the

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384 Bayat, “Activism and Social Development in the Middle East.”
385 Clark, Islam, Charity and Activism: Middle-Class Networks and Social Welfare in Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen, 19.
386 Abdel Rahman, Civil Society Exposed: The Politics of NGOs in Egypt, 7.
387 Al-Sayyid, 288.
388 Ibid., 289.
positive elements of both. Islamic institutions have the concern for the poor that the public sector is supposed to have and the efficiency and quality attributed to the private sector.”

Interaction with the Regime

Resala has had a relatively positive relationship with the regime due to two primary factors: their large size and their willingness to be ideologically co-opted by the regime. Resala staff is adamant that they are not engaged in politics in any way. Resala volunteers and staff members are discouraged from engaging in any sort of political activity or civic activism either as part of Resala or on their own. They are also adamant that they are not a Muslim organization. A study of Resala found that “when speaking publicly about Resala, the founder was always careful to deny political or macro-social goals…. Abdelazeem called [Resala] the Academy of Giving and he intends this to sound as far from oppositional organizing as possible. This was undoubtedly both his sincere view, and a public statement in order to protect his organization and its members from state intervention.”

Despite their ideological co-optation, Resala has faced significant bureaucratic hurdles. For example, it has taken four years for Resala to get an approved license to open a new branch, a process that Resala staff believes should take one week. Additionally, Resala has had pushback on where they are allowed to open new branches and new areas of activity that they wanted to engage in. Operating such a large organization, the individual bureaucratic rules that might be annoying to a small organization can be stifling to Resala. They must get every major

389 Sullivan and Abed-Kotob, Islam in Contemporary Egypt: Civil Society vs. the State, 33.
390 Interviews with civil society actors. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010 and June 2011.
391 Ibrahim and Hunt, “Youth, Service and Pathways to Democracy in Egypt.”
392 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
393 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
purchase approved by MOSS and must send their board meeting minutes to MOSS for approval. This sort of “time waste” and backlog leads Resala staff to criticize the Egyptian government for being overly bureaucratic, but not authoritarian.394 As one staff member stated, as long as you stay away from politics and religion, you are “safe” from government interference, noting that while churches are protected from government interference (“being a minority is an asset”), mosques have a very difficult relationship with the government.395 Resala also sees itself as partnering with the government. They believe that neither government nor civil society is sufficient to alleviate poverty in Egypt. Thus, they must work together to best address the problems facing Egyptian society. This is demonstrated by the example of Resala’s annual Mother’s Day event at Cairo Stadium in which the Egyptian Minister of Organizational Development gave a speech congratulating Resala on its work, ending with the words, “Thank you Resala, thank you volunteers!”396

Resala is also undoubtedly partially protected from government pushback due to their extremely large size. According to one Egyptian journalist, unlike other Muslim CSOs, Resala has grown so large that the government “cannot touch them or stop them from growing.”397 Nevertheless, in 2008 State Security required that Resala close all of their branches on national university campuses. This is one way that the government was able to contain Resala’s influence without receiving too much pushback. Resala acquiesced, deciding that it was in their interest to go along with the government’s request and continue to operate their other branches, rather than try to fight the decision. Thus, Daly argues, “This threat and Resala’s willingness to manage,

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394 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
395 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
396 Sparre and Petersen, “Islam and Civil Society: Case Studies from Jordan and Egypt.”
397 Ibid.
however, make it clear that Resala has little choice but to operate as a prop to the state in providing services to the needy, and that any further ambition will be closely monitored. It is for this reason that Resala claims no political motivations or society-wide vision… At the same time, as it does with other NGOs, the state spins Resala’s success as evidence of its own tolerance for ‘open,’ ‘civil society.’"  

Case Study: Dar al Orman

Type: Muslim Strategy: Ideological Co-optation

A second Muslim CSO that will be examined is Dar al Orman. Dar al Orman is a very large organization, operating in several branches throughout Egypt. Like Resala, Dar al Orman has chosen a strategy of ideological co-optation due to its low level of outside rhetorical support, medium level of perceived threat to the regime and high level of access to foreign funding. Dar al Orman began as an orphanage but has since expanded to take on a wide variety of charity and development activities aimed at alleviating poverty in Egypt and improving human development. Dar al Orman shares many characteristics and experiences with Resala and thus this case study will not repeat the arguments already presented above.

History of the CSO

Dar al Orman began operating in 1985 and formally registered as a CSO in 1993 under the leadership of two businessmen, Ahmed al-Qabbany and Dr. Khaled al-Nouri, along with an academic, Dr. Magdy Badran. Qabbany and Nouri are partners of a successful metal and aluminum works company, Qabnoury. The initial focus of Orman’s work was orphan care,
establishing an orphanage in Giza in 1996. The orphanage was first established by a group of businessmen including Qabbany and Nouri who purchased land and built the orphanage, supporting it through their own personal donations as well as television advertising to attract outside individual donations. Today Orman oversees six orphanages throughout Egypt. Each orphanage is home to approximately 75 orphans, with 50 “step-mothers” (similar to foster mothers) who work with the children. The long-term goal of the orphanage is to place all of the orphans in permanent homes. As of 2010, Orman had placed 2,000 out of 2,200 orphans in foster families.400 Due to restrictions in Islamic law regarding adoption (explained in detail below) most of the Orman orphans’ adoptions occur before the age of two years. After two years old, the orphans generally live at the Orman orphanage, living communally until age nine when they are separated by gender. While none of Orman’s orphans have yet reached age 17, Orman plans to provide “graduating” orphans with the financial resources necessary to continue their education at the university level and survive on their own.401

In addition to providing a shelter for orphans (including a focus on disabled children), the orphanage works to assist the orphans through health and wellness lectures for both the orphans and their foster families, religious lectures, medical supplies and treatment, and assisting in marriage proceedings.402 One of the problems facing orphans is the inability to marry due to a stigma against orphans within Egyptian society as well as the orphans’ lack of a dowry. Thus, Orman frequently assists orphans in marrying each other. The orphans of Orman attend regular school with their peers and efforts are made by Orman staff to make the children feel as if they

402 Laila El-Daly, Al-Orman Orphanage (Dar al Orman).
are just like their non-orphan classmates.\textsuperscript{403} Orman also provides summer activities, sports clubs, and a large, nationwide celebration of Orphan’s Day, in which Egyptian volunteers teach the orphans arts and crafts and other skills.\textsuperscript{404}

Orman has since expanded its work to include projects assisting cancer patients, microenterprise, interest-free loans and vocational training. Orman oversees a hostel in Cairo (the Ein El-Seera Orman Hostel) that hosts children with cancer who come from other parts of Egypt to receive treatment at the government-run National Institute for Cancer. The hostel provides free accommodation for the children and their families for the duration of their treatment. Orman also targets female heads of household through the “Cow Project” (also called the “Small Farmer” program) where widows in rural areas receive a cow to start a dairy with the goal of enabling the woman to generate enough income to support her household. This project also provides individuals in rural areas with the capital and supplies necessary for income-generating projects such as starting a street kiosk, copy shop or a café, in an effort to help them help themselves in the long term.\textsuperscript{405} The cow project provides the average farmer 350 Egyptian Pounds (about $57) per month, while kiosks provide between 450-600 Egyptian Pounds (about $74-$99) per month.\textsuperscript{406} As a large Charity and Development organization, Orman also provides medical supplies and medical care for children and the poor, assistance to the families of non-political prisoners, Ramadan food packages, school tuition payments, and furniture, blankets, and clothing donations to the poor.

\textsuperscript{403} El Gazzar.

\textsuperscript{404} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{405} Atia; El-Daly.

\textsuperscript{406} Atia.
One of Orman’s most innovative projects is its “An Organization for Each Village” project, a public-private partnership that began in 2006 with 40 businessmen in eight villages throughout Egypt. Because Orman was founded by two influential businessmen, they have always focused on the importance of the business community in driving development in Egypt and promoted business-skills and income-generation as part of their organization.407 As a public relations representative explained to Mona Atia, “The future of civil society organizations in Egypt lies with businessmen. They are taking the lead.”408 The goal of this latest project was to create eight separate mini-foundations, wherein the businessmen would supply the total financial needs for a single village and use those funds to provide comprehensive development for the village. The project was aimed at improving the standard of living of village residents while encouraging private sector investment and attracting private sector expertise in funding, planning and supervising the development of a particular village. While the businessmen provide the ideas for development and financial support, Orman oversees all administrative aspects of the project. Some examples of projects that have come out of the foundation model include literacy programs, improved agricultural production, education programs, medical shuttles, and vocational and skills training.409

Dar al Orman currently operates throughout Egypt, with 16 chapters in sixteen governorates, engaging in more than 15,000 projects in Upper Egypt alone.410 Orman employs over 600 people and has 5,000 volunteers.411 The organization has been extremely successful at

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407 Ibid.
408 Ibid., 203.
409 Ibrahim and Sherif, eds., From Charity to Social Change: Trends in Arab Philanthropy.
410 Ibid.
411 Atia.
fundraising, collecting over 120 million Egyptian Pounds (about $20 million) in its first eight years.412

Methods

As stated above, Orman has a strong focus on private sector-public partnerships and has thus partnered not only with individual businessmen to fundraise and provide expertise for their projects but also with private sector companies. For example, Orman has partnered with Mobinil, a large Egyptian private sector company, in a job-creation program.413 Orman has also partnered with the Egyptian government on multiple projects, including sponsoring the Festival of the Blind under the auspices of the Arab League and supported by the Embassy of Kuwait in Egypt.414 However, Orman also serves as a vocal lobbyist for orphan care issues, pressuring the Egyptian government to change the laws regarding orphan care, waive school fees for orphans and improve access to higher education for orphans.415 Orman also established Orphan’s Day in 1994, a nationwide event focused on bringing attention to the issue of orphans throughout Egypt that has since been welcomed and supported by the Egyptian government.416 Orman frequently invites government officials to their public events and emphasizes the importance of government and civil society working together to address issues of development in Egypt.417

Orman has also partnered with other civil society organizations in Egypt and throughout the Middle East including helping to develop a youth-led association in Kuwait and aid in

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412 El Gazzar.
415 Atia.
416 Ibid.
fundraising. This cooperation was done at the official, governmental level with a protocol signed between MOSS and the Kuwait Foreign Ministry. Orman does not reach out to the West and has not accepted funding from Western donors. Unlike Resala, Orman’s website is only in Arabic and does not reach out to the English-speaking community. Orman uses its fundraising and private-sector expertise to attract individual donations and zakat funds, thereby eschewing the need for Western funding.

The Issue

The primary issue that Orman addresses is orphans in Egypt. The issue of orphans is particularly complicated in Egypt due to strict prohibitions against adoption in Islamic law. Despite the fact that there are about 56,000 orphans in Egypt according to UNICEF, Egypt’s adoption law makes it very difficult for most orphans to get adopted. Part of the problem is that Islamic law prohibits orphans or other adopted children from taking the name of their adopted father or receive any inheritance. While children can be placed in foster families, and families are allowed to support the child financially and raise him or her in their home, the legal concept of adoption of prohibited in Egyptian civil and Islamic law. Furthermore, foster families are not allowed to keep children in their home past puberty. To get around this issue Orman and other CSOs aimed at addressing the issues facing orphans make every attempt to place children with families prior to age two (or sometimes four), when they are able to be breastfed by their foster mother. In this way, the mother treats the child as if he/she was her own

418 Modheet Wahba and Mona Fahmy, "Orman Adopts a Project to Assist the Poor and Infirm in Egypt”, "El Yom El Sabeah, November 17, 2011.
419 Ibrahim, “Orphanage Day Puts Adoption in Spotlight.”
420 Ibid.
and is not required to kick the child out of the home after puberty.\footnote{Ibid.} A further legal constraint on adoption is that Christian families are prohibited from adopting orphans because any child born in Egypt is automatically considered a Muslim. Thus, Christian families must go through the church rather than an orphanage if they want to adopt a child.\footnote{Ibid.}

The law that governs orphan issues is Chapter 12 of the Unified Child’s Law of 1996, which codifies the procedures for foster care. According to the law, there are 12 conditions that a potential foster family must fulfill. If a married couple fulfills that criteria, they must then apply to MOSS for fostering rights. MOSS oversees foster parent procedures, requiring an extensive application and background check of potential foster parents. The parents must prove that they are able to financially and socially support the child, must be between 25 and 55 years old, cannot have more than two children under 18, and at least one of the parents must be an Egyptian national.\footnote{Ibid.} MOSS then advises fostering couples (of which there were approximately 4,400 as of 2004) to inform the orphans that they “are the children of extended family members or friends who passed away and left them in their care.”\footnote{Amira El-Noshokaty, “Home Alone,” \textit{Al Ahram Weekly}, April 8-14, 2004.} These strict legal procedures, coupled with the stigma against orphans in Egyptian culture, have made the issue of orphan care one that many CSOs have taken up. According to one report, as of 2004 232 CSOs dealt with orphan care issues in addition to 62 residential nurseries.\footnote{Ibid.}

\textit{Interaction with the Regime}
Much like Resala, Orman has had a symbiotic relationship with the regime. Orman has refused to engage in political issues and has both welcomed and invited participation of the Egyptian government in their projects. One of Orman’s most successful projects is Orphan Day, an annual event that is supported by the Egyptian government and has grown since its first celebration on April 2, 2004 to a nationwide event celebrated the first Friday in April every year where thousands of orphans are invited to gatherings throughout Egypt to celebrate with games, live music, celebrity appearances and even a mass wedding of orphans.\textsuperscript{426} The 2010 Orphan’s Day celebration expanded the event by gathering over 4,000 orphans under the shadow of the pyramids of Giza, holding the Egyptian flag for 10 minutes to set a Guinness World Record for the number of children waving a national flag at once and called for Orphan’s Day to officially become “International Orphans Day.”\textsuperscript{427} The first Orphan’s Day was greeted with some regime criticism, as some MOSS officials believed the event was bringing the orphans false hopes of a better life that they were unlikely to actually achieve.\textsuperscript{428} Nevertheless, as of 2010 the Egyptian government, including MOSS and the Supreme Council of Antiquities, officially sponsored Orphan’s Day, recognizing the success and positive public image of the event and therefore co-opting it.

Orman has taken a political stance on the issue of orphans, advocating the government for more favorable laws regarding orphan care, however this is an issue the government has openly addressed and has never been considered a politically threatening issue, despite the stigma against individual orphans. Rather, Orman’s incredible success at developing and running

\textsuperscript{426} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{428} El-Noshokaty.
orphanages throughout Egypt has made Orman indispensible to the Egyptian regime in dealing with the issue of orphans in Egypt. Orman has been very careful to avoid any sort of political activity outside of orphan care and sees itself as strictly a Charity and Development organization, not an advocacy or political group. Thus, Orman has allowed itself to be co-opted by the Egyptian government, reaching out to MOSS and other government bodies for partnership and sponsorship of their activities. Even more so than Resala, it has benefited Orman to work with the government rather than try to operate outside of it or fight against it.

*Why do Muslim CSOs Choose Ideological Co-optation?*

Both Resala and Dar al-Orman chose ideological co-optation due to the interaction of the three independent variables that make up the type of Muslim CSO – low outside rhetorical support, medium level of perceived threat to the regime and high level of access to foreign funding. Muslim CSOs represent a medium level of perceived threat to the regime, as explained above. Regardless of their actual connection (or lack thereof) to political Islamist groups, Muslim CSOs are suspected of having ties to political Islam in general and the Muslim Brotherhood in particular. Because the Mubarak regime has adopted a strategy of selective repression against Muslim groups, Muslim DCSOs recognize that in order to avoid getting shut down by the regime and thrown in jail (as frequently happens to Islamist political figures), it is imperative that they avoid all political activity. Thus, Muslim CSOs are aware that in order to survive, they must allow themselves to be ideologically co-opted. While some non-Muslim CSOs are free to take on an advocacy and rights-based approach to development, Muslim CSOs must remain squarely in the charity and development camp, avoiding advocacy.
Furthermore, Muslim CSOs lack the outside rhetorical support provided to other high and medium threat organizations. Thus, Muslim CSOs do not have the outside protection that groups with medium or high levels of outside rhetorical support possess. While there is no doubt that foreign governments such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrain and outside groups like Hamas vocally support Sunni Islam (Egypt’s Muslims are almost entirely Sunni), the influence of these groups on the role of Muslim groups in Egypt has been minimal. While the international Sunni Muslim community has provided financial support to some Muslim CSOs, the Mubarak regime’s crackdown on Islamists during the 1980s and 1990s and overt co-optation of Muslim CSOs has been silently accepted, if not welcomed by the international community. Thus, Muslim CSOs have a low level of outside rhetorical support, requiring them to seek protection from the regime from within the regime itself.

The combination of low outside rhetorical support and medium perceived threat to the regime implies that Muslim CSOs might choose capture, rather than co-optation. However, the high level of access to outside funding afforded to Muslim groups has allowed them to financially prosper and thereby grow their organizations to the largest CSOs in the country. Muslim CSOs have access to direct donations that are funneled through a mosque. This money is not subject to MOSS approval or the bureaucratic hurdles facing donations made through regular channels. Muslim CSOs also benefit from the emphasis in Islam on charitable giving and the large amounts of zakat money in Egypt. Many Muslim CSOs, therefore, have no problem receiving and accessing money, which has enabled them to grow and expand their programs, making their charitable programs indispensible to the Egyptian state. Muslim CSOs provide goods and services to a large swath of the Egyptian population that the Egyptian state has been
unable to reach. Thus, the state recognizes the necessity of Muslim CSOs and is willing to allow
them to operate as long as they stay within the parameters described above, such as avoiding all
political activity and staying away from overt ties to the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist
opposition groups.

Muslim CSOs, such as Resala and Dar al Orman choose ideological co-optation due to
their lack of outside rhetorical support, medium level of perceived threat to the regime and
unique access to funds that are not vetted by MOSS. The strategy of ideological co-optation is
ideal for Muslim CSOs, enabling them to continue to operate without the fear of shutdown that
they would face if they chose pluralism or administrative co-optation.

Case Study: Nahdet el Mahrousaa

CSO Type: Charity and Development  Strategy: Ideological Co-optation

Nahdet el Mahrousaa (NM) is a Charity and Development CSO that has chosen the
strategy of ideological co-optation due to its low level of outside rhetorical support, medium
level of perceived threat to the regime and medium level of access to foreign funding. NM is a
youth-led CSO that focuses on social, economic and cultural development by helping youth
create and implement their own development projects, focusing on a wide variety of issues and
calling itself an “incubator of innovative social enterprises.”429 NM is a medium-sized
organization that assists with projects located throughout Egypt.

History of the CSO

429 Nahdet El Mahrousaa Organizational Profile (2011).
Nahdet el Mahrousa, meaning “the Renaissance of Egypt” formally registered with MOSS in November 2003. However, NM developed out of another CSO that was started by a small group of friends following their graduation from the American University in Cairo (AUC) in 1999. Upon graduation, the friends wanted to volunteer through established civil society organizations to help alleviate poverty in Egypt, however, they noticed a lack of youth-led grassroots organizations. The graduates began volunteering independently in the Masaken El Zelzal neighborhood in the Moqattam Hills area of Cairo, speaking with the women who lived in the neighborhood to determine their development needs. Based on their responses, the graduates set up a microfinance scheme to help the women with loans and met with the women on a weekly basis.

Because the graduates did not initially register their volunteer work as an NGO with the MOSS, they attracted the attention of the State Security services, who sent representatives to interrogate and threaten the graduates at their homes. Thus, they were forced to register their activities officially with MOSS. This initial organization was called “Fat’het Kheir” and it continues to exist as a separate CSO that is affiliated with NM. During the next few years as more youth became aware of Fat’het Kheir’s efforts, the CSO’s numbers of volunteers exceeded its capacity to use them. Additionally, youth who were aware of Fat’het Kheir’s success wanted to work on other development programs and models. Thus, several of the original AUC graduates split off and started their own independent CSOs, including Nahdet el Mahrousa.

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432 Fat’het Kheir works solely within the Masaken El Zelzal neighborhood to alleviate poverty there. Following the success of initial the microfinance program, additional programs have been established such as skills training and a community center with the goal of developing a replicable model for poverty alleviation combining volunteerism and development.
In November 2001, one of the initial Fat’het Kheir founders, Ehaab Abdou, started an email discussion with around 15 of his friends, many of whom were from the 1999 AUC graduate group, discussing a way to return to the development goals they had set out to address in 1999. The group, under the leadership of Abdou and his co-founder Ayman Ismail, decided to form a CSO as a platform for young Egyptian professionals to participate in development in Egypt. Nahdet el Mahrousaa was officially registered with MOSS in 2003. The goal of NM is “to make a positive and lasting impact on Egypt’s cultural, economic and social development through activating and engaging Egyptian youth in the country’s development, public work and decision-making arenas.” NM has a unique model in that it does not initiate its own development projects. Rather, it serves as an “incubator of innovative social enterprises”, whereby Egyptian youth are given the resources and skills and encouragement to develop their own innovative development programs. Thus, NM functions both as an independent CSO and a network of youth-led development organizations and individuals. One of the primary functions of NM is to provide seed grants and capacity building to individuals who are working on small socio-economic development projects in their local community. Working with NM, the small project can be scaled up to impact a larger population, with the goal of improving development in Egypt as a whole. Through these projects, NM works to advance the values of “diversity,

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433 The group first considered forming a political party, but realized that they would not be able to achieve their goals under this format, given the intense government crackdown on political parties at the time. They also decided against forming a not-for-profit company as the government, at that time, was particularly suspicious of these types of organizations operating as human rights CSOs.
434 Nahdet El Mahrousaa Organizational Profile.
435 Ibid.
tolerance, accepting the other, transparency, accountability, and pro-active social responsibility.  

Methods

NM’s largest project is its social enterprise incubation. Through the offices of NM located in downtown Cairo, off Tahrir Square, NM provides shared services for social entrepreneurs to establish their nascent CSOs including office space and infrastructure with computer resources, human resources including technical assistance and legal services, capacity-building and access to NM’s network of other social entrepreneurs. NM’s social entrepreneurs also receive a monthly stipend as well as a seed grant for their CSO.

The goal of providing these resources is to “incubate” the burgeoning CSO during its early stages of development so that it is more likely to succeed as an independent CSO in the long-term. NM identifies potential social entrepreneurs through an annual competition open to individuals or organizations. The annual competition process has been supported by outside donors including corporations (such as Yahoo!), international NGOs (such as the International Youth Foundation), and foreign funders (such as USAID).

Some examples of the social enterprises that NM has incubated include the Young Innovators’ Awards (YIA), in which young Egyptian scientists, engineers and researchers receive financial support, training and professional opportunities to engage in research and development projects throughout their higher education (undergraduate, master’s and doctoral

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436 Ibid.
437 NM also provides support in hiring full and part-time staff, volunteers and interns for each project, accounting services, project design and proposal development services, research support and best-practice training, access to technical resources, donor contacts, academic resources, media contacts, professional branding support, internet access, phone lines and email accounts, fully equipped meeting services and computer services and financial support. “Nahdet El Mahrous Home Page”: www.nahdetmasr.org (accessed July 11, 2011).
programs); Any Masry (“I’m Egyptian”), a band that promotes tolerance and diversity as well as national unity in Egypt; Misriyati (“My Egyptian Identity”), an educational curriculum that focuses on tolerance, peace and diversity; EgyptCarPoolers.com, a website that promotes the benefits of car pooling in Egypt; Green Arm, an environmental awareness and activism organization; Loving Hearts, an orphanage workers and foster care training organization; and Oyoun Art Group, which promotes learning through art for youth and children. In addition to the annual competition to identify social entrepreneurs, individuals and CSOs may also join NM as members for a 300 Egyptian Pound (about $49) fee. However, only individuals who are recommended or nominated by a current member may be considered for membership in NM. Individuals and organizations without NM contacts may attend NM information sessions to establish contacts and develop a relationship with NM in order to apply as a member.

A second NM project is Salon El Mahrousa, a weekly lecture series held at the NM office which serves as an intellectual forum for Egyptian professionals. The lectures address issues related directly or tangentially to development and are focused around five main types of lectures: economic, policy and identity series (public lectures by leading public intellectuals and NM members), tolerance and diversity workshops, “Egypt the Big Picture” sessions (panel discussions or movies on major economic, social and political issues facing Egypt including successful civil society projects), seminars and brainstorming sessions and other workshops.

In 2006 Nahdet el Mahrousa established a career and entrepreneurship development office at Cairo University. This project, in which NM partnered with the International Youth

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438 Nahdet El Mahrousa Organizational Profile.
439 “Nahdet El Mahrousa Home Page”.
440 Nahdet El Mahrousa Organizational Profile.
Foundation, USAID and corporate sponsors, set up a permanent center at Egypt’s largest university to provide career counseling, employment recruitment services and entrepreneurship services, the first of its kind at a public university in Egypt. In its first few years, the office trained more than 10,000 students and helped 800 graduates find employment. Due to this success, Cairo University eventually asked NM to replicate the office in six additional departments on campus and career development offices have since been set up at all public universities in Egypt. NM also set up “One-Stop-Shops” in youth centers across Egypt. Each shop provides vocational and technology skills training, career development support, sports and other well-being activities, health resources, cultural activities, and service learning and civic education projects. NM worked with the National Youth Council, a government body, to establish these centers and partnered with three separate CSOs (Alashanek ya Balady Association for Sustainable Development, Sekem Development Foundation, and Business Enterprise Support Tools) to manage the day to day operations of each youth center.

Another major part of NM’s work is partnerships with government institutions, businesses, other CSOs (both local and international), and educational institutions. Government partners include the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, Ministry of Investment, National Youth Council and government-run youth centers and hospitals. NM has partnered with numerous businesses, including Egyptian corporations such as Mobinil, Sekem Group and Cilantro Café, as well as international corporations including Abercrombie & Kent, Barclay’s Bank, BP, DuPont, ExxonMobil and Yahoo!. NM has worked with all 18 public Egyptian universities and the Supreme Council of Universities in

441 A full list of NM’s partners can be found in Nahdet El Mahrousia Organizational Profile.
addition to several private universities including Ain Shams University, Fayoum University, American University in Cairo and other educational institutions such as AMIDEAST and the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. NM has received funding and other support from several international NGOs including the Ford Foundation, Center for International Private Enterprise, Near East Foundation, UNDP, UNICEF, USAID and the World Bank. Many of these partnerships have worked to help youth prepare to enter the job market through skills development, career counseling and other training. NM has helped more than 15,000 university students and 5,500 underprivileged youth through these partnerships.  

NM receives funding through a wide variety of sources. Initially self-financed, NM still relies heavily on membership fees and contributions from individual members. However NM also receives corporate sponsorships and donations and grants from a variety of international and Egyptian foundations and donor agencies.

The Issue

Nahdet el Mahrousa works on socio-economic development from a comprehensive perspective. Their projects do not address any specific development issue. Rather, NM has incubated and supported projects related to youth development, arts and culture, healthcare, education, research and development, and the environment. However, NM works solely with social entrepreneurs who are young Egyptian professionals and tends to favor projects that are focused on youth issues. Thus, NM’s issue area of focus is both comprehensive development as well as youth development.

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442 Ibid.
443 “Nahdet El Mahrousa Home Page.”

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Despite NM’s wide scope of activities, they have a particular interest in two areas of development: employment and promotion of tolerance/diversity. The issue of unemployment (and youth unemployment in particular) is very serious in Egypt. According to a Brookings Institution report, over 30% of the population of the Middle East was between the ages of 15-29 in 2005, significantly higher than any other region of the world. This youth bulge has serious negative implications for the region. Scholars have connected a large youth population to increased levels of extremism and violence. High levels of unemployment have trickled down to the educated youth population, causing most Middle East university graduates to remain unemployed for several years after graduation. Youth in the Middle East are 3.5 times more likely to be unemployed than adults (in Egypt that number is 4.8), with youth employment levels of 25% region-wide. Nevertheless, youth have high expectations due to the experience of their parents in which a heavy-handed state ensured access to decent education and public sector employment. In reality, today’s youth face “poor access to quality education; long spells of unemployment; unproductive and low-quality work; and delayed plans for independent life due to the high costs of forming a family.” This results in a tremendous loss of potential and capacity and increasing levels of frustration amongst the restless youth population. As Navtej Dhillon and Tarik Yousef argue, “State institutions are no longer able to meet [the youths’] expectations for employment and social protection, and private sector jobs remain an elusive

444 Navtej Dhillon and Tarik Yousef, Inclusion: Meeting the 100 Million Youth Challenge (Washington, DC: The Wolfensohn Center for Development at Brookings & The Dubai School of Government).
446 Dhillon and Yousef.
447 Ibid.
448 Ibid.
reality."\textsuperscript{449} NM has recognized the youth unemployment problem and focused its efforts on tackling it from the bottom-up.

Through their career development offices at public universities in Egypt, NM seeks to overcome one of the greatest hurdles for university graduates – a lack of jobs suitable to the set of skills they receive through the formal education system. Rather than focus solely on training university graduates in the skills needed to become attractive candidates for existing jobs, as many Egyptian CSOs do, NM also encourages graduates to start their own businesses rather than looking for an existing job. That way, a university graduate will not only have his or her own business, but also will create multiple jobs for his or her classmates.\textsuperscript{450} This innovative method of finding employment for university graduates also addresses the issue of entitlement facing many Egyptian youth. As NM’s Managing Director Jackie Kameel explains, upon graduating from a strong department at a public Egyptian University (such as the Faculty of Engineering at Cairo University) and getting good grades, a student expects to have employers lined up waiting to hire him or her after graduation, which is not usually the case.\textsuperscript{451} At the private universities undergraduates receive job skills training that students at the public universities do not, so NM’s efforts target the network of Egyptian public universities, although they do have a few programs at some private universities. Through the career development offices at public universities as well as some of their incubated projects, NM is trying to erase the gap between public and private university education in regard to job skills training and career opportunities.

\textsuperscript{449} Ibid., 8.
\textsuperscript{451} Ibid.
In regard to promoting tolerance and diversity, NM is concerned with both promoting inter-religious tolerance (Muslim and Christian) and inclusion of women. Both of these issues were discussed in detail in Chapter Three. To address diversity and tolerance NM both incubates projects that support these values and practices diversity within its staff and board. The first president of the NM board of directors was a Coptic Orthodox Christian, while subsequent presidents have been Muslim and their board regularly contains a relatively equal number of women and men, Muslims and Christians. NM also tends to support and incubate projects that do not have any particular religious or ethnic focus, preferring projects that promote tolerance and diversity within their mission statement and activities.

Interaction with the Regime

Fat’het Kheir’s relationship with the regime before the formation of Nahdet el Mahrousya was simple and straightforward. As stated above, when the founders of Nahdet el Mahrousya first started their independent volunteer work, they caught the attention of the State Security services, who forced them to register officially as an NGO. This is neither surprising nor inappropriate. The founders were technically operating illegally. Additionally, during this time, some Egyptian foundations were engaging in money laundering and stealing from their clients. Thus, State Security explained to the founders that by operating a micro-finance scheme illegally, they appeared suspicious to the State Security observers.452 Once Fat’het Kheir registered officially as an NGO, they did not receive much government scrutiny. Nahdet El Mahrousya’s relationship with the regime was much less straightforward. NM has not had a contentious relationship with the regime compared to other development CSOs because they have chosen several strategies for

452 Interview with Egyptian civil society actor. Washington, DC, May 2011.
regime interaction that have allowed them to maintain a relatively peaceful relationship with both MOSS and State Security. These strategies have not, however, allowed NM to meet all of its objectives or tackle all of the issues they originally intended to address. As with any ideologically co-opted organization, NM chose to make trade-offs in order to avoid regime ire. And NM has been exceptionally successful at navigating the tricky landscape that co-optation can create.

NM’s staff and board members chose the path of ideological co-optation because they were keenly aware of the limits (both *de jure* and *de facto*) placed on CSOs by the Egyptian regime. NM board members expressed frustration at the role of the Egyptian government in “hindering the progress of the work of civil society” by imposing more restrictions on CSOs than are actually found in the Associations Law.453

An NM staff member noted that there are two types of government employees that NM had to work with – those who they “are in bed with” and can’t avoid, such as MOSS and SS employees, and those with whom they had sporadic involvement, such as the Minister of Industry or other government officers who worked on issues related to NM’s work.454 The first type are generally young officers who are unqualified and lack the capacity or knowledge to process funding requests or other routine paperwork. While many of them are well-intentioned, they are afraid to make any decisions on their own and thus their lack of action leads to a stalemate between CSOs and the government. The second group consists of government officials who like to use CSOs for PR purposes. One government minister would regularly invite NM representatives to meetings and conferences and make a show of having a “dialogue” with NM,

453 Jackie Kameel, managing director of Nahdet el Mahrousua, quoted in Page et al.
454 Interview with civil society actor. Washington, DC. May 2011.
however it was all for show according to NM staff. Because NM had a strong reputation and was “secular enough” and “looked like them”, some government officials, including the National Youth Council and the Minister of Higher Education were happy to support NM rhetorically and attend their events and sit on their board, but their support did not amount to much substantively. This was a mutually beneficial relationship, whereby NM received small, positive support from the regime and the regime gave off the appearance of supporting civil society. Other government officials supported civil society more substantively but were not connected enough and lacked formal channels through which to hold the government accountable.455

One of the greatest barriers to NM’s success has been that same high level of success. When starting the career development office at Cairo University, NM immediately came up against hurdles because their project was seen as replicating the efforts of a regime-supported organization – the Gamal Mubarak Future Generation Foundation (FGF) – which had its own building at the Faculty of Commerce. FGF was established by Gamal Mubarak, son of former President Hosni and First Lady Suzanne Mubarak, and 14 other businessmen in 1998 to aid Egyptian youth in employment and management training. Although NM did not intend to compete with FGF and believed that they were approaching the issue of youth unemployment in a different way using different tools and philosophies, Cairo University, a public, government-supported entity, initially saw NM’s career development office as a threat. NM had to go through a separate faculty (the Faculty of Engineering) to build its office and had, at times, a very rocky relationship with the dean with whom they dealt at Cairo University. From 2006-2010 NM dealt with two different deans. One dean stayed out of their way and allowed them to grow the office

455 Interview with civil society actor. Washington, DC. May 2011.
and function with little supervision. The second dean viewed NM as direct competition to other university efforts. NM staff described him as “jealous” of their efforts and “a real pain.” The dean cancelled several NM events without legitimate reason. He also manipulated their funding, requiring NM to deposit their payments to the university in special accounts that were seen by NM staff as “fishy.” NM complied with his requests, as maintaining a positive relationship with the dean was crucial to their ability to function on Cairo University’s campus. As a result, the career development office was widely successful and grew and expanded to other Egyptian public universities. However, NM was only able to achieve such success by playing by the dean’s rules, even rules they felt were improper and illegal.

Other examples outside of the Career Development Office have shown that like many other Egyptian CSOs, once NM became very successful, the government began to view them as a competitor rather than a partner. As Jackie Kameel said in a speech at the Brookings Institution, “We want to be perceived as a partner rather than a competitor or a challenge to the government or that we are pinpointing their mistakes or issues. We’re actually trying to help this government do a better job so we want to be perceived as a partner.” She went on to describe the phenomenon of CSO-government competitiveness by noting that once CSOs become large (and successful), “we’ve seen many of the civil society organizations being eaten up by the government institutions.” NM was able to overcome this perceived competition through a variety of strategies as described here.

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458 Page et al.
459 Ibid.
State Security harassed NM regularly both requiring NM leaders to meet with State Security in person and through other less direct communication. To deal with State Security, NM chose to open a dialogue between NM staff and State Security representatives to address any issues that came up. Although NM was transparent in its interactions with State Security, State Security did not trust NM and would read NM’s emails and had embedded a spy within NM to watch over their activities. NM became aware that a spy existed when a new member, the head of IT for the government-run Federation of NGOs, revealed information to NM staff that he would have no way of knowing. For example, the NM server was stolen and they received a call the next day from the suspected spy mentioning information only the person who had access to the stolen server would have known.

In the mid-2000s a third layer of bureaucracy, on top of MOSS and SS was added to the CSO approval process – intelligence services. The intelligence services entered the CSO arena after a session in the Egyptian Parliament where one of the intelligence ministers was unable to answer questions about how CSOs were spending their money. Thus, the head of national intelligence determined that national intelligence needed to oversee CSO efforts in addition to MOSS and SS.460 Although national intelligence began overseeing CSO activities in much of the same way as MOSS and SS, national intelligence was off-limits to CSOs. While CSOs were able to appeal to MOSS and SS for information about funding delays or other regime issues, the intelligence services would shut down any CSOs who questioned them. During this time, the government began to crack down on CSOs across the board. NM was told, in particular, that they needed to slow down their activities until 2011 when Hosni Mubarak had planned to step down.

from the presidency and Gamal Mubarak would take power through “elections” and they would then be allowed to re-start their activities. The Egyptian revolution of 2011 changed these political plans.

Why Ideological Co-optation?

Nahdet el Mahrousia chose ideological co-optation due to its combination of low outside rhetorical support, medium level of perceived threat to the regime and medium level of access to foreign funding. As a secular Charity and Development CSO, NM did not receive the high levels of outside rhetorical support available to some religious and Single-Issue CSOs. On the surface it may appear as if NM should receive a medium level of outside rhetorical support due to its focus on tolerance and diversity, an issue that is championed by the international community. However, as stated above, NM has made a calculated decision to avoid addressing controversial issues and political issues with the exception of tolerance/diversity and NM couches its support of tolerance and diversity in a non-threatening way, making clear that it is not an advocacy organization but rather it only promotes tolerance and diversity within its own organization and the organizations it supports. NM does not advocate for a change in laws related to tolerance and diversity and does not bring outward attention to the issue and has therefore not received outside rhetorical support for its work.

Nevertheless, NM represents a medium level of threat to the regime both because it has chosen to address the issue of national unity, however minimally; and because NM serves as a network of multiple CSOs. As explained in Chapters One and Two, the Mubarak regime

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461 Interview with civil society actor. Washington, DC. May 2011.
462 National unity is an issue that represents a medium level threat to the regime. As Abdel Rahman argues, addressing national unity through promoting the rights of a specific group of people, CSOs “challenge the
considers CSO networks and partnerships far more threatening than individual CSOs. By bringing together a variety of CSOs working on development throughout Egypt, NM is therefore somewhat threatening to the regime. NM has also taken funding from multiple major foreign donors including USAID, the Ford Foundation, the World Bank and UNICEF and its success has made it a darling of the international community. Because NM is run by young, smart, English-speaking Egyptians, the organization has been able to appeal to the international community in a way that the regime is uncomfortable with. Recognizing the precariousness of their financial relationship with the international community, NM has concentrated on individual donations, corporate sponsorships and membership fees as a steadier source of funding in case they are unable to access the foreign grants they have been so successful at winning.

While NM works largely on small projects that are not, in themselves, threatening to the regime, the organization as a whole has developed a very high profile as a result of its success. NM was acknowledged as a best practice in the 2008 UN Human Development Report and was nominated by the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to represent Egypt in the King Baudouin Award in 2009. As described above, this success has been both a blessing and a curse. While it was to NM’s advantage to show off their success in order to attract donors, the more they put themselves in the spotlight, the more they were likely to appear as a competitor to the government. Thus, NM navigated the spotlight very carefully, utilizing a very sophisticated website in English only and promoting their work in the United States (also in English) in order to draw the respect and attention of foreign funders. However, in Egypt, NM intentionally


463 *Nahdet El Mahrous* Organizational Profile.
avoided media appearances, did not publish all of their materials in Arabic and generally tried to stay under the radar. They make a concerted effort to not appear aggressive or threatening. They also provide their members with a manual on how to effectively communicate in public to avoid government scrutiny.

Another strategy used by NM is a focus on diversity and secularism. As stated above, NM promotes diversity within their membership and is thus seen by the regime as a secular CSO, which is beneficial to their relationship with the government, although they describe themselves as “neutral” – neither secular nor religious. This “strategy” is central to NM’s mission to promote tolerance and diversity but it is notable that NM’s incubated projects tend to avoid any religious or ethnic affiliation, which is another way in which it is able to avoid regime attention.

NM’s funding strategy has been very successful from a financial standpoint, but because they accept many forms of foreign funding, they have drawn regime attention. Initially, NM was self-financed. The young professionals who founded NM pooled some of their own financial resources to rent an apartment to serve as an office and took care of all maintenance and logistics themselves. Once their initial project was successful they started reaching out to large institutional donors including USAID, the Sawiris Foundation (one of the largest Egyptian foundations), and corporations. NM was able to speed up the grant receipt process a bit by sending their funding petitions directly to State Security, in addition to MOSS, since they knew MOSS would forward all materials to State Security for approval. However, for most of NM’s grants there was a nine-month delay in receipt of funds. NM experienced the same erratic

behavior by SS officials during the funding approval process as most other CSOs. For example, SS initially refused a grant by EFG Hermes, a local Egyptian foundation, because they said EFG Hermes was a foreign donor and thus a separate funding approval process was needed. EFG Hermes is one of the largest Egyptian foundations, regularly giving grants to CSO throughout Egypt and could not be considered a foreign donor. Furthermore, Gamal Mubarak sat on the board of EFG Hermes. The issue was eventually straightened out but represents one of the ways in which funding, even from non-threatening sources, could be delayed. Despite the law, which states that MOSS has 60 days to approve or deny funding applications, after which time the application will be considered approved, on the 59th day, NM would regularly receive a form letter from MOSS threatening them that if they spent a single pound of funding that was not officially approved, they would lose all of their funding.

NM employed several strategies to maintain a relatively positive relationship with the regime. They played down their USAID money and refused to take any overt human rights or democracy-promotion grants. They also diversified their funding, taking money from Egyptian and international donors so their “controversial” grants (such as from USAID) were not so obvious. They also turned down all money from the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), a U.S. State Department program. Because NM was most active during the administration of former US President George W. Bush, whose democracy-promotion efforts were viewed with suspicion and scorn by the Egyptian regime, NM stayed away from MEPI, seen as Bush’s pet project.

Another strategy NM used was self-censorship. This is a typical form of ideological co-optation. Rather than vocally criticize the regime or attempt to cross redlines, NM tried to engage
in non-controversial issues and quickly retreated when they did accidentally cross a line. For example, NM initially undertook a few projects that were more critical of the regime including hosting a book discussion by an author critical of Mubarak, hosting vibrant salons in which problems of Egyptian society and politics were discussed, and participating in a program run by the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) on democracy promotion skills. The government asked NM to suspend each of these programs. NM not only complied, but also changed their focus to development-only projects thereafter.

NM also welcomes regime allies on their board, including the founder of the National Youth Council. These regime connections have paid off, particularly in the registration process. While it was a “nightmare” to register Fat’het Kheir, they had a much easier time registering NM due to their contact at the government-run Federation of NGOs who helped them through the logistical process.\footnote{465 Interview with civil society actor. Washington, DC. May 2011.} For NM, as for many Egyptian CSOs, during the 2000s, it became easier to register a new CSO, but harder for CSOs to survive the shifting and often harsh regime rules. This is particularly true following 2005 when the government began to close in on CSOs, particularly human rights groups. As one civil society actor said, although the regime targeted human rights CSOs, “all [CSOs] are impacted.”\footnote{466 Interview with civil society actor. Washington, DC. May 2011.}

NM’s strategies of regime interaction represent a clear case of ideological co-optation. NM was initially not afraid to take on controversial or potentially threatening issues, but NM immediately altered its behavior when it received regime pushback, acquiescing to regime demands. Additionally, NM welcomed regime allies onto its board of directors and used close regime connections to achieve their goals. However, NM did not allow itself to be captured
continued to accept several forms of funding from foreign donors, seen as threatening to the regime. NM also publicized issues of tolerance and diversity, which were issues that the Egyptian government was not happy to see in the spotlight.

NM is well-aware of the potential threat that they pose to the regime and, more so than many CSOs, NM has a clear understanding of the complex CSO-state relationship in Egypt. Thus, NM has chosen multiple strategies, all of which fall under the category of ideological co-optation, in order to achieve their goals. First, prior to NM’s official founding, NM founders made the important decision to create a CSO rather than a political party or a rights-based organization. While NM’s founders had originally wanted to start an organization with a more political focus, they recognized the difficulties in doing so and believed they would be most effective by starting a CSO. NM has also chosen to partner with the Egyptian government on several of their initiatives and has allowed for government members to attend their meetings and sit on their board. By inviting the participation of the government in their activities, NM has preempted some government pushback. NM’s strategy of ideological co-optation is necessary because of their medium level of threat to the regime and lack of a high level of outside rhetorical support. By choosing ideological co-optation NM has had to alter its methods from advocacy to development and has been unable to address some political issues that it had originally attempted to address, but it has also been able to function without serious government intervention in its activities.

**Case Study: New Horizon Association for Social Development**

Type: Charity and Development  
Strategy: Administrative Co-optation
New Horizon Association for Social Development (New Horizon) is a medium-sized Charity and Development CSO that has chosen the strategy of administrative co-optation due to their low outside rhetorical support, low level of perceived threat to the regime and medium access to foreign funding. New Horizon focuses on a variety of development projects in four Egyptian governorates, frequently working with the Egyptian government to expand their initial efforts.

**History of the CSO**

The New Horizon Association for Social Development (New Horizon) was founded in June 2003 by seven Egyptian development professionals. The founders had each worked in development organizations in Egypt for several years, including working for CEOSS, Aga Khan Foundation, USAID, Caritas, Habitat for Humanity and Catholic Relief Services. Given their professional experiences, New Horizon’s founders believed that the development field in Egypt was lacking local professional organizations, with an overabundance of international organizations working on development in Egypt as well as ineffective, non-professional local CSOs.467

Funded with an initial grant from the World Health Organization, New Horizon began their work in the slum areas of Old Cairo with the goal of addressing Egypt’s Millennium Development Goals.468 They have since expanded, carrying out approximately 20 projects per year, with 38 full time staff and more than 60 total staff, including part-time staff and

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467 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
468 The Millennium Development Goals are set by the United Nations and include ending poverty and hunger, universal education, gender equality, child health, maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, environmental sustainability and global partnership. “We Can End Poverty 2015: Millenium Development Goals”.
consultants. While they have expanded significantly in their first seven years, New Horizon does not wish to grow too large, focusing instead on management of smaller CSO projects rather than attempting to develop the technical expertise necessary to tackle a wide variety of projects. Rather, they hire staff with management experience and contract out technical experts when necessary. Due to their management focus, New Horizon has been able to keep low overhead costs.

Using their management expertise, New Horizon functions as an umbrella organization for 28 community development associations (CDAs). New Horizon’s projects are implemented through the CDAs and New Horizon has formed new CDAs in areas in which they would like to implement a project, but there is no CDA partner with which to work. New Horizon is defined as a Charity and Development organization because they tackle projects dealing with all aspects of development. However, New Horizon focuses on four core target populations: children at risk, youth, women, and CDAs. Regarding children at risk, New Horizon advocates a “rights-based approach towards finding solutions to the challenges children face within their community.” Thus, New Horizon works towards eliminating child labor, improving the lives of street children, improving the health of all children, and improving social and economic conditions for at-risk children. New Horizon addresses youth (defined as Egyptians aged 18-29) through focusing on unemployment and underemployment, civic participation, and youth education. Regarding women, New Horizon’s goal “is to empower women on the social, cultural, political and

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469 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
471 Ibid.
economic level without creating mistrust and dissonance between male and female members in society."472

When entering a new community, they take a holistic approach – looking at the community as a whole – and carrying out a needs assessment to determine what areas of development would be most beneficial to the community. New Horizon has engaged in programs ranging from youth education to agriculture to sustainable development to professional development to youth prisoners. New Horizon also operates a few self-sustaining projects including a vocational training center for woodworking and a bakery, in addition an agricultural school, which generates some income. New Horizon works throughout Egypt in several communities in Old Cairo, throughout Cairo and Giza and in rural areas such as Minya and Beni Sueif.

New Horizon has taken on dozens of projects during its first seven years both addressing its core target groups as well as other members of the communities that they serve. Below are some examples of New Horizon projects. “Community Based Rehabilitation for the Disabled” was a one-year (2009-2010) program designed to empower disabled members of the communities in which New Horizon works. This program was designed as a model for local government and other CSOs working on disability issues to integrate community based rehabilitation strategies into their existing programs.473 “Enhancing Women’s Economic and Social Capacities in Old Cairo” was a two-year project (2008-2010), which focused on empowering women in the squatter communities of Old Cairo. The project included capacity building of female leaders as well as vocational training for female youth, in addition to a micro-

472 Ibid.
473 New Horizon Association for Social Development CV 2010, (Cairo, Egypt, 2010).
credit scheme targeting 150 women in Old Cairo.\textsuperscript{474} New Horizon has provided a summer camp for children at risk aimed at educating children on their rights regarding child labor and providing education for children and youth. Another program, “Developing Local Child Protection Officers” trained 50 local leaders and 25 social workers employed in schools to become child protection officers under a law passed in 2009 on children's rights. New Horizon also addressed Egypt’s vast tourism sector through a program in El Dakhla Oasis, providing local community members with the skills to become tour guides, with the goal of providing the local community with the financial benefits of tourism.\textsuperscript{475} In 2007, New Horizon carried out a large education project, “Girls Scholarship Program”, funded by USAID. This one-year project started in 2007 and provided scholarships to children 7-15 years old who had dropped out of school (or were at risk of dropping out) as well as children aged 7-9 who had never attended school. The program provided school fees, clothing, school supplies and educational awareness training to girls and their families within New Horizon’s communities.\textsuperscript{476} Under the guise of civic participation, New Horizon carried out a program in 2007 funded by the National Endowment for Democracy that trained youth in computer skills as a means to pursue civic education. The program trained 25 youth in basic IT skills as well as civic education, including lessons on the Egyptian constitution, volunteerism, pluralism, citizenship and democracy.\textsuperscript{477} New Horizon has also provided improved sewer services for slum neighborhoods, basic water and sanitation services for individual homes, medical caravans providing mobile medical services (particularly vision services) to various Cairo neighborhoods, voter registration and national

\textsuperscript{474} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{475} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{476} New Horizon Association for Social Development Annual Report 2007 (Cairo, Egypt, 2007).
\textsuperscript{477} Ibid.
identification services for Egyptians in their target communities, communal bicycles and bicycle parking lots to decrease air pollution, and tree-planting campaigns.478

Methods

New Horizon’s methodology is somewhat unique. Rather than implement their own projects, New Horizon seeks out communities in which they have a positive relationship with the local governor and then works to establish a local partnership to implement the projects that New Horizon believes would be most beneficial to that community. They carry out a six-month community assessment, looking for local Community Development Associations (CDAs)479 with which to partner. If it becomes clear that the community does not want New Horizon there, they go elsewhere.480 Thus, New Horizon does not seek out the communities with the most need, but rather they seek out the friendliest communities in which they believe they will be able to carry out their goals with minimal interference. After the initial community assessment, New Horizon helps build the capacity of the local CDA, focusing on finances, transparency, good governance and sustainability to make sure that the CDA will be able to carry out the project on its own.

New Horizon is frequently approached by communities asking for help.

As stated above, one of New Horizon’s other projects is to form CDAs in communities where there is no effective CDA presence. New Horizon follows a three-year cycle to establish a CDA in which they enter the community, form a local committee made up of dynamic

479 Community Development Associations (CDAs) are localized CSOs that are closely aligned with the government and were established by Nasser’s regime to allow for government control over civil society. CDAs were created by MOSS to aid in rural development and implement state social welfare programs. They are only nominally considered “development” organizations as they rarely provide assistance to the poor and do not develop community projects. They are regularly staffed by ministry employees and often share office space with the local government. Several CDAs have since shifted to citizen-control, but all remain closely linked to the government.
480 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
individuals from that community who are interested in implementing New Horizon’s projects and work with that committee to form a CDA. Through 2011, New Horizon has established three CDAs that now function independent of New Horizon and have received their own WHO and World Bank grants to continue projects started by New Horizon.

New Horizon is willing to address any area of development. For example, up until 2008 New Horizon had not worked on agriculture, but received a request to open an organic agriculture school in Wadi Jadid in Southwestern Egypt. New Horizon bought a parcel of land and trained 330 students in organic agriculture, 180 of whom are employed today in the field of agriculture in Egypt. In the case of this project, New Horizon worked with Egyptian government trainers to help implement the program. This was a project of interest to the government, and rather than compete with the government, New Horizon chose to work with government to share resources and expertise.

A second example of a New Horizon project began in 2004 in the area of Old Cairo lining the road leading to New Horizon’s office. They noticed increased levels of air pollution from the pottery factories that stretched up and down the main road of Old Cairo. Using a grant from the Australian Embassy, New Horizon upgraded the equipment of 17 potteries, converting them into clean-burning factories. This project had a very small cost but a large impact, and was thus attractive to the Egyptian government, who took over the project in 2005, converting an additional 120 factories.

New Horizon funds their projects exclusively through grants, and primarily through foreign grants. They do not reach out to individual donors, instead carrying out a two-pronged funding strategy. They target the “big fish” donors (such as USAID, the EU and the World Bank)
but recognize that grants from these donors are difficult to get. Thus, they also reach out to smaller embassy grants and have received long-term grants from the Australian Embassy for five years and the Finish Embassy for four years. They have also received funding from the National Endowment of Democracy for seven years. Other donors include Barclays, Cairo Petroleum Wives, Drosos Foundation, European Commission, the Irish Embassy, the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood, the National Council for Women, Oxfam and Save the Children.\footnote{NHASD’s full list of donors includes the Australian Embassy in Egypt, Barclays, Cairo Petroleum Wives, CCFD (France), CRTDA (Lebanon), Caritas, CIDA (Canada), CIDÉAL (Spain), Church Development Service Germany (EED), Drosos Foundation, European Commission (Egypt), Finnish Embassy in Egypt, Global Environment Facility (GEF)/UNDP, GTZ, Japanese Embassy in Egypt, Irish Embassy in Egypt, National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM), National Council for Women (NCW), Proctor & Gamble, Presbyterian Church (USA), Polish Embassy in Egypt, Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), National Endowment for Democracy (NED), Oxfam Novib, Rotary al-Fustat, Sawiris Foundation (Egypt), Save the Children (USA and UK), UNODC, USAID, World Bank and the World Health Organization (WHO). “New Horizon Association for Social Development”} New Horizon has found the smaller grants to be much more sustainable, as once you get the grant for the first year, it is generally easy to renew the grant in subsequent years.\footnote{Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.} For the agricultural school, New Horizon received funding from the Sawiris Foundation and the Japanese Embassy after they were able to demonstrate the project’s success.

*Interaction with the Regime*

As described above in the case of the Wadi Jadid agricultural school, New Horizon does not shy away from working directly with the Egyptian government to implement their projects. In fact, New Horizon prefers to turn their projects over to the government once they have gotten them on track. The New Horizon model is to conduct a pilot program and then hope that the government will take over the project and expand it. The end goal of New Horizon is to improve development and sustainability in Egypt, so it does not matter to New Horizon whether their
pilot projects are taken over by the government or by the local community, as long as the project continues. As a New Horizon staff member stated, they are “not revolutionary” and do not wish to confront the government. Rather, they “just want to do their jobs” and improve development in Egypt. Thus, they have developed good relationships with MOSS and the ministries of Health, Education and Manpower. These relationships have helped New Horizon stay off the government’s radar for the most part.

According to New Horizon staff, New Horizon intentionally stays out of politics, focusing solely on clear development projects. Nevertheless, in 2009-2010, State Security increased their presence and began interfering in the work of New Horizon. New Horizon staff were puzzled by this increased attention because they are politically neutral and do not interfere in politics. They are a secular organization with a balance of male and female and Christian and Muslim staff, which should not represent a threat to the government. New Horizon staff speculate that the reason for the interference is due to New Horizon’s success in their work. Because they have developed very strong, positive relationships with dozens of communities throughout Egypt, New Horizon would be capable of providing political influence in those communities very easily. Thus, although they were not actually engaged in political activism, their potential ability to do so caused State Security to worry. Additionally, they are very successful in providing basic social services that the Egyptian government was unable (or unwilling) to provide to the impoverished slum communities in which New Horizon operates, thereby representing a second, albeit a low level, of threat to the regime.

483 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
484 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
486 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
During the end of 2010, in the lead up to the parliamentary elections, the government began an even tougher crackdown on civil society. New Horizon experienced several funding problems at that time, with the inability to access several approved grants, particularly smaller grants. For example, New Horizon received a $1 million grant from USAID to conduct civic education for religious leaders, which they were able to access, but they could not access a similar grant from the National Endowment for Democracy for $30,000.487

Despite this interference, New Horizon did not alter the content of their programs. They continued to carry out youth civic education programs aimed at training youth in advocacy and educating youth about democracy. While New Horizon contracts out the implementation of these programs to smaller CSOs, they are the facilitator and grantee. They received a 2006 MEPI grant to carry out youth democracy education projects, which they then sub-contracted to 20 CSOs, focusing on teaching youth how to advocate for themselves through art.488 Despite the clear advocacy/political nature of this program, New Horizon staff insist that they are not an advocacy organization and are not involved in anything political. Rather, New Horizon provides the tools and training (or technical assistance) to other CSOs who provide the actual advocacy training. This protects New Horizon from more severe government pushback and enables them to maintain some cover.

Why Administrative Co-optation?

New Horizon chose administrative co-optation due primarily to their low level of threat to the regime. Combined with a low level of outside rhetorical support and medium access to foreign funding, New Horizon adopted administrative co-optation as a way to meet their goals

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488 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
while protecting themselves from harsh regime pushback. New Horizon is a development organization that tackles four main areas, all of which have been openly acknowledged and addressed by the Egyptian government: youth, children, women and CDAs. The types of programs that New Horizon undertakes are not only complementary to efforts by the Egyptian government to address these groups, but in fact have frequently been adopted by the government. None of the issues that New Horizon addresses are issues that the government has attempted to hide or come anywhere close to redline issues. Rather, New Horizon works with the Egyptian government to improve the human development of at-risk populations identified by the Egyptian government using methods approved of by the Egyptian government, representing a low level of threat to the regime. New Horizon does, at times, adopt an advocacy approach, for example informing children of the child labor law and training youth in democratic skills through art. New Horizon has been able to carry out these projects for two reasons. First, New Horizon farms out their advocacy-oriented projects to smaller CSOs with which they work. This gives them a level of distance from the advocacy work without requiring them to adopt ideological co-optation. Second, because New Horizon is a low level of threat to the regime, the government does not suspect them of a greater attempt at subversion, like CSOs that represent a medium or high level of threat.

New Horizon has been very successful in attracting funding from a variety of sources. While they do accept money from some controversial sources including USAID and MEPI, they also accept funding from more innocuous foreign sources like the World Health Organization and UNICEF in addition to the Egyptian government and Egyptian as well as international corporations. New Horizon has also been very strategic in the types of grants it receives, only
accepting money from controversial sources for explicitly non-controversial projects. For example, New Horizon accepted money from the National Endowment for Democracy for an IT skills program and from USAID for a girls’ scholarship program. This diversity of funding sources and the inclusion of Egyptian government funds does not draw regime attention, while also ensuring a continuous source of income for the organization.

The strategy of administrative co-optation has been highly successful for New Horizon. By reaching out to the government for partnership, New Horizon has pre-empted much of the pushback experienced by other CSOs. In fact, New Horizon explicitly states that their goal is for the Egyptian government to take over their projects and see them through. This not only protects New Horizon, but also allows for New Horizon to share the government’s resources and expertise. New Horizon’s combination of partnering with the government and farming out their advocacy-related projects is a clear example of administrative co-optation. Rather than confronting the government head-on or choosing to be completely subsumed by the regime, New Horizon has chosen a middle-ground strategy that enables them to both carry out all of the types of projects that they believe meet the needs of their beneficiaries, including advocacy work, but also has protected them from any sort of major government interference.

Case Study: Education for Employment Foundation

Type: Single-Issue Strategy: Administrative Co-optation

The Education for Employment Foundation (EFE) is a Single-Issue CSO that focuses on youth unemployment. EFE is part of an international NGO that began in the United States and has opened several branches throughout the Middle East, including EFE-Egypt. EFE-Egypt is a
small CSO with one office located in Cairo that operates independently from the larger
international NGO. EFE has chosen administrative co-optation due to its combination of low
outside rhetorical support, low level of perceived threat to the regime and medium level of access
to foreign funding.

History of the CSO

The Education for Employment Foundation (EFE) was started in 2002 by Jewish-
American real estate developer Ron Bruder. Bruder’s daughter was working near the World
Trade Center on September 11, 2001 and although his daughter was safe, the terrorist attacks had
a major impact on Bruder’s life, encouraging him to try to use his resources to better understand
the conditions that created the terrorist attacks and to try to help the Arab world in some way.489
Bruder took several trips to the Middle East where he noticed both the large youth population
and high levels of youth unemployment.490 He believed that the large masses of unemployed
youth, particularly college graduates who believe their degree entitles them to work, contributed
to the dissatisfaction and frustration that breeds terrorism and thus decided to start an
organization to help deal with youth unemployment across the Arab world.491 The goal of the
organization is to provide technical and skills training to Arab youth in order to make up for the
lack of professional training they receive in the formal education process. During his visits to the
Middle East, Bruder found that employers complained about the inability of college graduates to

490 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
491 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
complete basic tasks such as “hold meetings or run spreadsheets or even how to dress at an office.”

The training offered by EFE, therefore, was designed to assist Arab youth in both job skills training and finding and securing employment. The organization started in Washington, DC in 2002, consulting with Arab public opinion expert Shibley Telhami on how best to address youth unemployment and economic disparity, then officially opened its first office in the Middle East in Jordan in 2006. EFE expanded to Egypt and Morocco in 2007, the West Bank and Gaza, and Yemen in 2008, and Tunisia in 2011. Bruder donated $10 million of his own money to start the foundation and continues to serve as the Chairman of the Board.

While the Foundation is a US-based NGO, each country office is registered under local law and operates totally independent of the US organization. Thus, EFE-Egypt adopts different strategies and programs than other EFE offices, while adhering to the overall EFE model of professional and job skills training and job placement for program graduates. While Bruder remains the CEO of EFE and sits on the board of EFE-Egypt, all of the other EFE-Egypt board members are Egyptian. EFE-Egypt staff are adamant that their organization is not simply a branch office of EFE, rather EFE-Egypt is an independent Egyptian CSO.

The first attempt to start EFE-Egypt was in 2004, but the organization failed to get off the ground. The new CSO faced high levels of resistance to entering the market (i.e. competition

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493 Telhami is a nonresident senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and a professor at the University of Maryland. Telhami also sits on the board of EFE.
495 Marks.
496 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
497 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
from other CSOs) as well as pushback from the government. As EFE-Egypt staff argue, “The state has a mechanism for weeding out [new] CSOs.” Thus, the organization took a step back to reevaluate and after a few more false starts eventually succeeded in opening up their office in Cairo in 2007. It took EFE-Egypt six months to set up their office and a year and a half to complete the MOSS registration process, significantly longer than for many other CSOs. During the registration process they encountered significant bureaucratic hurdles, common to many CSOs and held meetings with MOSS employees and the MOSS minister in order to plead their case. Another hiccup in the process occurred because of EFE’s funding source. Their initial grant came from the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI). While MEPI granted EFE-Egypt their money in 2007, they were not given the power to spend it until 2009.

The primary focus of EFE-Egypt’s training programs are the textile and banking industries as well as SMEs. The Banking Training Program began in 2009 to train unemployed university graduates to work as customer service personnel and tellers at Cairo banks. The Textile Merchandiser Training Program also started in 2009 to train unemployed university graduates to be textile merchandisers in one of Egypt’s largest employers, the ready-made garment industry. The Junior Professional Training Program is a newer program, launched in 2010 to train university graduates as entry-level professionals in SMEs in Egypt across a variety of industries. Finally, the School-to-Market Program was launched in 2010 to give college seniors business skills and internships to help them secure employment in the private sector following graduation.

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498 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
499 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
500 “Education for Employment Foundation”. 213
In September 2009 EFE-Egypt signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Technical and Vocational Educational and Training Reform (TVET), a joint Egyptian-EU initiative that trains Egyptian laborers. The MOU allows EFE-Egypt to work with TVET’s Enterprise Training Partnerships throughout Egypt which identify industry needs and “develop demand-driven training programs in order to strengthen the existing and future workforce in Egypt.”

Methods

The EFE model begins not with the unemployed youth, but with the potential employers. EFE not only trains youth in interview skills and professional behavior but also seeks to pair its program graduates with employers, thus EFE first seeks out private companies who agree to hire a set number of EFE graduates, provide some funding for the program (usually one month’s salary for each of the potential employees) as well as in-kind donations such as office space and computers to assist in training. In exchange, the private companies are guaranteed employees who are not only well-trained in overall professional and vocational skills but also well-trained in the specific skills necessary for the company. The companies are selected because they have job openings available, but lack the skilled personnel to fill the open positions. Thus, the partnership of EFE-Egypt and the private sector companies with whom they partner is mutually beneficially, providing educated university graduates with job training skills and employment and providing private sector companies with trained, skilled employees for their open positions.

Working with the private companies, EFE-Egypt designs specific market-driven education programs, and then selects candidates (unemployed university graduates) through a

501 Ibid.
502 Ibid.
rigorous process. Candidates are recruited through social media, word of mouth, alumni and personal networks and flyers at Egyptian universities.\textsuperscript{503} The youth must complete a 60-question exam, an interview with EFE-Egypt staff and finally an interview with the potential employer. English language exams are also administered, if necessary for the position.\textsuperscript{504} Candidates must also pay 50-150 Egyptian Pounds (about $8-$25) to enroll in the program and commit to attend the training which takes place 5-6 days a week from 9 am to 5 pm for one to three months.\textsuperscript{505} EFE-Egypt has very high success rates for their training programs with 97\% of students graduating from the training program and 81\% of graduates placed in jobs. From its inception, through 2010, EFE-Egypt has trained 170 youth.\textsuperscript{506}

EFE also has an alumni network that both connects unemployed youth with program alumni who can assist them in their search for employment, and gives alumni the chance to give back to EFE both financially and by providing mentoring services to youth. The alumni board is elected by the students and is responsible for setting up mentoring programs, speaking events for industry leaders and young professionals and promoting EFE-Egypt’s continuing education programs.

The Issue

The issue that EFE addresses is youth unemployment. As explained above in the Nahdet el Mahrousa case study, because of the youth bulge across the Middle East, youth unemployment is much higher than unemployment on a national and regional level and significantly higher than in other regions of the world. In Egypt unemployment is primarily a socioeconomic issue, largely

\textsuperscript{503} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
\textsuperscript{504} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
\textsuperscript{505} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
\textsuperscript{506} “Education for Employment Foundation”.

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determined by class. As an EFE staff member argued, “employers do not want to hire the poor”, resulting in an “immense loss of human capital.”\textsuperscript{507} This is particularly a problem for unemployed women, many of whom do not have any work experience and are discriminated against for multiple reasons including the fear that female employees will be less dependable due to family constraints and the desire of many international companies to only hire unveiled women.\textsuperscript{508}

EFE-Egypt’s biggest challenge therefore has been scaling up their programs. While they have had tremendous success with their partner companies, EFE-Egypt staff feel that not very many Egyptian and Multinational Companies want to hire their target population (lower class university graduates).\textsuperscript{509} EFE-Egypt’s programs address youth unemployment overall, but also targets lower class Egyptian university graduates. NM, which also addresses youth unemployment, encourages youth to start their own companies to circumvent the problem of a lack of willingness by private sector companies to hire youth. However, NM’s beneficiaries tend to be upper class university graduates who are financially able to take the risks necessary to start a CSO or private company. EFE-Egypt addresses youth unemployment from a different angle. EFE-Egypt’s beneficiaries do not have the luxury of starting their own companies. Rather, they require job stability and a consistent income to survive. Furthermore, by providing skills and employment for lower class youth, EFE-Egypt is also addressing the larger issue of poverty in Egypt. Part of EFE-Egypt’s philosophy is that by both training and employing youth from the lower and middle classes, the entire country will benefit. Employed youth will contribute to the

\textsuperscript{507} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.  
\textsuperscript{508} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.  
\textsuperscript{509} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
Egyptian economy as well as to their own families, raising the socioeconomic status of their own families and growing the Egyptian economy as a whole. EFE-Egypt is attempting to cash in on the large amount of wasted human capital that comes from a large population of unemployed but educated youth.

*Interaction with the Regime*

Following the lengthy and difficult registration process, EFE-Egypt has not had many problems with the Egyptian government. The State Security services check in with EFE-Egypt every few months, but are generally pleasant.\textsuperscript{510} EFE-Egypt has managed to maintain a relatively positive relationship with the government because they do not address issues that represent a high level of threat to the regime (i.e. political or religious issues). While a very small percentage of their curriculum does address identity issues, a potentially threatening issue given the focus of the Mubarak regime on promoting a single Egyptian identity (i.e. a Muslim identity), identity issues were such a small part of the curriculum that it has not managed to draw negative regime attention and thus EFE-Egypt has not had to adopt ideological co-optation.

EFE-Egypt staff attributes much of their success to their selection of board members. EFE-Egypt’s board is comprised of CEOs and presidents of Egyptian private companies as well as the CEO and Chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt. Bruder sits on the board as well, but six out of eight board members are Egyptian nationals who live and work in Egypt.\textsuperscript{511} They were “very selective” in who they allowed to sit on their board, intentionally choosing prominent people who were friendly to the regime.\textsuperscript{512} EFE-Egypt worked hard to

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\textsuperscript{510} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
\textsuperscript{511} “Education for Employment Foundation”.
\textsuperscript{512} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
develop an equal relationship with MOSS, creating a positive power dynamic between their board and the MOSS officials with whom they deal. Additionally, EFE-Egypt reached out to State Security, offering to enroll their family members as EFE students. This type of administrative co-optation allowed EFE-Egypt to continue its programs without having to change their curriculum and significantly limited the amount of interference they received from MOSS. Most interesting, EFE-Egypt has not had any problems with the fact that their founder and board chair, Bruder, is Jewish. MOSS registration requires that you list the religion of all of your board members, and Bruder was listed as Jewish, but MOSS did not have any problems with Bruder. EFE-Egypt staff believe this is because MOSS is more concerned about transparency than with the fact that Bruder is Jewish. The only time Bruder’s religion has been an issue is that one employer asked why EFE tends to work in all “heavily Jewish” Arab states.

EFE-Egypt relies heavily on foreign funding, although they have diversified their funding sources fairly well. While the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) office of the U.S. Department of State has funded the majority of EFE-Egypt’s programs, that money went through the EFE-US office, not the Egyptian office. EFE signed a Cooperative Agreement of $1.5 million with MEPI on September 12, 2007 to support EFE expansion into Egypt as well as Jordan and Morocco. EFE-Egypt will not take money from the US military or any US anti-terrorism funds, in order to avoid regime pushback. They are able to receive direct contributions

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513 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
514 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
515 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
516 “Education for Employment Foundation”. “EFE Wins $1.5 million US State Dept. Middle East Partnership Initiative Grant.”
from Bruder without going through the government. According to EFE-Egypt staff, 70% of their funding comes from the local offices of international corporations (such as BP, JP Morgan and Ghezri Consulting) as well as local foundations and companies including Hesni and Cairo University. Companies where EFE-Egypt graduates have been placed include Souq.com, a web-based retailer, Azza Fahmy, a high-end jeweler, and El Matbakh, a full-service lunch caterer.517

Why Administrative Co-optation?

EFE-Egypt chose a strategy of regime interaction of administrative co-optation due to a combination of low outside rhetorical support, low perceived threat and medium access to foreign funding. As a Single-Issue CSO, EFE-Egypt focuses on one issue: youth unemployment. This is an issue that has been readily acknowledged and addressed by the Egyptian regime, thereby representing a low level of perceived threat. The issue of youth unemployment has been acknowledged by the international community (particularly by international scholars and policymakers) however it has not been the subject of vocal outside rhetorical support, mostly due to the fact that the Egyptian regime has openly addressed this issue on its own, thereby negating the need for outside pressure.

EFE-Egypt is a clear case of co-optation due to its lack of outside rhetorical support but its choice of administrative co-optation over ideological co-optation is due to its low level of perceived threat to the regime. Following a lengthy and difficult registration process, EFE-Egypt has carefully cultivated relationships with MOSS and State Security in order to prevent unwanted government interference in their activities. By opening up a dialogue with MOSS and inviting the children of both MOSS and State Security employees to participate in their

517 Ibid.
programs, EFE-Egypt has developed a positive relationship with the Egyptian government that has enabled them to continue their activities without any serious government pushback. While one would not expect EFE-Egypt to be subject to a high level of pushback due to EFE-Egypt’s low level of threat, their curriculum does include a small section on identity issues, a threatening issue. EFE-Egypt has been able to continually teach this curriculum because of their level of administrative co-optation. Furthermore, EFE-Egypt strategically chose their board members, selecting regime allies, so as to further protect themselves from regime interference.

Another way in which EFE-Egypt has been able to successfully navigate their relationship with the regime is through their unique funding structure. Because EFE-Egypt is connected to a US-based NGO, they are able to funnel some of their funds through the international NGO, avoiding some of the scrutiny that other CSOs experience. Thus, while EFE-Egypt’s founding grant was from MEPI, a somewhat controversial US-government source, that money was channeled through EFE’s US office. Since their founding, EFE-Egypt has been strategic about accepting foreign grants, preferring direct donations from Bruder and receiving much of its operating money from the private sector companies with whom they partner as well as student fees. EFE-Egypt will accept foreign funding, but only money that is not tied to controversial sources such as anti-terrorism funds or military spending. EFE-Egypt’s combination of low outside rhetorical support, low level of perceived threat to the regime and medium level of access to foreign funding explains EFE-Egypt’s strategy choice of administrative co-optation.

Why do DCSOs Choose Co-optation?
As the five case studies above have shown, DCSOs choose co-optation due to a combination of three factors: a lack of protection from the international community, relatively easy access to financial resources (including both foreign funding and domestic funding), and the level of threat they believe they present to the regime. DCSOs choose co-optation because they believe they are too vulnerable to operate outside of the regime (and therefore do not choose pluralism), but their issue area and agenda requires them to maintain some independence (and therefore do not choose capture). As stated above, co-optation is the most popular strategy for DCSOs because it both provides them a level of peace of mind in that they believe that by allowing themselves to be co-opted that they will be safe from harmful regime interference, but also allows them to carry out their activities and achieve most of their goals. However, co-optation is a double-edged sword. By choosing co-optation DCSOs must make sacrifices and turn over some control of their organization and activities to the government.

As Clark points out, having close administrative ties to the regime has serious benefits for CSOs. According to a study by the World Bank, “Egypt’s most successful associations usually have either connections in MOSS, powerful people on their boards of directors, or MOSS employees on their boards of administration.”\textsuperscript{518} Additionally, MOSS frequently provides seconded-staff (MOSS employees and “expert” personnel) to CSOs, paid for by the government, ostensibly to aid the CSO. However, these employees are usually more of a hindrance than a help. Seconded staff frequently demand payment for attending meetings and can place barriers in front of CSO work.\textsuperscript{519} And as Saad Eddin Ibrahim argues, “Personnel sent by [MOSS] to

\textsuperscript{518} Clark, \textit{Islam, Charity and Activism: Middle-Class Networks and Social Welfare in Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen}, 58.

\textsuperscript{519} Ibid.
PVOs are often suspected to be superfluous elements of the Ministry with few useful skills.\textsuperscript{520} Nevertheless, Clark argues “most seconded officials have proven to be highly useful to associations, helping them work through government regulations and bureaucracy.”\textsuperscript{521} Furthermore, some CSOs note that they are lacking in “human and technical resources” with the MOSS staff able to fill in some of the gap.\textsuperscript{522}

It is clear that co-optation is a strategy both preferred and successfully used by CSOs as well as Arab regimes. As Cavatorta notes, co-optation “allows regimes to expand the base of their legitimacy while preempting true demands for reform.”\textsuperscript{523} This applies both to traditional political opposition groups as well as CSOs. As Albrecht notes, “the [Egyptian] regime permits, or even promotes, the emergence of opposition while, at the same time, co-optative and clientelist arrangements serve as the primary control mechanisms.”\textsuperscript{524} Thus, CSOs willingly enter into co-optative arrangements with the regime (or in some cases are forced into them) in order to ensure their survival. By allowing themselves to be co-opted, CSOs are allowed to operate and carry out their activities. Without co-optation, CSOs are at a much higher risk of facing severe regime repression including being shut down altogether.

Co-optation is a mutually beneficial strategy for the regime and for DCSOs. As Ackerman argues, the active involvement of civil society and the strengthening of the state are not mutually exclusive; rather this leads to what he calls “co-governance”.\textsuperscript{525} As stated above, by

\textsuperscript{521} Clark, \textit{Islam, Charity and Activism: Middle-Class Networks and Social Welfare in Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen}, 58.
\textsuperscript{524} Ackerman.
working with the government rather than outside of it or against it, the DCSO is able to carry out its goals and because DCSOs frequently take on the delivery of goods and services that the government is expected to carry out, by allowing DCSOs to operate, the government alleviates some of its own burden. As one report noted, Egyptian CSOs “play an instrumental role in delivering social services to the community.”526 Despite high levels of public spending on health, education and social welfare, the Egyptian government is unable to meet societal demands for these services. For example, public spending on health insurance covers only about 40% of the Egyptian population and social service spending has failed to achieve its goal of reducing poverty.527 This poor allocation of resources is most evident in the fact that the lowest quintile of income in Egypt receives only 16% of the total state social safety net resources, while the highest quintile receives 28%.528

Furthermore, the government benefits from co-optation because successful DCSOs have the potential to embarrass the regime, highlighting the inability of the government to do its job.529 In many cases CSOs not only accomplish what the government cannot, they also do it in a way that gains them the trust and respect of the people whom they serve. The CIVICUS regional stakeholder survey found, for example, “people would trust particular CSOs more with their money or goods than government controlled or run counterparts.”530 Thus, the government needs to co-opt CSOs as much as CSOs need the protection afforded by co-optation. By

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526 Embracing the Spirit of the Millennium Declaration.
527 Arab Republic of Egypt: Selected Issues.
528 Ibid.
529 Gubser.
530 An Overview of Civil Society in Egypt: Civil Society Index Report for the Arab Republic of Egypt.
partnering with CSOs, the government is able to control both the success of CSOs as well as their public appearance.

While all five CSOs profiled in this chapter chose co-optation due to the combination of a lack of outside rhetorical support and medium or high access to outside funding, the variable that determines whether a CSO opts for ideological co-optation or administrative co-optation is the level of perceived threat an organization represents to the regime. CSOs with a high or medium level of threat choose ideological co-optation, while CSOs with a low level of threat choose administrative co-optation. This was clearly demonstrated in the two case studies of Muslim CSOs – Resala and Dar al Orman.

As Muslim CSOs, Resala and Orman are similar in many aspects and have each chosen ideological co-optation for the same reason: the level of threat they represent to the regime as Muslim CSOs requires a high level of guaranteed regime protection. However, each CSO chose to adopt ideological co-optation in a slightly different way. Both CSOs do not outwardly advertise that they are Muslim organizations and stay far away from political Islamist organizations, however, Resala chose to stay completely out of politics while Orman chose to work with the Egyptian government to advocate for its main issue area – orphans. Resala remains entirely focused on charity, avoiding activism altogether, while Orman has chosen to continue advocating on behalf of orphans by securing government co-sponsorship for their activities and inviting government participation in their advocacy work. Both Resala and Orman have managed to avoid significant government interference in their activities due, in part, to their large sizes. These organizations are two of the largest CSOs in the Arab world. By strategically adopting ideological co-optation by staying out of politics, refusing to promote religious issues,
and generally avoiding advocacy, both Resala and Orman have grown so large that they are now almost untouchable by the regime. Nevertheless, both CSOs are aware of the precarious place that they occupy within the civil society sector. As Muslim CSOs that continue to grow and spread throughout Egypt (and possibly the Middle East), they continue to represent a serious threat to the regime. Thus, they must continue to allow themselves to be ideologically co-opted in order to continue to carry out their goals.

The two Charity and Development CSOs included in this chapter, New Horizon and NM, share some similarities, including size, level of access to foreign funding, and level of outside rhetorical support, however they differ in their level of perceived threat to the regime and have therefore adopted different strategies. NM, a youth-led CSO, chose to focus on social entrepreneurship and develop a network of CSOs while New Horizon took a strictly development approach, focusing on professionalism and solid methods for choosing its projects. This differentiation in methodology is due, primarily to the background experience of each organization’s founder. NM is led by AUC graduates with significant personal ties to the West while New Horizon was founded by individuals with years of experience working in the field of development in Egypt. The methodology chosen by each organization has resulted in a difference in level of perceived threat, which has, in turn, resulted in a difference in strategy choice. Because NM addresses national unity and functions as a network of CSOs, it is potentially threatening to the regime. Initially NM took more of an advocacy approach, addressing redline issues such as the Mubarak regime and operating with more of a public presence. This caused NM significant problems from the regime; NM has therefore had to adjust its methods and areas of focus in order to avoid regime pushback. New Horizon, on the other
hand, represents a low level of threat to the regime as it is a strictly development organization that does not advocate for change. New Horizon seeks out government partners for their activities and views itself as a project starter, with the goal of turning over its pilot programs to the government for completion. This strategy of administrative co-optation has enabled New Horizon to complete several successful development projects, attract and accept foreign funding and develop a symbiotic relationship with the Egyptian government.

The Single-Issue CSO included in this chapter, EFE-Egypt, is a particularly interesting case due to its connection to an International NGO. Very different from the other Single-Issue CSO included in the dissertation, the Egyptian Association to Support Street Children, EFE-Egypt began as an offshoot of the larger organization EFE, based in the United States. However, EFE-Egypt operates as a local CSO independent of EFE-US. Its focus on youth education and employment grants it a low level of perceived threat to the regime, as this an issue area that the Egyptian regime has openly acknowledged and addressed. Nevertheless, EFE-Egypt’s small size and initial difficulties in starting and registering with MOSS have shown EFE-Egypt the benefits of administrative co-optation. By strategically selecting regime-friendly individuals to sit on their board and offering their services to the children of their MOSS and Security Service interlocutors, EFE-Egypt has bought itself protection from regime interference.

The five case studies included in this chapter have clearly shown that DCSOs choose co-optation due to a low level of outside rhetorical support and a medium or high level of access to foreign funding. And more specifically, the decision to adopt ideological co-option is due to a medium or high level of threat to the regime, while the decision to adopt administrative co-optation is due to a low level of threat to the regime.
Outliers

A few CSOs included in this dissertation have made strategy choices that do not match their predicted strategy (see Table 6, Appendix). One CSO, the National Egyptian Development Association (NEDA) has chosen a strategy of ideological co-optation instead of a predicted strategy of pluralism. This section will explain NEDA’s strategy choice to shed further light on the strategy of co-optation.

*National Egyptian Development Association (NEDA)*

Type: Protected Minority  Strategy: Ideological Co-optation

The National Egyptian Development Association (NEDA) is predicted to choose a strategy of pluralism due to its type, Protected Minority CSO. NEDA has a high level of outside rhetorical support, medium level of perceived threat and high level of access to foreign funding, which should cause NEDA to choose pluralism. However, NEDA chose ideological co-optation (see Table 9, Appendix). NEDA is a small Coptic CSO located in Cairo that works on improving the socio-economic development of the Coptic community, focusing on youth unemployment as well as increasing corporate social responsibility (CSR) in socio-economic development in Egypt. NEDA also sees its mission to build the capacity of existing CSOs to better address socio-economic development in Egypt overall. NEDA was founded in 2006 by a group of business management professionals who believed that the vast majority of CSOs in Egypt were ineffective and were not well-linked in their efforts.531 Because the organization was started by

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531 Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
business professionals, they had an interest in creating a professional, well-run CSO that followed a clear business model.

Upon NEDA’s creation, the founders noticed a missing link between the jobs available in Egypt and the caliber of university graduates applying for those jobs. NEDA’s founders believed that university graduates, particularly from the public universities, were not well-equipped with the skills and technical expertise (including communication skills, time management and business skills) necessary to enter the job force. Thus, they developed a job skills training program aimed at the Coptic community, but open to both Copts and Muslims. One of NEDA’s missions is to increase the number of effective development CSOs and to increase the public awareness of the role of civil society in development in Egypt, thus they encourage both the creation of new CSOs working on youth unemployment and partner with existing CSOs to implement their training sessions.

As a Coptic CSO, NEDA falls into the category of Protected Minority CSO. As a Protected Minority CSO, NEDA is predicted to choose a strategy of pluralism. NEDA’s connection to the Coptic community worldwide gives it a high level of outside rhetorical support. They represent a medium level of threat to the regime and their direct access to donations funneled through the church gives them a high level of access to foreign funding. However, NEDA has chosen a strategy of ideological co-optation rather than pluralism. This is due primarily to the relationship of the individuals who founded NEDA with the regime. NEDA has been able to avoid government pushback primarily because their board members are the owners and CEOs of large Egyptian private companies, who have, themselves, developed a
positive relationship with the Egyptian regime.\textsuperscript{532} One of NEDA’s founders is also a judge. This is the driving reason for NEDA’s choice of ideological co-optation instead of pluralism, as NEDA’s board is unwilling to jeopardize their professional careers by provoking the regime and causing a rift in their relationship with the regime. NEDA is a very small organization, with 11 board members and four full time staff (in addition to five volunteers). Thus, it would be very easy for the regime to target the individuals that make up NEDA’s board if NEDA were to threaten the regime.

As part of NEDA’s strategy of ideological co-optation, they have shifted their beneficiary pool from the Coptic community to working with an almost equal number of Copts and Muslims. NEDA’s original programs were 80% Copts, 20% Muslims, but they have since shifted to 60% Copts, 40% Muslims after problems attracting funding from donors who refused to support religious organizations.\textsuperscript{533} Furthermore, NEDA does not describe itself as a Coptic organization on their website.\textsuperscript{534} The organization is not formally affiliated with any specific church and they operate their programs in areas with mixed Muslim and Coptic populations. However, NEDA staff readily admit that one of their founding goals was to address the issues facing the Coptic community.\textsuperscript{535}

Another explanation for NEDA’s choice of ideological co-optation is that although, as a Coptic organization they are permitted to receive direct funding through the church, NEDA has chosen to focus its funding efforts on the business community. As stated above, part of NEDA’s mission is to increase the participation of corporations in civil society, mostly through financial

\textsuperscript{532} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
\textsuperscript{533} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
\textsuperscript{535} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. June 2011.
support. NEDA therefore behaves much more like a Single-Issue CSO, rather than a Protected Minority CSO, not relying on church-based funds for support. Thus, 80% of NEDA’s financial support comes from donors (including Bank Misr, Sawiris Foundation for Social Development, and Egyptian companies Alfa Electronics, El Baddar, Global Napi Pharmaceuticals, LaRouche, Decent Home and Mina Mark), with an additional 20% from NEDA itself, through participant registration fees and individual donations. NEDA does not take money from the international community, instead relying on non-controversial funding sources.

While NEDA is predicted to choose a strategy of pluralism, in reality NEDA has chosen ideological co-optation due to their reliance on the business community for financial support and the relationship of their founders and board members with the Mubarak regime. Because NEDA’s founders are prominent members of the business community, it is in their interest to maintain a positive relationship with the Egyptian government. These individuals are unwilling to sacrifice their personal and professional success for the ability of the CSO to openly criticize or operate outside of regime control. Rather, NEDA has made the strategic calculation that it is more important to address youth unemployment from a non-threatening, development perspective than to focus on addressing the Coptic community and its relationship with the Egyptian government. A strategy of ideological co-optation allows NEDA to attract funders, carry out training programs and partner with other CSOs without government interference, where a strategy of pluralism could invite problems for NEDA’s board members and prevent them from carrying out their initial goal of improving the socio-economic development and increasing the awareness of Egypt’s Coptic community.

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Conclusion

As the case studies above demonstrate, DCSOs choose co-optation when they lack the perceived protection from regime interference provided by a high level of outside rhetorical support but they also wish to maintain some level of independence from the regime. DCSOs that choose ideological co-optation are Muslim CSOs and some Charity and Development and Single-Issue CSOs. Muslim CSOs choose ideological co-optation because they have a low level of outside rhetorical support, combined with a medium level of perceived threat. Their level of perceived threat to the regime requires them to obtain protection from the regime. They achieve this protection by allowing themselves to be ideologically co-opted – by refusing to address politics or outwardly acknowledge that they are religious and by maintain a safe distance from Islamist political organizations. Charity and Development and Single-Issue CSOs choose ideological co-optation when they have a low level of outside rhetorical support but represent a medium or high level of threat to the regime. Much like Muslim CSOs, ideological co-optation is an attractive strategy for organizations that simultaneously lack outside support and potentially threaten the regime, inviting government pushback. By changing their issue area or method of addressing their issue area in a way that is more acceptable to the government, Charity and Development and Single-Issue CSOs ensure that the level of pushback they receive is tolerable and does not prohibit them from carrying out their larger mission.

Organizations that choose administrative co-optation are Charity and Development CSOs and Single-Issue CSOs with low or medium outside rhetorical support, low level of perceived threat to the regime and medium access to foreign funding. An organization that lacks outside support but also does not represent much threat to the regime does not need to allow itself to be
ideologically co-opted. Rather, these DCSOs adopt administrative co-optation as a way to protect themselves while maintaining a high level of independence from the regime. DCSOs that are administratively co-opted strategically choose their board members and staff to include individuals friendly to the regime and allow for MOSS or other government officials to participate in their activities and attend their meetings. These are goodwill gestures that show the regime that the DCSO has nothing to hide therefore alleviating regime pressure on the organization. However, by choosing administrative co-optation over ideological co-optation an organization can focus on the issue area of its choice and can advocate for it using the method of its choice.

Co-optation is a middle ground strategy that is highly appealing to DCSOs in the Arab world. While co-opted CSOs must make trade-offs, when choosing co-optation, a CSO has determined that those trade-offs are more beneficial than detrimental to the operation of the CSO. By proactively choosing a strategy that allows the government to have some level of control over your organization, a DCSO believes that it is protecting itself from future regime interference.
CHAPTER V: CAPTURE

The third strategy option for DCSOs is capture, in which DCSOs allow themselves to be fully absorbed into the regime. The strategy of capture is different from pluralism and co-optation as very few DCSOs choose capture. Rather, almost all organizations that are captured by the regime fall into one of two categories: organizations that were founded by the government (government–organized non-governmental organizations, or GONGOs536) and organizations that were initially independent of the government but were forcibly captured. The strategy of capture is included here because a small number of organizations do choose capture, as will be explained in more detail below, and because captured CSOs make up an important sector of the civil society arena in the Arab world.

In order to show why some DCSOs choose capture and why capture is included in this examination of civil society in the Arab world, this chapter will first describe the strategy of capture in more detail, explaining both why a small number of CSOs choose capture and why regimes create captured CSOs (GONGOs) or forcibly capture independent CSOs. To do so, I will discuss two outliers from Table 6 (Appendix), the General Federation of NGOs and the Integrated Care Society, both of which chose capture even though they were predicted to choose co-optation based on my theory.

What is Capture?

536 GONGOs are referred to in different sources as “Government-Organized NGOs”, “Government-Oriented NGOs”, and “Government-Owned NGOs”. All three terms have the same meaning.
DCSOs that are captured maintain virtually no autonomy from the regime. The majority of their professional staff and board members are regime allies (if not members of the ruling elite, themselves). The founders of captured DCSOs typically include one or more members of the ruling elite, including members of the head of state’s family (such as former President Hosni Mubarak’s wife Suzanne and son Gamal) or prominent and visible regime allies. Captured DCSOs rely almost exclusively on the state for funding. They may accept personal donations or grants from foundations that are close to the regime, but they do not seek foreign funding, with the exception of grants and partnerships with non-controversial multilateral donors such as the UN or the World Bank.537 Captured CSOs have a two-prong goal – to “support the implementation of policies initiated by their governments, but to legitimate them without voicing any criticism. In certain cases, these associations actively take part in smear campaigns targeted at other (independent) NGOs in order to undermine their work.”538 Captured DCSOs, by definition, represent a low level of threat to the regime. They are fully non-political and thus they do not challenge the state in any way, thereby removing any threat to the regime. Their goal is to serve the regime as a propaganda tool, making it appear as if the regime is supporting traditional civil society organizations, while in reality captured CSOs are not traditional CSOs as they are only minimally, if at all, independent from the regime.

Captured CSOs fall into two categories: independent CSOs that have chosen to allow themselves to be captured or were forcibly captured by the regime, and government-created

537 This is generally true for captured CSOs, however in some cases captured CSOs intentionally apply for grants from foreign governments to access money that is not available to government entities. Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network, Monitoring Report on Freedom of Association in the Euro-Mediterranean Region (Copenhagen, 2009).
538 Ibid.
CSOs, or GONGOs. In the following section I will explain why non-GONGOs choose capture. Here I will explain both why the regime creates GONGOs and the role GONGOs play in the greater civil society arena in the Arab world.

As explained in Chapter Two, GONGOs are not included in my typology of CSOs for two reasons. First, the strategy of capture is endogenous to the category of GONGOs – a CSO that forms as a GONGO is, by definition, captured by the regime. Thus, GONGOs do not choose their strategy for regime interaction and therefore cannot be included in an examination of why CSO type explains CSO strategy choice. Second, GONGOs are in no way independent of the regime. While CSOs in the Arab world are never fully independent of the state, in order to qualify as a civil society organization, an organization must be at least minimally independent of the state. GONGOs are, therefore, not CSOs as they are created by the state to be an extension of the state. Conversely, non-GONGOs that either choose to be captured or are forcibly captured are included in my analysis because they were, at one point, at least minimally independent of the regime and frequently remain minimally independent of the state even after they are captured.

Despite the fact that GONGOs are not defined as civil society organizations themselves, GONGOs play a very important role in the civil society arena and have a strong impact on the ability of CSOs to operate in the Arab world. GONGOs typically take on the same service provision and advocacy tasks as traditional DCSOs, competing with CSOs for financial and political resources. While GONGOs are an arm of the state, they are bureaucratically and financially separate from the official government agencies charged with the tasks of distributing goods and services such as health and education and protecting the rights of women and children.
Thus, for example, DCSOs that work on youth unemployment not only must contend with the Ministries of Manpower and Higher Education for resources and recognition but also with the Gamal Mubarak Future Generation Foundation, a GONGO that addresses youth unemployment. Understanding the role that GONGOs play in the Arab world is therefore essential to understanding the environment in which DCSOs operate and the constraints that they face, both of which shape their strategy choices.

GONGOs have been understudied in the literature on civil society. Because GONGOs are typically considered separate from both civil society and political society, most analyses of civil society in the Arab world (and elsewhere) exclude an analysis of the behavior and make-up of GONGOs in the region. Nevertheless, GONGOs play a very important role both as a propaganda tool of the regime and in competing with CSOs for attention and resources. As one report defines them, “GONGOs are organizations which answer to their public authorities, and which are expected by their governments to support social policies and the official line on civil liberties. Though they gladly present themselves as ‘civil society organizations’, they deliberately neglect the notion of independence, an essential foundation of any civil society organization worthy of that name.”\textsuperscript{539} Furthermore, Middle East regimes consider GONGOs to be a part of civil society, frequently including them in lists and reports on civil society activity at home. Thus, it is impossible to ignore the role of GONGOs in an analysis of the relationship between civil society and the state in the Middle East.

In Egypt, GONGOs have been used by state since the government of Gamal Abdel Nasser to function as a parallel civil society, providing development aid and services in a manner

\textsuperscript{539} Ibid.
that was heavily controlled by the state, but under the guise of an independent civil society. Under Mubarak, GONGOs were a frequently-used tool to take credit for successful civil society projects (as was the case of the Egyptian Association to Support Street Children, described in Chapter Three), to maintain control over controversial issues (such as the Egyptian Society for Childhood and Development, which sought to control issues of education and subvert feminist CSOs), and as a “democratic foil” to help legitimize the policies of the state (particularly in the area of human rights) and undermine independent CSOs. All over Egypt, organizations sprouted up bearing the name of former First Lady Suzanne Mubarak and her two sons Gamal and Alaa.

As discussed in Chapter One, one typical form of GONGO in Egypt is the Community Development Association (CDA). CDAs, which are described as “appendages of the state bureaucracy” were first set up by the Nasser government in the late 1950s to “provide integrated development to local communities, especially in rural areas” not necessarily as a method of government control over civil society. As of 1996, CDAs made up approximately one-quarter of all MOSS-registered NGOs, thereby representing an important player in Egyptian development. CDA activities are focused on rural development and provide rural communities with a wide variety of services including burial services, healthcare, schools, childcare and more. CDAs are highly dependent on Egyptian government funding and receive an annual stipend from MOSS. There are approximately 3,000 CDAs operating throughout Egypt today. The amount

540 Ibid.  
542 Abdel Rahman, Civil Society Exposed: The Politics of NGOs in Egypt.  
543 Egypt’s Social Contract: the Role of Civil Society.
of MOSS funding for CDAs has gradually decreased over the past two decades, but CDAs remain reliant on government funding.\textsuperscript{544} CDAs are staffed by public officials, including local and village council employees, former government employees and MOSS representatives. While the government role in administering and overseeing some CDAs has diminished over time, most CDAs remain GONGOs, tied to and run by government officials. CDAs differ from more advocacy-oriented GONGOs in that they represent a more paternalistic role by the state rather than a controlling or co-opting role. Abdel Rahman, in her study of development organizations (including CDAs, Coptic organizations and Muslim organizations) in Upper Egypt found that CDAs play a “dual role. On one hand they act as representatives of the organization in dealings with the State. On the other, they ensure, as MOSS officials or former officials, that State rules are clearly followed by the NGO, in return for the State’s support for themselves and the NGO.”\textsuperscript{545} This leads to “total co-optation and loss of autonomy.”\textsuperscript{546}

CDAs are not the only organizations that receive government funding. According to an official MOSS report from 1991, about 35% of registered CSOs receive government subsidies.\textsuperscript{547} Taking government money has benefits for both the CSO and the state. As Amaney Jamal notes in her study of associations in Palestine, “State-sponsored associations receive immediate political access and benefits not accorded to non-state associations. Clientalistic networks further reinforce vertical linkages between state leaders and citizens, at the expense of horizontal

\textsuperscript{544} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{545} Abdel Rahman, \textit{Civil Society Exposed: The Politics of NGOs in Egypt}, 156.  
\textsuperscript{546} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{547} Ibrahim, “An Assessment of Grassroots Participation in the Development of Egypt.”

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linkages among associations…Where associations derive resources and benefits from the state, they are more likely to endorse government initiatives.\(^5^{48}\)

Another form of GONGOs is the National Councils, created by the government to oversee popular and/or controversial issues. These include the National Council on Human Rights, started in 2003, the National Council on Women, started in 2000, and the National Council on Childhood and Motherhood, started in 1988.\(^5^{49}\) Several of these councils were founded by Suzanne Mubarak, a phenomenon not uncommon in the Arab world. As Heydemann states, “First ladies in the Arab world are especially prominent as founders and sponsors of such semi-official NGOs” noting the particular efforts of Asma al-Asad, the First Lady of Syria and Queen Rania of Jordan.\(^5^{50}\) But first ladies are not the only ones who play the GONGO game. Gamal Mubarak, son of Hosni and Suzanne, also served as the head of some prominent CSOs in Egypt. One example, the Future Generation Foundation, was an organization “with the aim of bolstering Egypt’s bold strategy for achieving sustainable economic growth through global competition by helping to create a tech-oriented and skilled workforce that could confront the needs of the new century.”\(^5^{51}\) Along with Gamal, the board of the Future Generation Foundation was stacked with regime allies including the Minister of Trade and Industry, the Minister of Housing, Utilities, and Urban Development, and several prominent bankers and industrialists.\(^5^{52}\) GONGOs headed by first ladies and children of the president ensure that the

\(^5^{48}\) Jamal, 15.
\(^5^{50}\) Heydemann, “Upgrading Authoritarianism in the Arab World.”
\(^5^{52}\) Ibid.
organization will play by the state’s rules while simultaneously allowing for the regime to appear friendly to civil society to outside observers.

Another function of GONGOs, as noted above, is as a way for regimes to control financial resources available for civil society. By creating organizations that are nominally independent from the official state bureaucracy, governments are able to access pots of foreign assistance reserved for non-governmental entities. As Sheila Carapico notes, GONGOs are also created as a way to “co-opt donor assistance to NGOs.”553 Rather than allow funding for civil society to go to independent CSOs, governments create their own organizations to secure available funding. While the state may not be able to attract bilateral or multilateral assistance funneled directly to the government, “funds-hungry third world governments also know that defining institutions as PVOs, CBOs, or NGOs helps attract dollars.”554 Another “widespread practice” according to Kandil is what she calls “functional integration of PVOs into the government system” in which the government assigns organizations tasks that would normally be the responsibly of the government.555 It should be noted that many GONGOs do serve a functional purpose and provide much needed goods and services to their beneficiaries, much like independent development CSOs. However some scholars see GONGOs as more sinister. Moisés Naim argues that “some GONGOs are benign, others irrelevant. But many…are dangerous. Some act as the thuggish arm of repressive governments. Others use the practices of democracy to subtly undermine democracy at home.”556

553 Carapico, “NGOs, INGOs, GO-NGOs and DO-NGOs: Making Sense of Non-Governmental Organizations.”
554 Ibid.
555 Kandil, Civil Society in the Arab World: Private Voluntary Organizations.
Why do DCSOs Choose Capture?

It is clear why states choose to created captured CSOs in the form of GONGOs, what is unclear is why an independent CSO would allow itself to be captured by the regime. This section will answer that question, using the two examples of CSOs from Table 6 that chose capture despite a predicted strategy of co-optation, as well as briefly explain why the state chooses to capture independent CSOs rather than simply create more GONGOs.

Why do Governments Capture CSOs?

As the section above explained, there are clear benefits to the state in creating GONGOs. They allow the state to appear to support independent civil society while still maintaining full control over both the rhetoric and the actions of these organizations. However, the Egyptian government has also used the strategy of forcibly capturing independent CSOs to serve its larger purpose of containment of civil society. The state chooses to capture independent CSOs for several reasons. First, the government “wants to organize and control the various occupational and functional groups in society.”557 As described in detail in Chapter Four, co-optation is a frequently used tool of the Egyptian government to simultaneously allow for the appearance of a free and independent civil society and maintain control over the organizations that make up civil society. As Albrecht argues, “co-optative and clientalist arrangements serve as primary control mechanisms” of the Egyptian government.558 Capturing independent CSOs is the ultimate control mechanism at the disposal of the Egyptian government.

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Second, states may capture CSOs in order to aid in state development goals. By bringing CSOs under state control, the government may believe that they will be better able to coordinate development efforts. As Kenneth Foster argues, captured CSOs can be much more effective than independent CSOs at achieving their development goals. Additionally, an especially successful CSO can draw attention to the state’s inability to fulfill its traditional roles, thereby embarrassing the government. It is therefore in the interest of the government to silence the CSO by controlling it, but also allowing it to continue the development work that it has succeeded in carrying out. In one example, the Egyptian government closed down the Arab Women’s Solidarity Association (AWSA) led by Egyptian feminist and opposition leader Nawal Saadawi, mostly due to her personal criticisms of Mubarak’s policies in the 1990 Gulf War. AWSA was shut down in June 1991 by the Egyptian government but no explicit reasons or justifications for the closure were given to AWSA staff. The government then took AWSA’s assets and “gave them to a little known ‘GONGO’, Women of Islam, a group run by a government official.” The government official, Faruq al-Fil, the director-general of social affairs for the Ma’adi district, was also given a 10% “liquidator’s fee” for liquidating AWSA’s assets and transferring them to his own organization. This was particularly odd, given that Women of Islam is a conservative organization whose mission and activities were largely at odds with those of AWSA.

Third, the government may choose to capture a CSO or to create a GONGO for the personal benefit of an individual government official or group of officials. The officials in charge

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559 Foster.
560 Gubser.
561 Sullivan and Abed-Kotob, *Islam in Contemporary Egypt: Civil Society vs. the State.*
of a captured CSO benefit from increased personal status, financial resources in the form of dues or other contributions to the organization, or support from international donors.\textsuperscript{562} By capturing CSOs (as well as by creating GONGOs), the state limits the available resources for independent CSOs. This is not lost on independent CSOs who accuse captured CSOs of “depriving other serious and committed NGOS from access to resources needed from their projects.”\textsuperscript{563}

\textit{Why Do CSOs Choose Capture?}

The strategy of capture is a counter-intuitive choice for independent DCSOs. By allowing oneself to be fully incorporated into the regime, a DCSO is inviting a very high level of regime supervision and control that other administratively and ideologically co-opted DCSOs do not possess. Captured DCSOs maintain only the most minimal level of autonomy, unable to control who sits on their board, what issues they address and the manner in which they address them. Thus, a DCSO that chooses capture is clearly limited in its ability to act. It cannot criticize the regime in any way and furthermore, in many cases, must vocally support the regime and its policies. A captured DCSO is limited in the amounts and types of funding it can receive and by choosing to be captured, relinquishes control over its administrative functions. Given these circumstances, capture is not an attractive strategy to the vast majority of DCSOs. As explained in Chapter Four, CSOs that desire (or require) regime protection tend to choose one of two forms of co-optation (administrative co-optation or ideological co-optation), both of which enable the CSO to receive protection while maintaining some autonomy. Co-optation is, therefore, a far more common strategy than capture. Nevertheless, a handful of DCSOs do choose to allow themselves to be captured. This is done by selecting a high-level regime official as its chair,

\textsuperscript{562} Foster.
\textsuperscript{563} Abdel Rahman, \textit{Civil Society Exposed: The Politics of NGOs in Egypt}, 192.
refusing to accept controversial funding sources, refusing to criticize the regime in any way or otherwise relinquishing administrative and programmatic supervision to the government. These organizations differ from the GONGOs, described above, in that they are not created by the government. Rather, they are created as independent CSOs that later allow themselves to be captured by the government. In reality, the small number of non-GONGO CSOs that choose capture fall along the CSO strategy continuum (see Figure 3) somewhere between ideological co-optation and capture, closer to capture. Their behavior is not fully explained by ideological co-optation or administrative co-optation, placing them in the category of capture.

DCSOs choose capture for two primary reasons: protection and patronage. As described in detail in Chapters One and Two, DCSOs in Egypt face frequent and arbitrary repression by the regime. By allowing oneself to be captured, a DCSO guarantees the highest level of regime protection. That protection can come in the form of assistance with the lengthy and confusing bureaucratic procedures of CSO registration and administration as well protection from regime harassment and fear of shut down. Abdel Rahman notes that allowing one’s organization to be captured, “helps NGOs to overcome bureaucratic hurdles more efficiently and faster than the rest of NGOs that are often unaware of different loopholes in the law, and of the best way of approaching ministry officials for solving central problems.”564 By having MOSS officials or former officials in a leadership position, a CSO is granted connections within MOSS that would otherwise be absent. Kevin O’Brien, writing on CSOs in China, which frequently choose the strategy of capture, explains this phenomenon well:

In an organization seeking to become embedded, the agents of change seek proximity to existing centers of power (i.e. entwinement) rather than distance. They are quite willing

564 Ibid., 156.
to sacrifice control of membership and opportunities to embarrass regime leaders to gain a measure of jurisdiction and organizational capacity. They realize that independence at this point means irrelevance and that future development demands sensitivity to existing power relations.\footnote{Kevin J. O’Brien, “Chinese People’s Congresses and Legislative Embeddedness: Understanding Early Organizational Development,” \textit{Comparative Political Studies} 27, no. (1994).}

Patronage is a two-way street. Bully praetorian states, as Egypt is described by Clement Henry and Robert Springborg, rely on state-based patronage networks for legitimacy. Lacking in rational-legal, traditional or charismatic authority, these states require “economically irrational, overgrown governmental and public sectors” in order to survive.\footnote{Henry and Springborg.} Thus, states require clients in the form of CSOs to maintain their legitimacy. On the other side, as Mustapha Kamil al-Sayyid argues, “Very few organizations are willing to engage in confrontations with the state over the question of their autonomy or any other matter. Their leaders view maintaining good relations with the government as the best way to ensure receiving government favors in terms of appointments in legislative or advisory bodies, obtaining facilities and benefits for their members, or simply escaping the wrath of officials, particularly security forces.”\footnote{Al-Sayyid, 288.} Thus, patronage benefits both the government patron and the CSO clients. This patronage can be at the highest, broadest level of regime elites or at the lower levels of individual MOSS or other government officials. As Francesco Cavatorta and Vincent Durac argue, “some independent societal associations actually seek to be co-opted by an authoritarian state, sacrificing autonomy and accepting constraints in order to attain their goals. Moreover the creation and functioning of incorporated associations is often shaped and controlled not simply by a unity state attempting to

\footnote{Henry and Springborg.}

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exert domination, but rather by an individual state official or organization with more parochial
goals in mind.”

The dual benefits of protection and patronage are exhibited in the choice of capture by
two CSOs from Table 6 - the General Federation of NGOs and the Integrated Care Society. Both
of these CSOs chose strategies that are more restrictive than predicted. Both are Charity and
Development CSOs. The General Federation of NGOs was predicted to choose ideological co-
option, based on its low level of outside rhetorical support, medium level of perceived threat to
the regime and medium level of access to foreign funding. The Integrated Care Society is
predicted to choose administrative co-optation based on its low level of outside rhetorical
support, low level of perceived threat to the regime and medium level of access to foreign
funding. However, both organizations chose capture. This behavior is explained by the desire of
both organizations to guarantee regime protection and the benefits of increased access to
patronage the organizations received by choosing capture.

The General Federation of NGOs was created by Egyptian law to coordinate and oversee
all NGO activity in the country, but it was intended to be a non-governmental organization. One-
third of its board members would be appointed by the Egyptian government while two-thirds
would be elected by the CSO membership, ensuring that the Federation remained autonomous
from the Egyptian government. Under Mubarak, the Federation was considered by scholars and
government officials to be a civil society organization, not a government body. The purpose of
the Federation is to coordinate and oversee all civil society organizations in Egypt. This includes
advocating for an increased transparency of CSO funding and oversight of CSO activities to

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568 Cavatorta and Durac, *Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World: The Dynamics of Activism*.
569 See, for example, Khallaf.
promote development while minimizing duplication. The Federation thus began with lofty and admirable goals meant to streamline Egypt’s bloated and disorganized civil society sector. In practice, however, the Federation quickly succumbed to regime pressure, adopting the strategy of capture by, most prominently, appointing as its chair high level regime allies and padding the organization’s board with regime-friendly civil society actors and government officials.

The Federation relies on both government and official bilateral and multilateral funding sources. In 2007, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) signed a “project document” in support of the Federation, with the goal of “empowering the [Federation] and transforming it into an innovative, democratic, transparent and participatory organization that is able to communicate effectively with policy makers, as well as achieve its objectives through the reform of regulation, institutional development, capacity building, and the establishment of administrative and financial procedures.”

Through a grant of $700,000 over two and half years with contributions from the UNDP, the Federation and the European Union, this partnership had the stated goal of improving civil society coordination and transparency across Egypt. However, in reality, this sort of arrangement represents the success of the Egyptian government at accessing foreign funding for government-approved civil society activity and guaranteeing further government oversight of civil society.

While the Federation began as a non-governmental civil society network, it quickly chose the path of capture. Appointing highly visible and influential regime allies to the board, including selecting as chairman, at various times, former Prime Minister Abdel Aziz Hegazi and First Lady Suzanne Mubarak. The appointment of regime allies to the board and oversight by these

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570 NGO Boost (United Nations Development Program, 2007).
individuals made it virtually impossible for truly independent CSO actors to be elected to the 20 non-appointed board seats. Thus, the Federation has since become “unofficial” in name only. At the Federation’s annual conference in 2010, Suzanne Mubarak was the keynote speaker and received an award from Federation Chair Hegazi. Mrs. Mubarak’s comments at the conference were followed by those of the other high level regime officials including Minister of Social Solidarity Ali Meselhi, and Minister of State for Family and Population Mushira Khattab. All of the speakers highlighted the importance of government-civil society coordination, with the underlying message that the Egyptian government supports civil society groups as long as they play by the governments’ rules.571 Under Hegazi’s leadership, a new agreement was reached with USAID wherein the Ministry of International Cooperation would oversee the disbursement of USAID funds to individual CSOs.572 This move was widely criticized by civil society organizations as well as the NGO Support Center, an independent CSO network. The Federation also worked with MOSS to draft a new, more restrictive Associations Law in 2010 that was never implemented due to the start of the Arab Spring. Amongst many new restrictions on civil society activity, this draft law would compel all CSOs to become members of the Federation.573

Furthermore, Federation board members not only vocally supported the existing Associations Law under Mubarak and the draft law discussed above, but also called for further government oversight of civil society activity, arguing that independent civil society organizations that were not heavily controlled by the government could be subversive to the

state.\textsuperscript{574} The Federation’s choice of capture was obvious to both its supporters and detractors. Thus, the majority of independent CSOs have chosen not to join the Federation, despite MOSS efforts to compel all CSOs to join, while those that have joined the Federation, have done so out of a desire to reap the benefits of patronage and protection discussed above.\textsuperscript{575}

The relationship between the Federation and MOSS is not without problems. MOSS and the Federation compete for oversight of civil society and both have made attempts to serve as the official directory of CSOs, resulting in the lack of any such document.\textsuperscript{576} One appointed Federation board member mentioned that there are lots of coordination problems between civil society and the government and that the government “misuses” civil society.\textsuperscript{577} Furthermore, the Federation is not against foreign funding, but seeks to control which CSOs receive funding and from whom, whereas MOSS would prefer to oversee all funding issues itself. Where MOSS and the Federation do agree is that government oversight of both registration and funding is a good thing and the role of security services to oversee “bad” organizations is necessary.\textsuperscript{578}

The General Federation of NGOs represents a clear case of capture. While the organization began as an independent CSO, it quickly chose to allow itself to be captured by the regime. The choice of capture brought clear benefits to the Federation. Working with the government, rather than attempting to critique it (as other CSO networks have done), the Federation avoided regime crackdown and gained access to political and financial resources that would not have been otherwise available. Given the Federation’s goals of improving

\textsuperscript{574} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
\textsuperscript{575} According to a Federation board member, only 600 out of 30,000 CSOs were members of the Federation as of 2010.
\textsuperscript{576} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
\textsuperscript{577} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
\textsuperscript{578} Interview with civil society actor. Cairo, Egypt. October 2010.
transparency and building the capacity of independent CSOs, it would appear to be counter to the Federation’s interests to completely acquiesce to the regime. Inviting a former prime minister or current first lady to chair the federation assures that the Federation will be unable to speak out against the government when evaluating the CSO-government relationship and limits the number and kinds of CSOs willing to participate in the network. However, CSO networks represent a threat in their very existence and by partnering with the regime in the form of capture, the Federation was assured of its protection from regime crackdown.

The Integrated Care Society (ICS) is another CSO that chose capture, despite a predicted strategy of co-optation. Much like the General Federation of NGOs, ICS chose to be captured by partnering with perennial civil society champion Suzanne Mubarak. Intended as an independent CSO, by choosing to ally itself with the strongest of regime allies, the first lady of Egypt, ICS quickly became captured. ICS is one of the older CSOs in Egypt, established in 1977 with the goal of improving the development of all members of the family, including women, children, adolescents, and their parents. ICS started by improving school libraries in rural communities throughout Egypt. Today the organization focuses on women’s advancement, family planning, illiteracy, adult education, sports activities, libraries, improving technology for healthcare, and the environment. ICS gradually became a captured CSO by selecting Suzanne Mubarak as its chair, by taking on official government projects and by working closely with several government ministries and agencies.

One of the projects that ICS oversees is the Egyptian Board on Books for Young People (EBBY). Established in 1987 as a branch of the International Board on Books for Young People, the EBBY began as an official government initiative under the General Authority of Books. The
program eventually migrated to ICS under the oversight of Suzanne Mubarak. One of the initiatives of EBBY is the Suzanne Mubarak Competition for Children’s Literature and Programs. Mrs. Mubarak also established the Suzanne Mubarak Complex for Craft Works to help disabled Egyptians acquire craft-making skills and assist vocational school graduates in finding employment. This project was established with the Ministry of Education, which oversees the project. All of ICS’ preschool and kindergarten projects follow the Ministry’s curriculum, which differentiates ICS programs from the educational programs carried out by many independent CSOs. Mrs. Mubarak has her mark on several additional ICS projects including several reading festivals and national prizes as well as the Cultural Center, which she established in an upper-class suburb of Cairo in 1997 to develop the cultural skills of the area’s residents, including computer training, arts and crafts, music classes, physical education and foreign language education.

Like the General Federation of NGOs, ICS accepts foreign funding from official bilateral and multilateral channels and has received a UNICEF grant to develop a rural community within Egypt with activities such as improved schools, vocational training, a kindergarten and a micro-credit program. The success of this program resulted in its takeover by the National Council for Women, a GONGO, that expanded the program to women across Egypt. ICS has also received grants from the National Council for Women, the German government, the World Bank, the World Health Organization and the UNDP.

ICS has also partnered with the Egyptian government by establishing numerous children’s and all-ages public libraries throughout Egypt. Through its partnerships with the General Authority for Books, the Ministries of Culture, Mass Media, Education, Environmental
Affairs, and the Higher Council for Youth and Sports, ICS has both opened several libraries and developed ongoing educational and cultural programs throughout Egypt’s public libraries. ICS has also created mobile libraries with the help of the Egyptian Red Crescent Society (also overseen by Suzanne Mubarak at one point). Additionally, ICS has partnered with some independent CSOs particularly in its larger development projects such as a project aimed at improving the standard of living for residents of Ezbet wa Arab Alwalda in Helwan. While ICS oversees the project, CSO partners provide goods and services such as school uniforms or books.

There is no question that ICS, although initially an independent CSO, became a captured organization and pet project of former First Lady Suzanne Mubarak. By selecting Suzanne Mubarak as its chair, ICS ensured that it would both receive a sufficient level of protection to enable it to carry out its activities, but also would be viewed with an increased level of legitimacy by the Egyptian government and the international community. Suzanne Mubarak was known throughout the international community for her work with children and women. By not only bringing her on board but also naming projects and initiatives after her, ICS was able to buy itself international approval. That approval came with the cost of a loss of autonomy, which ICS viewed as a worthwhile trade off. Many of ICS’ projects could be seen as competing with the state, particularly as ICS grew its focus from libraries only to socio-economic development as a whole. Rather than try to fight the state for resources and attention, ICS chose to allow itself to be fully co-opted by the state, both taking over state-run programs and turning its own programs over to the state.

In the cases of both the General Federation of NGOs and the Integrated Care Society the choice of capture provided a guarantee of protection from/by the regime as well as significant
patronage benefits for each organization. Both organizations were widely successful in receiving multilateral grants and drawing positive attention from the international community. While each organization had to give up its autonomy in order to reap those benefits, the regime protection combined with access to patronage proved more important than the ability to operate outside of the regime or criticize it in any way.

Conclusion

While very few independent CSOs choose the strategy of capture, captured CSOs in the form of GONGOs and forcibly captured independent CSOs play an important role in the civil society arena. Captured CSOs directly compete with independent CSOs for access to financial resources, both from the Egyptian government and from outside sources. Captured CSOs also compete with independent CSOs for legitimacy and political capital. Captured CSOs may badmouth independent CSOs, calling them Western puppets or questioning their motives. And independent CSOs must justify their existence to the Egyptian public in the presence of parallel and duplicate GONGOs and other captured CSOs that appear to be carrying out the same activities as independent CSOs. Thus, in order to understand the environment in which DCSOs operate and the constraints that they face in their interaction with the regime, it is essential to understand the role of captured CSOs within Egypt.

As this chapter has shown, the majority of captured CSOs are either GONGOs or independent CSOs that have been forcibly captured by the regime. It is in the interest of the regime to subsume both successful CSOs as well as CSOs that represent a particular threat to the regime. By either creating a GONGO to tackle the controversial issue (such as the National...
Council on Women) or forcibly capturing an independent CSO that has become too controversial (such as the Arab Women’s Solidarity Association), the regime is able to silence critical voices and maintain control over the rhetoric and activities of threatening organizations. However, there are some cases of CSOs that have chosen the strategy of capture. This choice is due to the combination of guaranteed regime protection that comes with being captured and the possibility of patronage benefits that captured CSOs may receive.

The examples of the General Federation of NGOs and the Integrated Care Society show that, at times, giving up one’s autonomy is a worthwhile price to pay for regime protection, access to financial resources, international legitimacy and the ability to operate with little interference. For most DCSOs, the goals and activities of the organization require some level of freedom from the regime, and thus capture is not a viable strategy. However, in the two cases described above as well as a handful of others in Egypt, the DCSO does not require independence from the regime and is willing to give up its ability to criticize the regime or counter its policies. By choosing capture, this small group of DCSOs must relinquish administrative, programmatic and political control, but it is rewarded with vast amounts of patronage and easier access to resources than non-captured CSOs.
CHAPTER VI: BEYOND EGYPT

The previous five chapters have shown that the variable DCSO type determines DCSO strategy in Egypt. This chapter will test that theory in two other liberalized autocracies in the Arab world – Jordan and Morocco. By examining the relationship between development civil society organizations and the state in these two countries over the past decade (1999-2010)579 I will show that the argument that DCSO type determines DCSO strategy is not specific to Egypt and can (and should) be tested in hybrid regimes across the region and outside of the Arab world.

This chapter extends the argument to Jordan and Morocco for several reasons. Egypt, Jordan and Morocco are all liberalized autocracies, possessing a combination of “guided pluralism, controlled elections, and selective repression” that has provided each of their regimes with long-term stability despite pressure to reform from both their citizenry and the international community.580 Despite the fact that Egypt is a republic while Morocco and Jordan are monarchies, the Mubarak regime exhibits the same behavior of selective repression and co-optation of the civil society sector that is found in the monarchies of the Middle East. Thus, the constraints under which Egyptian CSOs operate are similar to the legal and bureaucratic hurdles in place in Jordan and Morocco. This results in a similar variation in possible CSO strategy choice. Additionally, all three states possess an active civil society sector with a variety of CSOs across the development spectrum (in addition to numerous democracy promotion CSOs).

579 In both Morocco and Jordan regime change took place in 1999. In Morocco, King Mohammad VI came to power following the death of his father, King Hassan II. In Jordan, King Abdullah II came to power following the death of his father King Hussein.
Furthermore, Morocco and Jordan share several common attributes including similar sources of legitimacy, political systems and recent experiences with reform. In 1999, the decades-long rulers of both Morocco and Jordan passed away, transferring power to their thirtysomething, Western-educated sons. Both Kings Mohammad VI of Morocco and Abdullah II of Jordan appeared to be liberalizers, quickly enacting a series of reforms aimed at giving off the appearance of progressive change to domestic and international audiences, while simultaneously ensuring a strong hold on power for the monarchy. Both ruling families share similar bases of legitimacy, claiming direct descent from the Prophet Mohammed. Both are strong Western allies with connections to Europe and the United States including Free Trade Agreements and Millennium Challenge grants. And both have similar political histories that have placed them squarely in the category of liberalized autocracies with strong executives and weak parliaments endowed with some real powers. But more important, both have relatively large and vibrant civil societies, which experienced a significant increase in power and numbers following the 1999 political transitions that took place in both countries combined with a legacy of “cultural domination, political control and co-optation and repression” over those CSOs.

This chapter will thus expand the argument that DCSO type determines DCSO strategy by applying it to DCSOs in Jordan and Morocco. I will first examine the relationship of civil society and the state in Morocco, describing the legal environment under which CSOs operate, the constraints placed on Moroccan CSOs by the state and the way in which Moroccan CSOs respond to these constraints. Next, I will examine the Jordanian civil society sector and its

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582 Ibid., 99.
relationship with the state. In doing so I will show that in both Jordan and Morocco the variable DSCO type, which is comprised of the combination of three independent variables – level of outside rhetorical support, level of perceived threat, and level of access to foreign funding – determines the strategy a DCSO is likely to choose. Due to data limitations I will limit my analysis to the two types of CSOs that dominate the civil society sector in each country: Muslim CSOs and Protected Minority Groups. In order to fully test the theory that CSO type determines CSO strategy, further data would need to be collected on the behavior of Single-Issue CSOs and Charity and Development Organizations that do not fall into the aforementioned categories. Thus, this chapter is meant to be a first attempt at expanding the theory outside of the context of Egypt, with the hope that other scholars will take the analysis further.

Civil Society in Morocco

The Moroccan state is a clear example of a liberalized autocracy, containing several elements of pluralism, including multiparty elections for the legislature, several individual freedoms, and legal protections for minority groups (including the large Amazigh population and religious minorities such as Jews and Christians). However, “the ultimate decision-maker, the king, is unelected and unaccountable.” As stated above, Morocco underwent a stable transition after the death of King Hassan II in 1999. Power was passed from Hassan, who had ruled since 1961, to his son, King Mohammad VI. Upon ascension to the throne, Mohammad appeared to be a reformer, vowing “to undertake as many reforms as are necessary to establish the rule of law, a

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583 Francesco Cavatorta, “‘Divided they Stand, Divided they Fail’: Opposition Politics in Morocco,” *Democratization* 16, no. 1 (2009).
culture of democracy, economic liberalism and social solidarity.⁵⁸⁴ Among his first acts, King Mohammad defended women’s rights in a public speech, spoke against poverty and corruption, funded social programs to help the urban poor and visited the Rif region, an area his father had neglected for 40 years.⁵⁸⁵ He released more than 46,000 political prisoners, removed several of his father’s controversial advisers from government and planned for legislative elections. The reform process did not start with King Mohammad, however, as in the last years of his reign King Hassan initiated a series of political reforms including the first alternation of political parties in government in the Arab world. However, most of the reforms carried out under both Kings Hassan and Mohammed have been seen by scholars and the Moroccan people as “powerful, if mostly symbolic, gestures.”⁵⁸⁶

Morocco is home to “one of the freest and most dynamic civil society sectors in the broader Middle East”, with estimates of the number of CSOs around 40,000.⁵⁸⁷ Rachel Newcomb describes the role of CSOs in Morocco well:

In Morocco today, nongovernmental organizations play a major role in addressing social problems. Often funded by governments and organizations throughout Europe and the United States, many Moroccan NGOs have a degree of independence from the state that allows them to operate without excessive recourse to bureaucratic procedures. NGOs in Morocco are actively engaged in renegotiating the relationship between individuals and the state, and in the process, reimagining forms of community and creating new arenas to support those whom the system has failed.⁵⁸⁸

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⁵⁸⁷ Khrouz. Much like in Egypt, Morocco lacks an official comprehensive database of CSOs, making it impossible to verify the exact number of Moroccan CSOs.
⁵⁸⁸ Rachel Newcomb, “‘Singing to So Many Audiences’: Negotiations of Gender, Identity, and Social Space in Fes, Morocco” (Princeton University, 2004).
The relatively free operating environment has particularly benefited DSCOs, who assisted in reducing the poverty rate from 19% to 11% between 1998 and 2006 and in helping “ordinary Moroccans find new ways to raise literacy, earn income, and address other pressing human-development and welfare needs.”589

Morocco is closely connected both financially and politically to the United States and Europe. Morocco became a “major non-NATO ally” of the United States in 2004, the same year Morocco and the United States signed a free trade agreement. Morocco also signed an Association Agreement with the European-Mediterranean Partnership in 1996 and has received large amounts of development and counter-terrorism aid from both the United States and Europe over the past decade.590 One result of these close ties to the West is that Moroccan civil society organizations have been exposed to American and European CSOs and been the focus of international civil society spending and attention. Morocco is also closely allied with the other Sunni monarchies in the region, in particular Saudi Arabia, which has provided financial and rhetorical support for the Moroccan state.591

The Legal Environment

The Moroccan civil society sector is overseen by several laws. The Law on Public Liberties of 1958 gave all Moroccans the right of association. This law was later amended by the Royal Decree (dahir) of 1973, which gave significant powers to the government to dissolve and sanction associations, a result of the increasing success of Leftist organizations. A new Associations Law was approved in April 2002, which made it easier for associations to legally

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589 Khrouz.
591 Ibid.
register but also provided additional bureaucratic control measures for the Moroccan government over civil society.\textsuperscript{592} The Moroccan constitution further guarantees the freedom of association in Article 9, which states: “The constitution shall guarantee all citizens the following: a) freedom of movement through, and of settlement in, all parts of the Kingdom; b) freedom of opinion, of expression in all its forms, and of public gathering; c) freedom of association, and the freedom to belong to any union or political group of their choice. No limitation, except by law, shall be put to the exercise of such freedoms.”\textsuperscript{593}

CSOs must receive a license from the state in order to operate legally and once they are legalized, CSOs are overseen by the Ministry of the Interior. Much like in Egypt, the registration process is confusing and organizations can be refused licenses for arbitrary reasons. An association can also be declared illegal if it is found by the court “to be against moral customs, tamper with the Islamic faith, threaten the integrity of the national territory or the monarchy or incites discrimination.”\textsuperscript{594} This intentionally vague law gives the regime considerable leeway in making decisions on whether to permit or deny an association. Thus, as Jamal argues, “the palace’s most effective tool is not the restrictive NGO laws themselves, but the application of those laws.”\textsuperscript{595} Much like Egypt, the Moroccan regime does not regularly shut down associations, but rather fails to provide them with the necessary permit to operate, thereby leaving them in limbo in perpetuity. This results in significant problems for associations including “difficulty in renting office space or meeting halls; difficulty in opening bank

\textsuperscript{593} Kristina Kausch, \textit{Morocco: Negotiating Change with the Makhzen} (Madrid, Spain: FRIDE, 2008).
\textsuperscript{594} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{595} Jamal, 96.
accounts; exclusion from official events and ineligibility for subsidies; boycott by authorities; no right to organize gatherings in public thoroughfares; and risk of prosecution for members.”596

And organizations that violate one of the redlines (the monarchy, Islam, or the territorial integrity of the state) “can still receive exorbitant fines and jail sentences.”597

CSOs frequently complain about the difficult registration process, due, primarily to the “predominance of informal rules and the lack of practical implementation of legal provisions.”598

The government can outright ignore a CSO’s application, harassing CSOs that choose the tactic of pluralism and, at times, refusing to issue permits and funds to such CSOs. This tactic was described by Khalil Jemmah, vice-president of the Association of Friends and Families of the Victims of Illegal Immigration, who claims that “one of the rules of psychological torture for the Makhzen599 is to ignore the existence of associations that are active and independent.”600

In 2002 new legislation was passed to facilitate the use of foreign funding by CSOs. However, the distribution of funds is one of the most frequently used tools by the regime to control CSO activity. Any organization that receives foreign funds must report that funding to the General Secretariat of the Government within 30 days. 601 As Cavatorta and Dalmasso argue, “the distribution of grants to different groups for carrying out social and economic programs occurs not on the basis of merit, but on the basis of what can be termed political quietism. For

596 Cavatorta and Durac, *Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World: The Dynamics of Activism*, 59.
597 Cavatorta, “‘Divided they Stand, Divided they Fail’: Opposition Politics in Morocco.”
598 Kausch, *Morocco: Negotiating Change with the Makhzen*.
599 The Makhzen (literally “storehouse”) is a term used to describe the “informal governing alliance between the monarch, his advisers, selected businessmen, high-ranking bureaucrats and tribal chiefs operating as unelected and unaccountable decision-makers in the country beyond the control of the elected government.” Cavatorta and Durac, *Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World: The Dynamics of Activism*.
601 Kausch, *Morocco: Negotiating Change with the Makhzen*. 
associations that the authorities perceive as bothersome, the stick of harassment and denial of money is employed, while for the ones aligned to the regime, the so called associations *oui-oui*, there is the carrot of grants for their projects.

A 2008 study found that Moroccan CSOs across the board, including religious CSOs and women’s organizations were willing to work with Western partners, however religious organizations were less likely to accept Western financial assistance. This is because the Moroccan government has a very positive relationship with the West, as described above. Thus, “the Moroccan government has not, as some of its counterparts elsewhere in the MENA region, played the ‘traitor’ card against NGOs or other actors that accept foreign funding, having, on the contrary, encouraged NGOs to seek Western assistance. Islamists have also largely avoided that argument vis-à-vis secular NGOs in recent years (not least because they themselves have shown willingness to work with Western partners).”

*State Control over Civil Society*

Much like other liberalized autocracies, the state has a much more positive relationship with development CSOs than it does with democracy-promotion CSOs. Morocco suffers from high levels of poverty, unemployment and one of the highest rates of illiteracy in the world. Furthermore, “the state’s withdrawal from certain social and economic commitments is a fact. Thus, the state looks to relief being provided by private non-profit associations to limit the negative effects of withdrawal while at the same time meeting the demands of supranational organizations…for reductions in the public deficit.”

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604 Desrues and Moyano.
welcomes an open and equal partnership with CSOs providing much needed poverty-relief and development services to the people. Rather, like their democracy-promotion counterparts, in Morocco DCSOs operate under a highly restrictive legal environment, as described above, and are subject to somewhat arbitrary application of the laws that govern civil society.

Another way that the state has maintained control over civil society is through GONGO. A frequent tactic of the regime is to create an official project with similar goals to that of independent CSOs. This has the benefit of demonstrating regime support for civil society and reform efforts, while also carefully controlling those efforts. 605 The most prominent example was the 2005 National Human Development Initiative (INDH), inaugurated by King Mohammed and undertaken by a variety of elected officials, public institutions and civic associations. In addition to a national oversight board, the INDH has created local human development committees in all provinces and 264 municipalities composed of an equal number of civil society representatives, elected officials and local government officials.606 The INDH receives funding from the state budget and international partners. Thus, this initiative serves the dual purpose of attracting foreign funding for Moroccan development (of which it has been very successful) and drawing resources and attention away from independent CSOs, particularly Muslim organizations focused on development.607 As a consequence, Morocco has seen the creation of new CSOs specifically organized to access new pools of money made available by the INDH,

605 Newcomb.
with little interest in actual development activity. Prior to the INDH, the Moroccan government supported the creation of a series of regional associations (including Rabat al Fath, Fes-Saiss, Bou Regrag and Souss-Casablanca), tasked with recruiting individuals who would otherwise join independent CSOs. These regional associations have been very successful, led by individuals handpicked by the regime and focusing solely on social and cultural activities, such as sports, arts, and recreation. By co-opting and dividing the civil society sector, the Moroccan regime has created a sense of competition and rivalry amongst CSOs, making it more difficult for them to work together against the regime.

A second form of regime control over civil society is through national councils including the National Council of Youth and the Future (CNJA), the National Council of Social Dialogue (CCDS), the Consultative Commission for the Reform of Mudawana, and the Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture. As Maghraoui argues, through the National Councils, “as part of its strategies of self-renewal, adaptation and co-optation, the Moroccan regime has sought to bring more NGOs into its political orbit.” While some scholars have argued that the participation in National Councils has given civil society organizations a voice and increased their legitimacy in the eyes of the regime, in reality the National Councils are another tool for the regime to co-opt and, in some cases capture, independent CSO actors. This has been a particularly valuable tool in dealing with politically charged issues such as corruption and torture. Because of the weakness of the Moroccan Parliament, many opposition figures entered the associational sphere

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609 Jamal.
611 Ibid.
in the 1980s and 1990s, finding “safe haven” there.\textsuperscript{612} By creating National Councils and inviting opposition figures to participate, the Moroccan regime has been able to keep some control over even its sharpest critics.

\textit{CSO-State Interaction}

\textit{Muslim CSOs}

In Morocco DCSOs can largely be divided into two categories: secular CSOs and Muslim CSOs. These two groups not only contest one another over social and policy issues but also compete for resources and patronage.\textsuperscript{613} Muslim CSOs are likely to choose ideological co-optation (see Table 5). With a low level of outside rhetorical support, a medium level of perceived threat and a medium level of access to foreign funding, Muslim CSOs in Morocco rely heavily on the state for access to financial resources and access to the main source of political power – the Makhzen. Because of the king’s official role as Commander of the Faithful, he draws a significant part of his legitimacy from Islam. Thus, Muslim CSOs have been willing to partner with the regime in order to achieve their goals. Even the Muslim organizations that operate most clearly as opposition to the regime are aware of the position that they occupy within society and thus have been willing “to change with society and adapt both [their] discourse and [their] activities” in order to avoid regime crackdown.\textsuperscript{614}

Muslim CSOs in Morocco behave in similar ways to Muslim CSOs in Egypt. While some Muslim organizations are tolerated by the regime, others, particularly those linked to the outlawed opposition party \textit{Jamiat al-Adl wal-Ihsan} (Party of Justice and Charity) (al-Adl), are

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{612} Jamal, 109.
\item \textsuperscript{613} Cavatorta, “Civil Society, Islamism and Democratization: the Case of Morocco.”
\item \textsuperscript{614} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
illegal. Al-Adl is the largest organization in Morocco, similar in size and scale to the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. However, the difference between al-Adl in Morocco and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt is that al-Adl does not wish to formally participate in politics and thereby represents a lesser level of threat to the Moroccan government than the Brotherhood does to the Egyptian government. However, al-Adl is not the only Islamist organization with CSO ties. Most Muslim CSOs are connected to either al-Adl or the Party for Justice and Development (PJD), Morocco’s legal Islamist political party.

There was a shift in the regime’s response to Muslim organizations (both CSOs and political parties) following the 2003 Casablanca terrorist bombing by Islamist extremists. The bombing, which killed 38 people and wounded 100, resulted in a new anti-terror law (of 2003) and brought a new crackdown on Muslim organizations. As Lise Storm argues, today “the country’s Islamists – who are either seen as existential threats or as potential existential threats to the regime suffer from violations more frequently than other groups.”

Women’s Organizations

In Morocco, like in Egypt, women’s organizations fall under the category of Protected Minority groups. Women’s organizations choose pluralism due to their combined high level of outside rhetorical support, medium level of perceived threat to the regime and medium level of access to foreign funding (see Table 5). Women’s organizations were some of the first independent CSOs to form in Morocco. The National Union of Moroccan Women (UNFM) was established in 1969 with the support of the regime, with the wife of the king’s cousin as

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615 Ibid.
president. Other early organizations include the Democratic Women’s Association of Morocco and the Women’s Action Union, both of which opened their doors in the early 1980s. Most women’s organizations grew out of the leftist political parties that made up the Moroccan opposition in the 1970s and 1080s. The female members of these parties felt their work within the official political system was failing to meet their goals and thus established independent organizations. As a result, the majority of the women’s organizations in Morocco are secular, left-wing organizations. The women’s civil society movement took off in the 1980s, coinciding with an increase in civil society active across all spectrums. The new organizations focused on improving women’s rights, increasing literacy, providing legal and health assistance and increasing women’s employment. The first women’s organizations were technically youth clubs, but they were shut down by the government in the late 1980s. The Moroccan regime told the women’s groups to register as associations, as their activities were outside of what was permitted by a youth club, but it was clear that because of the CSO activists’ history within leftist opposition parties, they would not be granted associations permits and thus the youth clubs were forced to disband and, in some cases, re-form as independent CSOs. Throughout the 1990s, women’s groups sprang up, operating both as strict charity organizations and as more activist/political groups. These organizations received most of their funding from foreign donors, supported both financially and rhetorically by the international women’s movement. Another type of organization that sprang up in the 1990s was Islamist women’s organizations, unsatisfied with the work and impact of the secular women’s CSOs.

617 Khrouz.
Morocco, perhaps more so than any other regime in the Middle East, is deeply concerned with portraying a specific image to the international community – that of a modern, sophisticated country with strong ties to the West, particularly Europe. Respect for women’s rights and human rights have thus been high on the agenda of the Moroccan regime since the later years of the reign of King Hassan II.619 Nevertheless, Morocco is a largely patriarchal society, in which despite the presence of very advanced legal protections for women, most women remain both unaware of and unable to claim their rights. Thus, a wide range of women’s organizations exist to both publicize women’s rights and improve upon them.620 The greatest success of women’s organizations is the 2004 reform of the Moroccan family code, or Mudawana, which increased the age of marriage from 15 to 18, restricted polygamy, and expanded women’s divorce rights, among other significant reforms.

*Amazigh Organizations*

Unlike Egypt, Morocco does not have a sizeable Christian population. Rather, the second type of Protected Minority group within Morocco is the Amazigh (also known as Berber) ethnic group. Due to a high level of outside rhetorical support, medium level of threat to the regime and medium level of access to foreign funding, Amazigh organizations are likely to choose pluralism (see Table 5). The exact number of Amazigh Moroccans is difficult to determine, as both Arab and Amazigh Moroccans are frequently grouped into the same ethnic categories on demographic reports, however, about 40% of Moroccans speak one of the Berber dialects.

CSOs representing the Amazigh cause have existed in Morocco since 1967 with the foundation of the Moroccan Research and Cultural Exchange Association, which sought to

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619 Desrues and Moyano.
620 Newcomb.
promote Berber culture and history.\textsuperscript{621} Other, more political organizations such as Tamaynut followed, which was founded to pressure the regime for increased Amazigh rights. Tamaynut has used international pressure to achieve its goals as well.\textsuperscript{622} 1991 the first Berber Manifesto was released which “was the first direct challenge to the homogenous conception of Moroccan nationalism based predominately on the notion of Arabhood.”\textsuperscript{623} Thus, Berber CSOs were “seriously harassed by Moroccan authorities” in the years following.\textsuperscript{624} However, the efforts of Amazigh groups succeeded in large part due to an international backing, culminating in the World Amazigh Congress held in the Canary Islands in 1997, which resulted in a shift in the regime’s stance and the creation of the Royal Institute of Amazigh Culture, a national council which co-opted the issue. The Institute’s director and members were appointed by the King and all its decisions required monarchic approval. Many Moroccan CSOs dealing with the Amazigh issue have criticized the council and remained outside of the regime’s control, pushing for further constitutional reform to address the Amazigh issue.

Amazigh organizations have been very successful in pushing for acknowledgement of Amazigh culture and language in official Moroccan documents. In March 2000, more than 200 academics, authors, artists, executives and businesspeople signed the second Berber Manifesto, calling for greater respect for Berber rights. The Manifesto has amassed more than one million signatures and has been partially responsible for King Mohammad’s decision to make Amazigh an official language of Morocco, alongside Arabic, and allow schools to teach in Amazigh and

\textsuperscript{621} Maghraoui, “The Dynamics of Civil Society in Morocco.”
\textsuperscript{622} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{623} Ibid., 211.
\textsuperscript{624} Ibid.
publishing houses to publish in Amazigh. Today there are several dozen Amazigh associations seeking to preserve the Amazigh cultural heritage and earn more rights and freedoms for the Amazigh people.

Amazigh organizations represent a medium level of perceived threat to the regime. Their numbers are large and their success at mobilizing large swaths of both the Amazigh and Arab populations of Morocco has put the regime on notice. Furthermore, a loud Amazigh voice threatens the national unity of the Moroccan state. However, Amazigh CSOs are not seeking to overthrow the state or challenge its legitimacy, rather they are seeking to increase their role in existing state institutions. Thus, Amazigh organizations have chosen a strategy of pluralism. As demonstrated by the Berber Manifesto, Amazigh organizations have chosen to confront the state head-on rather than allow themselves to be co-opted. Because the Berber population extends well beyond Morocco’s border, Amazigh organizations have a high level of outside rhetorical support from both Berber populations across North Africa and from human rights organizations worldwide. Additionally, the Amazigh diaspora in Europe has been a vocal supporter of the Amazigh movement in Morocco.

Civil Society in Jordan

Jordan is ruled by King Abdullah who took the throne in 1999 following the death of his father King Hussein, who had ruled since 1952. A liberalized autocracy, King Hussein had begun a liberalization program in Jordan in 1989 following a severe economic crisis which resulted in political unrest. The liberalization measures included holding parliamentary elections,
removing some restrictions on the press, and limiting the role of the Mukhabarat (security services) in repressing the opposition.626 The reforms were codified in the 1990 National Charter, created by a Royal Commission consisting of consensus reached by “the king and parliamentarians, tribal notable and urban elites, East Bankers and Palestinians, conservatives, liberals, leftists, nationalists, and Islamists.”627 Further liberalization measures were undertaken in 1992 with the legalization of political parties following the lifting of martial law, which had been in place from 1967 to 1991. Prior to this time, only the Muslim Brotherhood was tolerated as a semi-legal party, although it was technically only legal as a social and charitable organization.628 This liberalization program should be understood as a highly controlled and intentional effort by the Jordanian regime to respond to a potentially destabilizing economic crisis. As Quintan Wiktorowicz argues:

As in other Middle East countries, democratic reform in Jordan was initiated from above as a tactical strategy to maintain social control in the face of severe economic crisis. Political change was driven by a stability imperative, not by a benevolent desire for enhanced political participation. As a result, the regime attempts to limit political participation to a narrow, relatively stable political space comprised predominantly of formal political institutions such as parties, elections, and Parliament. Political activism outside this space is discouraged by regulative and repressive state practices.629

King Abdullah initially largely continued in his father’s footsteps, however he took two major steps away from liberalization and towards further authoritarianism. First, he instituted a series of emergency laws “that have effectively reversed much of the democratic advancement

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628 Robinson.
[of his father]. In 2002, the government limited freedom of speech, expression and assembly. Second, King Abdullah took a more confrontational stance towards the Muslim Brotherhood, Jordan’s Islamist opposition group, than his father who had developed a symbiotic relationship with the group. While under King Hussein, the Islamic Action Front (IAF), the political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood, considered itself a “loyal opposition” party, in the mid-1990s and into the first years of King Abdullah’s rule, IAF-regime relations began to deteriorate. The government began a campaign to undercut the influence of the IAF and other Islamist groups by replacing IAF-affiliated preachers with pro-regime voices and taking over activities traditionally carried out by the Islamists including charitable activities, conferences on Islamic issues and contests for memorizing the Qu’ran. Like Morocco, the Jordanian monarch justifies his rule, in part, through his descent from the Prophet Mohammad. However, unlike in Morocco, the Jordanian king has no role as spiritual leader. Rather, the regime is propped up by “the four pillars of power in Jordan: the monarchy and its coterie, the army and security services, wealthy business elites, and East Bank tribal leaders” thereby leading to a less stable relationship with the Islamist opposition.

King Abdullah further limited reform efforts when he suspended parliament between June 2001 and June 2003. During this period he issued 211 provisional laws and amendments, many of which significantly hampered civil liberties in the kingdom. Where King Abdullah has focused his reform efforts is on economic reforms aimed at improving the standard of living.

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630 Jamal, 116.
632 Ibid.
633 Ibid.
634 Ottaway and Choucair-Vizoso, eds., *Beyond the Facade: Political Reform in the Arab World*. 272
for Jordanians such as by alleviating poverty and lowering unemployment and inflation. Most of
this is accomplished through GONGOs and Royal Commissions (which will be discussed in
more detail below). The Jordanian civil society sector is therefore much smaller than that of
either Morocco or Egypt with between 1,000 and 2,000 CSOs.\footnote{Cavatorta and Durac, \textit{Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World: The Dynamics of Activism}; Ana
Echagüe, \textit{Planting an Olive Tree: The State of Reform in Jordan} (Madrid: FRIDE, 2008).} Strict registration procedures
and a huge GONGO presence have limited both the ability and the necessity of independent
CSOs to operate. Furthermore, due to a combination of official legal procedures and unofficial
coop-tation, “the Jordanian monarchy is very much embedded within civil society.”\footnote{Jamal, 117.} However,
one result of the 1989 liberalization program was the expansion of civil society activity through,
primarily, development CSOs. From 1989 to 1994 the number of CSOs increased by 67%, from
477 to 796.\footnote{Wiktorowicz, “Civil Society as Social Control: State Power in Jordan.”} Nevertheless, under both Kings Hussein and Abdullah civil society organizations
faced harsh repression. In 1995 eleven CSOs were shut down by the government, with eighteen
more shut down in 1996. As Wiktorowicz argues, “Despite political liberalization, the state
retains its right to maintain disciplinary power and is willing to cancel any organization that does
not comply with the instruments of surveillance and regulative control.”\footnote{Ibid.}

\textit{The Legal Environment}

Civil society organizations have existed in Jordan since the 1930s with the passage of the
first law legalizing voluntary associations in 1936.\footnote{Clark, \textit{Islam, Charity and Activism: Middle-Class Networks and Social Welfare in Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen.}}
Today the civil society sector in Jordan is
controlled by three primary laws. The first, Law 33 of 1966, regulates associations and social
entities. This law regulates the registration process, which scholars have called “both complex
and drawn out."640 In order to operate, organizations must receive formal authorization from one of a handful of government ministries. Much like the other liberalized autocracies of the Arab World, the laws regulating civil society activity are intentionally ambiguous, providing the government significant leeway in how it chooses to accept or repress CSOs. For example, the government can refuse to register an association for no specified reason. The government’s other powers under the law include “controlling how funding is spent and the power to suspend funding.” And the government can suspend the board of any organization and replace it with an interim board that the government nominates.641

The second law is the Law on Public Meetings of 2004. This was a response to the War on Terror and was a reversal of many freedoms put in place in the 1990s.642 The law prohibits the use of “slogans, expressions, songs, drawings or pictures that are detrimental to the state’s sovereignty, national unity, security or public order.”643 It also requires written permission from the government in order to hold a public meeting or protest with very few permit requests granted.

The third law is the 2008 Law on Societies (or Associations Law). This requires the Council of Ministers’ approval to receive foreign funding and gives exclusive permission to register as a religious CSO to Christian and Muslim organizations. Associations are also tangentially controlled by the Political Party Law (Law 32 of 1992), which states that “the use of the premises, instrumentalities, and assets of associations, charitable organizations and clubs for

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640 Cavatorta and Durac, *Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World: The Dynamics of Activism*, 83.
641 Ibid.
642 Ibid.
643 Ibid.
the benefit of any partisan organization, shall be prohibited.” Thus, political activity, broadly defined, is only allowed to take place in the context of political parties, while civil society organizations are expressly prohibited from engaging in any activity that the regime deems to be political in nature.

Much like in Egypt, “Jordanian NGOs have attempted to evade government restrictions by finding and exploiting loopholes in the various laws that affect their activities’ signaling thus that there is a degree of independent activism.” The legal environment, in fact, encourages this behavior. By law the registration and oversight of CSO activity is divided amongst several ministries. Political parties, unions, and professional associations are regulated by the Ministry of the Interior; cultural organizations by the Ministry of Culture; and charitable organizations by the Ministry of Social Development. As Wiktorowicz explains, “Each government ministry controls all activities within its respective area of responsibility, and organizations are not permitted to engage in activities that cross into the purview of multiple ministries. Civil society is thus partitioned and segmented into administrative units based upon the logic of administrative efficiency.” However, these divisions of CSOs are somewhat arbitrary and ill-defined; thus, CSOs regularly selectively affiliate with ministries that are “more likely to turn a blind eye to their activities. Because the security services have different relationships with the various ministries, NGOs have tried to reduce security sector interference in their internal affairs through careful selection of the ministry least likely to interfere with their work.”

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644 Wiktorowicz, “The Limits of Democracy in the Middle East: The Case of Jordan.”
645 Cavatorta and Durac, *Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World: The Dynamics of Activism*, 84.
The regulation of foreign funding for CSOs is another complex issue. Technically, it is illegal for CSOs to receive foreign funding. But, “the state closes one eye in order to appease its external democratic patrons. However, if an organization in receipt of funding from abroad pushes its agenda too far and becomes overly politicized, the legal instruments are there to close it down.” As Ana Echagüe explains, “In theory the government does not limit access to foreign funding but it does require express authorization from the ministry concerned.” CSOs report long delays in receiving funding disbursement from the Ministry of Social Development (up to and over a year) and foreign embassies operating in Jordan are frequently reminded that they cannot fund Jordanian or international organizations without prior consent from the Ministry. The donor countries must provide any CSO funds to the Ministry directly, who will then disburse the money to individual CSOs at the Ministry’s (not the embassy’s) discretion. This issue is of high importance as CSOs lack significant financial resources from non-donor sources. The Jordanian government does provide some budgetary support for civil society, but not enough to sustain independent CSOs. Thus, despite the complex legal situation, CSOs must either rely on international donors for funding or raise money through individual donations and membership fees.

Additionally, as Sameer Jarrah argues, CSO oversight is not restricted to official channels. Rather, “the Ministry of Interior has taken overt action to restrict NGO activities. During 2006, for example, the minister of the interior and the governor of the capital refused to

648 Cavatorta and Durac, Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World: The Dynamics of Activism, 91.
649 Echagüe.
650 Ibid.
651 Ibid.
652 Ibid.
license many activities and rallies intended to mark the occasion of Earth Day or express support for those opposing foreign occupation in Palestine, Lebanon, and Iraq. This control ensures that Jordan’s apparently vibrant associations do not act, as might be expected, to create collective empowerment through grassroots mobilization.”653

State Control over Civil Society

The primary way in which the Jordanian government oversees and controls the civil society sector is through GONGOs (referred to as Royal NGOs, or RONGOs, by some scholars). More so than any other liberalized autocracy in the Arab World, Jordan has established parallel civil society organizations founded and run by members of the royal family addressing issues ranging from human rights to the environment.654 GONGOs are particularly harmful to independent Jordanian CSOs as “by virtue of their royal patronage, funding and size, [GONGOs] often dominate donor money and, as a result, the agenda.”655 In 2000, for example, King Abdullah established the Royal Commission for Human Rights, chaired by Queen Rania to “review the status of human rights in Jordan in order to ensure compliance with international human rights conventions and to recommend any necessary legal changes.”656 As a result, all changes to the Jordanian personal status law came straight from the Royal Commission, rather than from independent human rights and women’s rights groups. Furthermore, much of the civil society and democracy promotion assistance provided to Jordan by the United States and European Union countries ends up in the hands of GONGOs due to Jordan’s strict control over foreign funding, described above.

653 Jarrah.
654 Brynen.
655 Clark and Young, “Islamism and Family Law Reform in Morocco and Jordan.”
656 Ibid.
Along with GONGOs, Jordan also has a wide variety of what Clark and Young call “semi-governmental NGOs.” These include, primarily, government-created CSO networks and federations. All CSOs that fall under the purview of a semi-governmental NGO are required to register with the body, providing the government, “an indirect form of control over the activities of other NGOs.” One example of a semi-governmental NGO is the Jordanian Federation of Women, which requires all women’s organizations to register with the Federation. Additionally, the state created the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) to regulate, monitor and control all CSOs in the state that fall under the purview of the Ministry of Social Development. GUVS is a CSO umbrella group administered by the state but made up of CSOs and their volunteers, which legally functions as a CSO itself. GUVS is registered as a CSO at the Ministry of Social Development and subject, on paper, to the same rules and regulations as other CSOs. In practice, however, “it is inextricably linked to the administrative apparatus through its regulative and oversight functions. Decisions about whether to register new [CSOs] or to expand an organization’s activities are made jointly by the GUVS and the ministry.” GUVS is semi-independent and should not be seen as a GONGO in that GUVS does, from time to time, issue recommendations that differ from the Ministry. The Ministry has the final say and has rejected GUVS decisions. GUVS also functions as a conduit of international aid. Foreign donors frequently provide grants to civil society through GUVS, which uses those funds to both pay for its own charitable activities and assist its individual CSO members. Furthermore, once an

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657 Ibid.
658 Ibid.
660 Ibid.
661 Ibid.
organization becomes a member of GUVS, it receives a small operating stipend from the monarchy and is technically prohibited from receiving outside funding.\textsuperscript{662}

The combination of GONGOs and semi-governmental NGOs in Jordan has severely restricted the ability of independent CSOs to operate, pushing CSOs to choose a form of co-optation. For example, the Campaign to Eliminate So-Called Crimes of Honor, a successful CSO that sought to bring attention to the issue of honor crimes in Jordan, was fully co-opted by the state.\textsuperscript{663} This was due in part to the CSO’s success at advocating for their issue, but also at the necessity of the regime to avoid international embarrassment by silencing a group that painted Jordan as a backward country with little respect for women’s rights. Nevertheless, the CSO attempted to remain outside of the regime’s control as long as possible, refusing to register with the Ministry of the Interior and thereby operating illegally. As Eileen Nanes argues, “they felt they shouldn’t have to ask for permission [to operate].”\textsuperscript{664} This choice of pluralism by the organization opened them up to tremendous difficulties, including the inability to rent office space or find a printer to print their materials, harassment by the police, and arrests of some CSO members. After their request to hold a press conference was rejected by the Amman Municipality, they altered their strategy of pluralism and decided to seek out support from the office of Queen Rania, an advocate of women’s rights. As Nanes argues, “This shows that although civil society groups may desire autonomy, the structure of politics in Jordan forces them to seek royal protection”\textsuperscript{665}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{662} Jamal.
\textsuperscript{664} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{665} Ibid.
\end{flushleft}
**CSO-State Interaction**

**Muslim CSOs**

Muslim CSOs in Jordan are likely to choose ideological co-optation (see Table 5). Muslim CSOs have a low level of outside rhetorical support, a medium level of perceived threat and a high level of access to foreign funding. Virtually all Muslim CSOs in Jordan are tied to the Jordanian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB). The Muslim Brotherhood and its political wing, the Islamic Action Front (IAF), make up the largest and most powerful opposition movement in Jordan. The Muslim Brotherhood was established in Jordan in 1945 and registered as a legal charitable society under the patronage of King Abdullah I. Up until the liberalization efforts of 1989, the MB was the only tolerated political group outside of the monarchy. Even during the period of martial law the MB remained active, serving as an effective counterweight to other more extremist Muslim opposition movements as well as secular groups such as leftists and Nasserites.\(^{666}\) The MB began charity and development activities as early as 1963 through its social wing, the Islamic Center Charity Society (ICCS). Today, the ICCS is the largest CSO in Jordan, with the exception of the GONGOs established by the Royal Family.\(^{667}\) As stated above, the MB enjoyed a privileged relationship with the Jordanian monarch up until the 1990s, due to a “growing polarization between the MB and regime” over security concerns.\(^{668}\) Part of the reason for the split was the MB’s vocal opposition to Jordan’s 1994 peace treaty with Israel, which coincided with a large victory of 22 seats for the IAF in the 1993 parliamentary elections. While previously the MB had largely kept silent on policy concerns, benefitting from its unique legal

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\(^{666}\) Robinson.


\(^{668}\) Ibid., 146.
status and protections, that shifted with the peace treaty and today the MB is “the most vocal opposition voice – enough so that the government has continued in attempts to silence them.”

Nevertheless, “although there have been moments of tension, the historical relationship is predicated upon a balance between the ideological objectives of the Brotherhood and the need to assuage the survival imperatives of the Hashemites. The result is a symbiosis in which the regime allows the Brotherhood to organize and promote its objectives, while the movement upholds the regime’s right to rule and refrains from challenging Hashemite Islamic legitimacy.” Furthermore, the split between the MB’s political and charitable wings has made Muslim development CSOs less threatening to the regime than the IAF, thereby allowing the ICCS and other Muslim CSOs to avoid much of the negative blowback experienced by the IAF.

The ICCS is a large Muslim Charity and Development organization with four branches and 55 centers throughout Jordan. The centers provide schools, medical care, training projects, youth centers, financial aid to the poor, and orphan care. The ICCS does not accept funding from the West, relying on individual donations and government funding. Religious organizations in Jordan are subject to the same guidelines as nonreligious organizations, but “they enjoy more freedom in receiving and distributing funds, offering grants, and giving aid to the poor and needy” thereby granting them a high level of access to foreign funding. Because all mosques in Jordan are controlled by the state, “there is no formal NGO-mosque relationship. Some Islamic NGOs are informally affiliated with a local mosque through charitable work, often

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669 Ibid., 149.
671 Clarke and Jennings, eds.
672 Ibrahim and Sherif, eds., From Charity to Social Change: Trends in Arab Philanthropy.
located nearby or adjacent to the mosque, but explicit financial or material relationships are rare.\textsuperscript{673}

One of the ways that the government targets Muslim CSOs in Jordan is through the provision in the law that CSOs cannot engage in any type of political activity. Because the definition of “political activity” is intentionally ambiguous in the law, the regime is able to use this law to justify harassment and crackdown on Muslim CSOs that are engaging in behavior that is only tangentially political. For example, the members of an Islamic cultural society were harassed by Mukhabarat agents and accused of organizing a political movement following a lecture on the Egyptian Islamist leader Sayyid Qutb.\textsuperscript{674} This is a continuing problem, as many religious meetings put on by Muslim CSOs turn to politically-charged topics such as the peace treaty with Israel and ways to make the Jordanian political system more Islamic, thereby drawing regime ire and accusations of illegal activity.\textsuperscript{675}

\textit{Women’s Organizations}

Women’s organizations in Jordan, as Protected Minority groups, are likely to choose pluralism (see Table 5). Much like women’s organizations across the Arab world, Jordanian CSOs have been the benefactor of a vocal international women’s movement, pushing for increased women’s rights in the Kingdom and resulting in a high level of outside rhetorical support. However, the women’s movement in Jordan is largely dominated by GONGOs. While several independent women’s organizations do exist, they face severe funding challenges, due to the inability to access foreign funds directly. Legally, women in Jordan are a protected class and

\textsuperscript{673} Wiktorowicz, \textit{The Management of Islamic Activism: Salafis, the Muslim Brotherhood, and State Power in Jordan}, 86.

\textsuperscript{674} Wiktorowicz, “The Limits of Democracy in the Middle East: The Case of Jordan.”

\textsuperscript{675} Wiktorowicz, “Civil Society as Social Control: State Power in Jordan.”
men and women are equal under the law. In practice, discrimination exists at all levels. Despite
the provision of “equality” within the law, “the larger message of these laws… is that economic,
political and social control rests with male family members: only men can be recognized as
heads of households, regardless of what the reality may be.”676 Jordan also has high levels of
physical violence against women, particularly in the area of honor crimes, and, like Egypt, a
sharp divide between the de jure legal protections for women and the de facto relationship
between men and women in Jordanian society.

To address these issues, the Jordanian government has created multiple GONGOs and
made active attempts to co-opt all independent women’s organizations, particularly through
semi-governmental umbrella organizations. Thus, while independent women’s organizations
attempt to choose pluralism, they are frequently captured. The Jordanian regime has resorted to
several repressive steps to prevent women’s organizations from operating independently. For
example, in the early 1980s the heads of women’s organizations had their passports confiscated
by the government, making it impossible for them to gain employment. During the same time
period, the Ministry of the Interior shut down the Women’s Union in Jordan (WUJ) after it
supported Palestinian rights, eventually replacing the WUJ with the government-run General
Federation of Jordanian Women.677 Women’s organizations that focus solely on charitable
activities such as healthcare, poverty alleviation, children or the elderly are generally allowed to
operate, but groups that “make demands on issues of equal rights, accountability for honor
killings and full economic integration” are swiftly dealt with by the regime and forcibly

676 Brand, Women, the State and Political Liberalization: Middle Eastern and North African Experiences, 139.
677 Jamal.
Thus, similar to Muslim CSOs, women’s organizations frequently face accusations of carrying out political activity. For example, members of the Center for Women’s Studies were detained by the Mukhabarat after holding a meeting to discuss how to promote female candidates in the 1997 elections and told to discontinue such activities.

Women’s organizations face the same funding issues as other CSOs, with GONGOs and semi-governmental organizations relying heavily on the state for funding while independent CSOs must turn to foreign funders. Several high-profile international organizations have focused their efforts on women’s rights in Jordan including USAID, Amideast, NDI, and some European organizations (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung). But, these organizations split their resources between GONGOs and independent CSOs, which have a much more difficult time accessing foreign funds.

Table 5. CSO Strategies by Type – Morocco and Jordan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSO Type</th>
<th>Outside Rhetorical Support</th>
<th>Level of Perceived Threat</th>
<th>Access to Foreign Funding</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muslim (Morocco)</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Ideological Co-optation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s (Morocco)</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Pluralism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amazigh (Morocco)</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Pluralism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim (Jordan)</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Ideological Co-optation</td>
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<td>Medium</td>
<td>Pluralism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

678 Ibid., 122.
679 Wiktorowicz, “The Limits of Democracy in the Middle East: The Case of Jordan.”
680 Brand, Women, the State and Political Liberalization: Middle Eastern and North African Experiences.
Conclusion

This chapter has provided a brief overview of the relationship of civil society and the state in two additional liberalized autocracies in the Arab world: Morocco and Jordan. As the chapter has shown, the strategy choices for regime interaction available to CSOs in Morocco and Jordan are similar to those in Egypt. CSOs in Morocco and Jordan can choose to operate outside of the regime (pluralism), allow themselves to be captured by the regime (capture) or choose a combination of autonomy and co-optation (co-optation). In all three countries examined in this dissertation, a combination of strict laws overseeing the civil society sector and the arbitrary and selective application of those laws creates a situation in which CSOs must rely on external forces (either outside rhetorical support or access to foreign funding) to assist them in achieving their goals.

In Morocco, the regime has made a concerted effort to appeal to the West and appear as a modern state undergoing serious political reform. Thus, Morocco has encouraged and, in many cases, supported the blossoming of a vibrant civil society sector. As a country experiencing high levels of poverty and low performance on many socioeconomic indicators, this is particularly true for DCSOs. Thus, DCSOs in Morocco are generally viewed as less threatening to the regime than in other liberalized autocracies, provided they do not cross any of the very clear red lines (the monarchy, the territorial integrity of the state, or Islam). The two types of DCSOs discussed in this chapter, Muslim and Protected Minority organizations both represent a medium level of threat to the regime. In the case of Protected Minority groups (both women’s and Amazigh organizations), a high level of outside rhetorical support, combined with a medium level of threat
drives them to choose pluralism. Neither women’s nor Amazigh organizations are directly threatening to the monarchy nor are they pushing for any major political shifts. Rather, both groups seek further rights and recognition for their class. Furthermore, both groups have been vocally supported by the international community, a variable that is particularly salient in Morocco. Muslim CSOs, alternatively, are likely to choose ideological co-optation. The Muslim CSOs sector is largely split between the organizations affiliated with the legal Islamist party (PJD) and those affiliated with the illegal Islamist organization (al-Adl). Regardless, Muslim CSOs in Morocco do not represent a direct threat to the monarchy. Even the CSOs associated with al-Adl do not seek to overthrow the Moroccan regime and thereby represent a medium level of threat. Muslim CSOs do have easier access to funding outside of the regime, but still rely on the state for patronage and access to financial and political resources.

In Jordan the civil society arena is far more restrictive than in either Morocco or Jordan due to the large and powerful presence of GONGOs and semi-governmental NGOs. The presence of regime-sponsored organizations has successfully crowded out much of independent civil society. Nevertheless, CSOs can operate, at times, either fully or partially outside of regime control. Women’s organizations play a particularly interesting role in Jordan where they are likely to choose pluralism initially but are also likely to be forcibly captured by the regime after they either achieve success or become too political and visible. The high level of outside rhetorical support afforded to women’s organizations in Jordan gives them the confidence to choose pluralism initially. That support can protect them from regime interference to a point, however Jordan’s strict prohibition against political activity by CSOs makes it easy for the regime to legally crackdown on women’s organizations without appearing too harsh to the
international community. Muslim CSOs in Jordan behave in a similar fashion to Muslim CSOs in Egypt and Morocco. Because the monarchy has tolerated Muslim CSOs more so than any other group, they have managed to escape capture. However, they are not free to choose pluralism as they have entered into a bargain with the regime that affords them the ability to operate with significant freedom, but requires them to pay lip service to the regime. Thus, Muslim CSOs have chosen ideological co-optation as the strategy that has been successful for them throughout the history of the Jordanian state.

In both Morocco and Jordan, development civil society organizations behave in predictable ways. The strategy for regime interaction that a DCSO chooses is determined by its type, a variable made up of the combination of its level of outside rhetorical support, level of perceived threat to the regime and level of access to foreign funding. While further research needs to be conducted in order to definitively prove the applicability of this argument to countries outside of Egypt, this chapter has shown that in the case of two CSO types – Muslim CSOs and Protected Minority groups, the relationship between DCSO type and DCSO strategy is strong in Egypt, as well as Morocco and Jordan.
CHAPTER VII: SUMMING IT ALL UP: WHAT DETERMINES CSO STRATEGY?

This dissertation has analyzed the relationship of development civil society organizations (DCSOs) and the state in the liberalized autocracies of the Arab world, resulting in two important contributions to the literatures on civil society and the persistence of authoritarianism in the Arab world. DCSOs, defined as organizations with a primary goal of improving human development, constitute the vast majority of all civil society organizations in the Arab world, but they have been virtually ignored in the literature on civil society under authoritarianism.681 Because no scholar to date has analyzed the development civil society sector and its relationship with the state I have first provided an inductive map of the development civil society sector in Egypt, showing both that variation exists amongst development CSOs and that DCSOs are an important, and often highly politicized player in the civil society arena. Second, by undertaking eight in-depth case studies of DCSOs in Egypt operating between 1990 and 2010, I have shown that the interaction of the level of outside rhetorical support a DCSO receives, the level of perceived threat a DCSO poses to the regime, and the level of access a DCSO has to foreign funding results in a pattern of configurations called “DCSO type”, each of which predictably determines whether a development CSO will choose to confront the authoritarian regime head on, allow itself to be fully captured by the regime or choose a middle-ground strategy.

This chapter will wrap up the dissertation by first summarizing the argument that DCSO type determines DCSO strategy, focusing on the results of the findings from the three empirical chapters (Chapter Three, “Pluralism”, Chapter Four, “Co-optation”, and Chapter Five,

681 Sparre and Petersen, “Islam and Civil Society: Case Studies from Jordan and Egypt.”
“Capture”). I will then note the areas where future research on the relationship between CSO type and strategy is both welcome and needed. Finally, I will situate my findings within the context of the Arab Spring, briefly explaining how state-society relations have (or have not) shifted in the liberalized autocracies of the Arab world currently undergoing some form of political transition.

**What Determines CSO Strategy?**

A CSO’s strategy choice is shaped initially by the context within which it operates. In the liberalized autocracies of the Arab world there are four primary tools available to regimes to control and manipulate civil society: official laws and regulations, unofficial security oversight, control of CSO funding, and the establishment of a parallel civil society through GONGOs. The application of these tools provides the context within which CSOs operate and the range of strategy choices available to CSOs in their interaction with the regime. Because the goal of CSOs is to procure goods and services that serve their interests and transfer those goods and services to their beneficiaries, CSOs and the state have a two-pronged relationship. CSOs must simultaneously seek out the support of the arms of the state responsible for the regulation and supervision of the goods and services necessary to achieve their goals (whether that is legal reform, sanitary water or office space), as well as work to maintain the necessary separation from the state required to carry out their activities without undue government interference. Thus, as Clark argues, CSOs have only three options, “They can oppose the state, complement it, or reform it – but they cannot ignore it.”\(^{682}\) These options can be re-framed as the three main

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\(^{682}\) Clark, *Democratizing Development: The Role of Volunteer Organizations*. 289
strategies available to development CSOs in the Arab world: operating fully outside of the regime (pluralism), allowing themselves to be partially co-opted while maintaining some form of autonomy (co-optation), and allowing themselves to be fully incorporated into the regime (capture).

Every development CSO can be categorized into one of four sub-types: Muslim CSOs, Protected Minority CSOs, Charity and Development CSOs, and Single-Issue CSOs. These sub-types represent a unique interaction of three sub-variables: outside rhetorical support, access to foreign funds and perceived threat to the regime. It is this interaction that determines both the range of possible strategies available to a DCSO and the strategy the DCSO is most likely to choose. Muslim CSOs, which have low outside rhetorical support, medium perceived threat and high access to foreign funding, tend to adopt a strategy of ideological co-optation. Protected Minority CSOs, which display high outside rhetorical support, medium perceived threat and high or medium access to foreign funding, tend to choose pluralism. Charity and Development CSOs follow one of two paths. All Charity and Development CSOs have a low or medium level of outside rhetorical support and a medium level of access to foreign funding. Some Charity and Development CSOs represent a low level of perceived threat to the regime and thus opt for administrative co-optation while those with a medium level of perceived threat choose ideological co-optation. Finally, Single-Issue CSOs choose one of three paths, depending on the issue they address. Those that address issues with high outside rhetorical support tend to adopt pluralism, regardless of the level of perceived threat to the regime. Single-Issue CSOs that address an issue with a low level of outside rhetorical support either adopt administrative co-
optation (if their level of perceived threat is low) or ideological co-optation (if their level of perceived threat is either high or medium).

**Pluralism**

Two DCSO types are likely to choose pluralism: Protected Minority CSOs and Single-Issue CSOs with a high level of outside rhetorical support. Both of these CSO types have a high level of outside rhetorical support in common, highlighting the importance of a strong and vocal diaspora community or international NGO (or NGOs) in providing the necessary protection for a DCSO to operate outside of the regime. DCSOs that choose pluralism desire full independence from the state. To achieve that independence, they forgo state funding, instead relying on individual private donations, grants from local foundations and foreign funding to sustain their activities. DCSOs that address high or medium level threat issues, including redline issues and issues that the regime has not previously dealt with or finds embarrassing, believe that the strategy of pluralism is necessary to carry out controversial activities and bring attention to those issues. However, addressing high or medium level threat issues has a downside – it invites regime ire. Thus, DCSOs that choose pluralism do so because they are supported by a diaspora community or international NGO, which the DCSO believes will provide them with the necessary protection to survive any regime backlash they may incur.

The case of the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS) shows how the strategy of pluralism can benefit a Protected Minority DCSO. As a Coptic CSO, CEOSS has a very strong and vocal diaspora community backing up its actions, as well as the support of several international NGOs. That support (both political and financial) has enabled CEOSS to take on multiple controversial issues including female genital mutilation (FGM) and to engage
with human rights CSOs. These activities have drawn negative attention from the regime, but CEOSS has survived (and thrived) because it was willing and able to push the regime right back. The combination of CEOSS’ high level of outside rhetorical support from the Coptic diaspora and international community, strong financial resources (including the ability to contract directly with USAID), and large size have made the strategy of pluralism an easy one. CEOSS not only has overcome regime interference and pushback, but has, in fact, made itself indispensible to the state through its effective and large-scale provision of charitable goods to Egypt’s poor, thereby allowing CEOSS to carry out more controversial activities.

The second Protected Minority CSO featured in this dissertation, the Association for the Development and Enhancement of Women (ADEW), also chose pluralism due, primarily, to a high level of outside rhetorical support. ADEW, a secular feminist CSO, has been supported both financially and rhetorically by the international community, particularly American and European NGOs that advocate for women’s rights. ADEW has required a strategy of pluralism due to its method of publicly criticizing the Egyptian government and intentionally drawing attention to controversial issues including violence against women and inequality under the law. By publicizing these issues within Egypt (and inviting Egyptian government officials to their conferences and public events), ADEW has sought a strategy of direct confrontation with the regime. But by also publicizing these issues abroad, ADEW has been able to protect itself from excessive regime pushback.

The Egyptian Association to Support Street Children (EASSC) is included as an example of a CSO that chose pluralism but ultimately failed to achieve its goals, as it was shut down by the state. A small, Single-Issue CSO, EASSC chose pluralism as the strategy it believed would
be most beneficial to achieving its goals of highlighting and addressing the issue of street children in Egypt. EASSC did succeed in bringing the issue to the international stage and forcing the Egyptian government to both acknowledge and address the problem of street children, but in the end EASSC’s success was also its downfall. By garnering loud support from UNICEF and the International Labor Organization for the issue of street children, EASSC embarrassed the Egyptian government, resulting in accusations by the state that EASSC was defaming Egypt and the eventual capture of the issue of street children by Suzanne Mubarak and the regime.

Pluralism was an appealing choice to EASSC given their high level of outside rhetorical support, successful ability to attract foreign funding and high level of threat to the regime. However, in the end EASSC drew the ire of one local councilwoman who was determined to shut down the CSO and succeeded in doing so.

In all three case studies, the CSO chose to adopt the strategy of pluralism due to a combination of three factors: the level of protection they believed they would receive from the rhetorical support provided by the international community, the ease with which they were able to receive non-governmental grants and the level of threat that their issue(s) represented to the regime. It is clear from the three case studies of CEOSS, ADEW and the EASSC that diverse CSOs choose pluralism for the same reason: a combination of high outside rhetorical support, a medium or high level of perceived threat and a medium or high level of access to foreign funding.

Co-optation

The strategy of co-optation is a middle ground strategy between pluralism and capture which enables DCSOs to simultaneously provide themselves with a modicum of protection from
the regime and operate with some level of autonomy. Co-optation is the most common strategy choice of DCSOs because it enables them to achieve most, if not all, of their goals while guaranteeing some level of cover from the regime. This cover is necessary because co-opted DCSOs lack the high levels of outside rhetorical support that protect their counterparts that choose pluralism.

The strategy of co-optation can be divided into two categories: administrative co-optation and ideological co-optation. In general, co-optation has clear benefits for both the co-opter (the regime) and the co-opted. As Stacher argues, once an individual or group is co-opted, there is “little incentive for him/her to challenge the regime.” 683 Co-opted individuals may even increase their support of the regime as they begin to reap the benefits of co-optation including “social prestige” and “personal security.” He notes, “Being co-opted increases the chances one will be protected from a regime’s security apparatus.” 684 DCSOs that adopt a strategy of co-optation maintain a stable equilibrium with the Egyptian government by allowing for some explicit government control of and interference in their activities, refusing to take on issues that the government finds threatening and refusing to employ individuals that the government sees as a potential threat. By cooperating with the government by allowing for regime allies to sit on their boards or inviting regime officials to attend their meetings, co-opted DCSOs choose to invite a high level of government attention and open themselves up to close scrutiny. However, because these organizations have a tacit agreement with the regime that they will avoid redline issues and will stay within acceptable behavioral standards set by the government, they are confident that this government interference will not prevent them from carrying out their agendas.

683 Stacher.
684 Ibid.
Ideological co-optation describes DCSOs that change their ideological or political agenda in order to conform with regime requests or to preemptively prevent regime interference in their activities. Ideological co-optation is most desirable to CSOs with a combination of low outside rhetorical support and high or medium level of perceived threat and is thus the strategy choice of Muslim CSOs, which possess a low level of outside rhetorical support, medium level of perceived threat and high access to foreign funding as well as both Charity and Development and Single-Issue CSOs with low or medium outside rhetorical support, high or medium level of perceived threat and medium access to foreign funding. Administrative co-optation describes DCSOs that do not change their ideological or political agendas, but rather allow for regime-friendly administrative measure such as inviting regime members and allies to sit on their boards and participate in their meetings, only accepting specific sources of funding, or partnering with government agencies, GONGOs, or government-friendly DCSOs. Thus administrative co-optation is most desirable to CSOs with a combination of low outside rhetorical support and low level of perceived threat, including Charity and Development and Single-Issue CSOs with those qualities.

Two case studies of Muslim CSOs are included in the dissertation – Resala and Dar al Orman. In both cases, a combination of low outside rhetorical support, medium perceived threat and high access to foreign funding drove the CSO to choose ideological co-optation. All Muslim CSOs represent a medium level of threat to the regime because of their suspected ties to the Muslim Brotherhood (regardless of their any actual connection to the group) and a low level of
outside rhetorical support. Thus, Muslim CSOs cannot survive if they choose pluralism. They will be shut down by the regime due to their threatening nature and lack of protection. Additionally, a high level of access to outside funding, due to the regime’s lack of supervision of funding channeled through a mosque, allows Muslim CSOs to maintain some independence and avoid capture. Furthermore, as both Resala and Dar al Orman demonstrate, the ease with which Muslim CSOs are able to obtain external funding allows them to grow their organizations quite large, to the point where they become both indispensable to the regime and very difficult to shut down.

The other CSO that chose ideological co-optation is Nahdet el Mahrousa (NM). As this case study showed, Charity and Development CSOs with low outside rhetorical support and a medium level of threat to the regime are likely to choose ideological co-optation as a way to protect themselves from high levels of regime interference. NM’s inclusion of national unity as part of its area of focus, and development of a CSO network places it into the category of medium level of perceived threat. This, combined with NM’s success at attracting foreign funding, particularly from the United States, and their direct competition to existing government programs, required NM to seek out a strategy that would provide them with some protection from the regime. NM thus chose to allow itself to be ideologically co-opted, eschewing overtly political programming and scaling back more controversial activities when asked to do so. Initially addressing some highly controversial issues (including the regime itself), NM made a calculated decision to scale back its programming and instead focus on less threatening issues to placate the regime. NM has been very successful since adopting ideological co-optation, as they

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685 While some Muslim CSOs may choose to address redline issues, placing them in the category of high perceived threat, none of the Muslim CSOs included in this study have followed this path.
have been able to carry out their programs focusing on youth unemployment and education (an area the regime has openly acknowledged) with little government interference. Furthermore, NM has chosen to focus their advertising and PR efforts in the West and on their English-language website, in an effort to attract funding but avoid regime attention.

Another Charity and Development CSO that chose co-optation is the New Horizon Association for Social Development (New Horizon). This case study highlighted a unique strategy for regime interaction wherein New Horizon actively seeks out government partnerships for its projects, with the goal of eventually turning over its pilot projects to government entities. Because of their focus on sustainable development and issues the regime has openly addressed (women, youth, children and CDAs), New Horizon represents a low level of threat to the regime. This, combined with a low level of outside rhetorical support and a medium level of access to foreign funding has driven New Horizon to choose administrative co-optation. By inviting both regime supervision of and interference in their development work, New Horizon has been able to also carry out some advocacy work without drawing the attention of the regime. This is aided by New Horizon’s ability to sub-contract out their advocacy projects to smaller CSOs with whom they partner.

The final case study included in the dissertation is that of the Education for Employment Foundation – Egypt (EFE-Egypt). An independently run branch of a US-based NGO, EFE-Egypt is a Single-Issue CSO that has chosen the strategy of administrative co-optation due to a low level of outside rhetorical support, low level of threat to the regime, and medium level of access to foreign funding. EFE-Egypt carefully selected prominent Egyptians, several of whom are well-connected to the regime, to sit on its board as one way to secure regime support of the CSO.
This is just one way EFE-Egypt has reached out to MOSS and State Security to cultivate a positive relationship with the regime, thereby providing them with the protection needed to carry out their activities. By focusing their activities on the issue of youth unemployment, an area that has been widely acknowledged and addressed by the Egyptian government, EFE-Egypt represents a low level of threat to the regime, but by adopting administrative co-optation they have also been able to include some potentially threatening issues within their curriculum, including addressing identity issues and national unity. EFE-Egypt’s strategy choice is also based on their ability to secure funds through the EFE office in the United States and through direct donations from their founder, Ron Bruder. By taking money from controversial foreign sources (such as MEPI), but through back-channels, EFE-Egypt has been able to avoid regime pushback and operate relatively free from regime control.

While all five CSOs profiled here chose co-optation due to the combination of a lack of outside rhetorical support and medium or high access to outside funding, the variable that determines whether a CSO opts for ideological co-optation or administrative co-optation is the level of perceived threat an organization represents to the regime. CSOs with a high or medium level of threat choose ideological co-optation, while CSOs with a low level of threat choose administrative co-optation.

**Capture**

The strategy of capture is different from the strategies of pluralism and co-optation in that very few DCSOs choose capture. Rather, almost all organizations that are captured by the regime fall into one of two categories: organizations that were founded by the government (GONGOs) and organizations that were initially independent of the government but were
forcibly captured. As the examples of the General Federation of NGOs and the Integrated Care Society show, in some cases it is in the interest of the DCSO to choose capture, but this is a rare circumstance. Nevertheless, as one of the goals of this dissertation is to provide a complete map of the civil society arena in the Arab world, it is necessary to include the strategy of capture as captured CSOs play an important role in both creating the context within which independent CSOs operate and in competing with independent CSOs for financial resources and patronage. In Egypt, GONGOs are regularly used by state as a parallel civil society, providing development aid and services under the guise of an independent civil society, but in a manner that is heavily controlled. The government uses GONGOs to take credit for successful civil society projects, to maintain control over controversial issues, and to help legitimize the policies of the state and undermine independent CSOs.

Very few CSOs choose capture because by allowing oneself to be fully incorporated into the regime, a DCSO is inviting a very high level of regime supervision and control that other administratively and ideologically co-opted DCSOs do not possess. Captured DCSOs maintain only the most minimal level of autonomy, unable to control who sits on their board, what issues they address and the manner in which they address them. Thus, a DCSO that chooses capture is clearly limited in its ability to act. It cannot criticize the regime in any way and, in many cases, must vocally support the regime and its policies. A captured DCSO is limited in the amounts and types of funding it can receive and by choosing to be captured, relinquishes control over its administrative functions. Given these circumstances, capture is not an attractive strategy to the vast majority of DCSOs. Nevertheless, a few DCSOs do choose capture based on two primary
benefits of that strategy choice: guaranteed protection from the regime and high levels of access to patronage not available elsewhere.

The examples of the General Federation of NGOs and the Integrated Care Society show that, at times, giving up one’s autonomy is a worthwhile price to pay for regime protection, access to financial resources, international legitimacy and the ability to operate with little interference. For most DCSOs, the goals and activities of the organization require some level of freedom from the regime, and thus capture is not a viable strategy. However, in these two cases as well as a handful of others in Egypt, the DCSO does not require independence from the regime and is willing to give up its ability to criticize the regime or counter its policies. By choosing capture, this small group of DCSOs must relinquish administrative, programmatic and political control, but it is rewarded with vast amounts of patronage and easier access to resources than non-captured CSOs.

*Do Individuals Matter?*

Two of the outliers discussed in the dissertation, Alashanek Ya Balady (AYB-SD) and the National Egyptian Development Association (NEDA), have shown that in some cases an organization’s strategy choice is influenced to a great degree by the personal relationships of the CSO’s founders with the regime or with the international community. This leads to the question of whether the role of individuals provides a stronger explanation for CSO strategy choice than DCSO type. While it is clear that individual relationships mattered tremendously in the cases of AYB-SD and NEDA, close examination of these case studies helps to confirm rather than refute the overall theory that DCSO type determines DCSO strategy. In the case of AYB-SD, the CSO’s founder, Raghda El Ebrashi, had achieved a high level of outside rhetorical support for
her work, despite the fact that the issue area AYB-SD addresses is one of low outside rhetorical support (AYB-SD works on basic development issues including job skills training, loan programs and addressing unemployment for youth and women). El Ebrashi is a prominent civil society personality who has been recognized for her work on social entrepreneurship by many international and Egyptian organizations. That international recognition, in particular, garnered her both the international spotlight and the rhetorical support for her work which allowed her to choose the strategy of pluralism for AYB-SD. Furthermore, several other AYB-SD board members, in addition to El Ebrashi, are well-connected to the international community. Thus, AYB-SD, which is coded as a low level of outside rhetorical support should, perhaps, be coded instead as a high level of outside rhetorical support, which is consistent with the strategy choice of pluralism. As the variable “outside rhetorical support” is defined in this dissertation, the support applies only to the CSO’s issue area, not to the individuals who make up the CSO’s leadership. The case of AYB-SD brings to light the need to reconsider this definition in future research.

The case of NEDA also highlights the importance of individual CSO leadership in strategy choice. Like AYB-SD, NEDA’s board is made up of prominent individuals. However, the difference between AYB-SD and NEDA is that NEDA’s board members are the owners and CEOs of large Egyptian private companies who rely on the state for the ability to operate their businesses freely and are not protected by the international community. While NEDA is predicted to choose pluralism due to its status as a Protected Minority CSO, NEDA’s board members are aware that by provoking the regime they are likely to jeopardize their business interests (in addition to attracting government pushback for the CSO’s work). Because of the
reliance of the economic sector in Egypt on the state, it is in the interest of NEDA’s board members to maintain a positive relationship with the Egyptian government and allow the CSO to be co-opted. This is a strategic calculation that both protects NEDA’s board members from personal and professional problems and allows NEDA to carry out its goals of increasing corporate social responsibility and addressing youth unemployment, while sacrificing some of its ability to directly engage and address the Coptic community. In both of these cases (AYB-SD and NEDA), the role that the CSO’s individual leaders play in Egyptian society and their connection to the international community impacted the CSO’s strategy choice. Thus, in analyzing the reasons why a CSO chooses to confront the regime, allow itself to be captured or be partially co-opted, it is important to acknowledge the role that the CSO’s leadership plays. The inclusion of these outliers thus confirms the need to conduct detailed qualitative analysis of individual CSOs in order to determine what motivates their strategy choice. The role of individuals is captured in the theory put forth by this dissertation. The variable “level of perceived threat” takes in to account the level of threat an individual poses to the regime as well as the level of perceived threat that the issue area poses, and all three strategy choices (pluralism, co-optation, and capture) recognize the ability of the state to co-opt or capture individuals in addition to entire CSOs. But, as future research is conducted on the state-civil society relationship in the Arab world, it is important to recognize that CSO strategy choice is a complex process that is best understood through qualitative case study research.

Areas for Future Research
This dissertation has addressed the relationship between civil society and the state within specific scope conditions: development civil society organizations within Egypt. While Chapter Six briefly tested the theory that DCSO type determines DCSO strategy in two other Arab states – Morocco and Jordan – in order to fully test the relationship between DCSO type and strategy outside of Egypt, further research must be done. Furthermore, because this is the first in-depth look at the relationship of civil society and the state from a bottom-up perspective focusing solely on development civil society organizations, there are multiple ways in which to expand upon this dissertation to draw out theoretical explanations for the relationship between civil society and the state on a broader scale.

*Liberalized Autocracies of the Arab World*

Chapter Six has addressed why I believe my theory should apply to the liberalized autocracies of the Arab world outside of Egypt. The multiple regimes that fit the definition of liberalized autocracy in that they possess a combination of “guided pluralism, controlled elections, and selective repression” share several important characteristics in addition to similar political structures and informal rules, which makes them easily comparable and suggests that the theory of the relationship of CSO type and CSO strategy should hold up across cases.686 These regimes, which are growing in number following the Arab Spring, all possess a vibrant and varied civil society sector (with a particularly active development CSO sector), a restrictive legal environment overseeing civil society, at least minimal autonomy for CSOs, and the use of civil society as a tool of selective repression by the state. Thus, liberalized autocracies place

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686 Brumberg, “Liberalization versus Democracy: Understanding Arab Political Reform.” I consider the following states liberalized autocracies as of April 2012: Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Jordan, Kuwait, Yemen, Tunisia, Bahrain and the Palestinian Territories.
civil society under similar legal and bureaucratic hurdles. Because of this, DCSOs throughout the liberalized autocracies of the Arab world have three strategies at their disposal: choosing to confront the state, choosing to be partially co-opted, while maintaining some form of autonomy, or allowing themselves to be fully captured by the regime. Furthermore, the liberalized autocracies of the Arab world are all connected to some degree to the international community and allow some form of funding for CSOs external to the regime. Therefore, it is my expectation that the theory that DCSO type determines DCSO strategy will hold up across the liberalized autocracies of the Arab world and I encourage future scholars to test this through in-depth qualitative case study research of the individual CSOs in those states. I do not, however, expect to be able to extrapolate my findings to the full autocracies of the region including Syria and Saudi Arabia, where civil society has virtually no autonomy from the state.

Hybrid Regimes Writ Large

As stated above, I intentionally limit the universe of cases in the dissertation to those in the countries of the Arab world due to the exceptionally low levels of political rights and civil liberties in the region and the fact that, unlike any other region in the world, no single Arab state has transitioned to democracy as of 2012. However, I do still believe that my research applies to cases outside of the region. At the end of 2001 Larry Diamond noted that competitive authoritarian and hegemonic electoral authoritarian regimes combined made up one-third of all regimes worldwide. Today, that number is even higher. As close to a majority of states worldwide no longer fit standard definitions of full democracy or full autocracy, I believe that

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687 For a good explanation of the “exceptionalism” of the Arab world see Schlumberger.
my theory will extend to a wide range of regimes. That is, while I acknowledge that the liberalized autocracies of the Arab world are unique in many regards, I hope that future scholars will be able to test my theory and find it applicable in most hybrid regimes in the world. As Diamond argues, “These authoritarian structures and practices are not unique to the Arab world, but Arab rulers have raised them to a high pitch of refinement, and wield them with unusual skill.” I hope that future scholars will test my theory in cases outside of Egypt and outside of the Arab world. While the specific DCSO typology would not necessarily map on to other regional contexts (perhaps, for example, replacing Muslim CSOs with some other form of dominant opposition or religious movement), the three independent variables that determine the typology (outside rhetorical support, level of perceived threat, and level of access to foreign funding) should carry over to country cases outside of the Arab world. Thus, other scholars may determine that parts of my theory are context-specific, and thus may need to refine my theory, which I would welcome as a natural part of a theory-building exercise.

*Democracy Promotion CSOs*

Finally, I would encourage other scholars to test my theory in the context of democracy promotion CSOs in addition to development CSOs. This dissertation has focused on development CSOs for multiple reasons described in detail in Chapters One and Two. Development CSOs make up the vast majority of CSOs in the Arab world and have been drastically understudied, providing a rather large hole in the literature. Conversely, there exists a relatively vast literature on civil society in the Arab world, which has focused almost exclusively

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689 An examination of Freedom House’s 2009 *Freedom in the World* report reveals that 86 out of 193 countries (or 45%) can be considered in the grey zone between full autocracy and full democracy (between 3.0 and 5.5 average combined political rights and civil liberties score).
690 Diamond, “Why are there no Arab Democracies?”
on democracy promotion CSOs. That literature has successfully described both the tools available to the state to control and manipulate civil society and how democracy promotion CSOs (particularly human rights organizations) navigate the constraints placed upon them by the state. Nevertheless, most of this literature remains focused on a top-down, or state-centered perspective of the civil society-state relationship. Thus, it would be worthwhile to shed further light on the strategy choices of democracy promotion CSOs from a civil society perspective.

Testing the theory that CSO type determines CSO strategy in the context of democracy promotion CSOs has two potential implications. If the theory does hold up across the civil society spectrum, it would further strengthen my argument that development CSOs and democracy promotion CSOs are more similar than the earlier literature suggests, operating under similar constraints, facing similar forms of regime repression, and responding to their environment in similar ways. If the theory does not hold up, meaning that CSO type is not a strong predictor of strategy choice for democracy promotion CSOs, it would both emphasize the need for further research on what determines strategy choice for democracy promotion CSOs and the importance of separating out the democracy promotion and development civil society sectors in analysis of civil society-state relations. Thus, I would encourage other scholars to test the theory that CSO type determines CSO strategy in the context of democracy promotion CSOs.

Civil Society and the Arab Spring

This dissertation was completed during the Arab Spring, the series of protests and revolutions that swept across much of the Arab world beginning in December 2010. While there is no question that the final outcome of the Arab Spring is still unknown, what is clear is that the
relationship between Arab societies and their rulers has changed. Prior to the Arab Spring the mass public within the Arab world was largely apathetic, unwilling and unable to challenge the deeply entrenched authoritarian regimes under which they lived. Following the revolutions that began in Tunisia and eventually resulted in the removal from power of four of the longest-serving executives in the modern world (Tunisia’s Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, Mubarak, Libya’s Muammar Qaddafi, and Yemen’s Ali Abdallah Saleh), citizens became more confident in their abilities to challenge the state and more willing to do so. While the role of organized civil society in bringing about the Arab Spring remains untested and is beyond the scope of this dissertation, it is worthwhile to examine the implications for my findings on the shifting state-society relationships that have emerged since early 2011.

The behavior of DCSOs and their relationship with the state prior to the Arab Spring has four primary lessons for the ability of civil society to operate independent of the regime in the post-Arab Spring transition period. First, redlines matter. While the redlines for CSO behavior may have shifted, even in the chaotic environment of the post-revolution period, some redlines remain and crossing those redlines still represents a high level of threat to the regime. Due to the post-revolutionary chaos in Egypt, in which the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) tried to find its footing, largely ignoring civil society to deal with the larger issues of the political transition and basic security, CSOs were left to function with little supervision. This resulted in the erasure of virtually all of the redlines found under Mubarak. According to my conversations with civil society actors, the only redline that remained after Mubarak’s fall was the military. Civil society groups were now able to question and insult the Egyptian regime, bring to light issues of sectarianism and police brutality, but could not address the military in any negative
light. While few CSOs have thus far tested this redline, others, such as Egyptian blogger Maikel Nabil have been jailed for criticizing the military.

Second, outside rhetorical support is important, but is not sufficient to guarantee protection from the regime. In post-revolutionary Egypt, support from the West can be more of a poison pill than a protective mechanism. The immediate post-revolution period saw CSOs first ignored by the state, then the subject of a witch hunt by Mubarak regime holdover Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Fayza Abul Naga. In an attempt to gain domestic legitimacy and distract from criticisms regarding the political transition, the SCAF, the military government in place following Mubarak’s resignation, and the freely elected Egyptian parliament turned their attention toward what they have called foreign interference in Egyptian civil society, opening a far-reaching investigation into civil society groups receiving foreign aid which has resulted in the trial of 40 Egyptian and foreign CSO workers (including 16 Americans). Egyptian government officials have gone so far as to call for the end of foreign funding for CSOs altogether. What this shows is that the state has caught on to the importance of access to foreign funding in providing CSOs with the ability to operate outside regime control. Furthermore, the Egyptian CSOs under investigation have not benefitted at all from vocal rhetorical support from the West against the CSO crackdown. This confirms that outside rhetorical support is only useful when a state’s legitimacy and identity is connected to its relationships with the international community. Thus, in a state that openly defies the West (such

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692 Nabil was arrested and sentenced to three years in prison for insulting the military on his blog. He served one year before being released.
693 At the time of this writing, the trial is on hold until April 26 and the travel ban put in place by the Egyptian government on the Western NGO workers has been lifted.
as Iran), Western rhetorical support for CSOs is more harmful than helpful. But in a state that is closely connected to the West (such as Morocco), outside rhetorical support *does* provide cover from regime interference.

Third, in an unstable political environment, CSOs are more likely to choose pluralism or administrative co-optation rather than ideological co-optation or capture, as the level of threat they represent to the regime decreases under lower levels of regime supervision. Following the Egyptian revolution, DCSOs began creating programs to take advantage of the post-Mubarak environment and the prospects of democratic reform, including undertaking voter registration drives, parliamentary training programs and campaigning manuals. Virtually every DCSO actor with whom I spoke in June 2011, shortly after the revolution, had a list of democracy-related projects they were either already beginning or planning to integrate into their programming. Youth-led CSOs took particular advantage of the lax legal environment in the months following Mubarak’s ouster, explicitly working on democracy and political issues that were considered redlines in the Mubarak era. As this dissertation has argued, the legal environment and the context in which CSOs operate defines the range of strategy choices available to CSOs. When the political environment is chaotic and unstable, that context is in flux, allowing CSOs to engage in more risky behavior than they would otherwise engage in as issues that were previously a high level of threat become a low or medium level of threat.

Fourth, worsening economic conditions allow for a bigger role for DCSOs and the ability of DCSOs to re-negotiate their relationship with the state. The deteriorating economic situation following the Egyptian revolution highlighted the inability of the state to address many of the

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basic needs of the citizenry. Thus, DCSOs that provide basic goods and services, including clean water, food and healthcare have become indispensible to the state, placing them in a strong bargaining position vis-à-vis the state. The strategy choice of these DCSOs has not shifted. They remain likely to choose administrative co-optation, as they were always a low level of threat to the regime, however in a time of economic crisis, the amount of co-optation a DCSO must accept is lower.

Nowhere has the shift in state-society relations been more pronounced than in Egypt in since February 2011. There is no doubt that the success of the Egyptian revolution of 2011 is due in large part to the ability and willingness of Egyptian society to defy traditional roles, crossing red lines and violating taboos along the way. Both formal, organized civil society in the form of CSOs and informal civil society in the form of individual action and mass protest has become more emboldened since the revolution and many redlines have been erased. Nevertheless, overall, Egypt has not experienced a drastic, permanent shift in notions of popular sovereignty and the ability of society to make demands upon the state. Rather, Egyptian civil society is experiencing the latest cycle of liberalization-deliberalization, a tool the hybrid regimes of the Middle East have used to maintain control over society for decades. Despite the success of the Egyptian revolution at removing Hosni Mubarak from power, the three main tools used by the Mubarak regime to manipulate civil society (official laws and regulations, unofficial security oversight and control of CSO funding) are still in use by the post-revolutionary Egyptian government today.

As it has been just one year since the start of the Arab Spring, it is still far too early to tell definitively whether the revolts of 2011 will result in a permanent shift in the state-society
relationship in the Arab world. As the case of Egypt shows, what is clear is that civil society has become more emboldened, refusing to acknowledge or accept the redlines of the old regime. This has given society a voice that was previously silenced and a confidence to use that voice. However, civil society actors are still severely restricted in their ability to challenge the state in any meaningful way. The old legal restrictions on civil society are still in place and are still arbitrarily applied. The security apparatus is still ever-present, albeit in an even less official capacity. And the post-Mubarak regime has restricted foreign funding to an even greater extent than the prior regime. Thus, the dynamic relationship between state and society in the Arab world has not drastically improved as a result of the Arab Spring. Rather, while the rulers who oversee civil society may have changed, the rules under which they operate remain the same, resulting in a context in which a CSO’s level of outside rhetorical support, level of perceived threat to the regime and level of access to foreign funding still provide the best explanation for a CSO’s decision to challenge the regime or acquiesce to it.
### Appendix: Tables

#### Table 6. Predicted and Actual CSO Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSO Name</th>
<th>CSO Type</th>
<th>Outside Rhetorical Support</th>
<th>Level of Perceived Threat</th>
<th>Access to Foreign Funding</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Predicted Strategy</th>
<th>Actual Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Association for the Development and Enhancement of Women</td>
<td>Protected Minority</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Greater Cairo</td>
<td>Pluralism</td>
<td>Pluralism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alashanek Ya Balady</td>
<td>Charity and Development</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Throughout Egypt</td>
<td>Administrative Co-optation</td>
<td>Pluralism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alwan wa Attar</td>
<td>Single-Issue</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Cairo</td>
<td>Administrative Co-optation</td>
<td>Administrative Co-optation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab Network for NGOs</td>
<td>Charity and Development</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Cairo</td>
<td>Ideological Co-optation</td>
<td>Ideological Co-optation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basaisa</td>
<td>Single-Issue</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Basaisa Village</td>
<td>Administrative Co-optation</td>
<td>Administrative Co-optation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARE</td>
<td>Charity and Development</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Upper Egypt</td>
<td>Administrative Co-optation</td>
<td>Administrative Co-optation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care4Needy Copts</td>
<td>Protected Minority</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Upper Egypt</td>
<td>Pluralism</td>
<td>Pluralism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEDPA</td>
<td>Charity and Development</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Throughout Egypt</td>
<td>Administrative Co-optation</td>
<td>Administrative Co-optation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Service</td>
<td>Protected Minority</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium/High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Throughout Egypt</td>
<td>Pluralism</td>
<td>Pluralism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Society Project</td>
<td>Charity and Development</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Cairo</td>
<td>Ideological Co-optation</td>
<td>Ideological Co-optation</td>
</tr>
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Table 7. Case Selection

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Table 8. Case Studies Included in Chapter Three (Pluralism)

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