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The American University in Cairo

School of Global Affairs and Public Policy

**Egypt Post the January 25th Revolution:
The Relationship between Non-
Governmental Organizations and
Networks of Activists**

A Thesis Submitted to the

Public Policy and Administration Department

**in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Public Policy**

By

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Spring 2015

The American University in Cairo

School of Global Affairs and Public Policy

Department of Public Policy and Administration

Egypt Post the January 25th Revolution: The Relationship between Non-Governmental Organizations and Networks of Activists

Yara Shawky M. Abdel Wahed

Supervised by Professor Khaled Zakaria Amin

ABSTRACT

This study looks at the relationship and dynamics of interaction between human rights NGOs and networks of activists belonging to three social movements. Three NGOs are studied as case studies in their relationship with networks of activists belonging to three social movements; students' rights movements, anti-sexual violence and harassment groups, and new engaged urban initiatives. The study explores the relationship between both to identify their motivations, features, and foundations. It also explores other stakeholders' impact on the relationship mainly state institutions. The study also looks at the dynamics of the relationship given the organizational, professional, and institutionalized nature of NGOs as opposed to the non-structured, voluntarily, non-institutionalized nature of network of activists within social movements. The study focuses on the three years from 2011-2013, it tackles the development of the relationship starting from January 25th revolution and ends by the referendum over the new constitution of 2014 that marked the beginning of a new political era in Egypt. The study concludes that NGOs and networks of activists within social movements have a cooperative relationship in which both actors are aware of their different roles. It identifies the dynamics governing the relationship in light of a power imbalance between the NGOs and the non-structured networks of activists. The study also concludes that the restrictive legal environment around civil society in Egypt interrupted the pre-mature relationship between NGOs and all groups of activists within social movements and its further development.

Key words: Civil Society, NGOs, Human Rights, Social Movements, Activism, Sexual Violence, Urban Initiatives, Student Movement

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List of Abbreviations

CBA	Community Based Associations
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
GRO	Grassroots Organizations
IFIs	International Funding Institutions
LOs	Local Organizations
MURIS	Ministry of Urban Renewal and Informal Settlements
NCW	National Council for Women
NDP	National Democratic Party
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NSM	New Social Movements
POS	Political Opportunity Structure
URC	Urban Reform Coalition

Introduction

In the 10 years prior to 2011, a new generation of human rights organizations proliferated seeking social and political change. In parallel to these organizational structures, several networks of activists gathered around different social movements started to occupy the political scene including the labor movement in Mahla, several civil servants strikes, anti-torture movements around publicized cases like Emad el Kabeer, Khaled Saiid and many others. During the post January 25th revolution years both organizations and movements continued to play a greater role in changing the political scene despite several challenges from consecutive regimes. After almost four years since January 25th revolution, the relationship between human rights NGOs and networks of activists within different social movements has become a growing phenomenon that requires an exploration of its foundations and features.

Research Problem

As the literature review later shows, the studies and research on NGOs and networks of activists within social movements in Egypt discuss them individually without looking at the relationship between both and the dynamics governing this relationship. As both are part of wider civil society, the interaction between these two players is worth exploring and understanding. This study therefore explores the relationship between human rights NGOs and networks of activists within social movements in Egypt following the January 25th revolution and until the adoption of the new 2014 Constitution. It examines the dynamics of the relationship between these two civil society actors in an attempt to add to the accumulation of knowledge on the role of civil society in the quest for political change in Egypt.

Research Questions

This study aims to answer two sets of questions; the first set is about exploring the existence of the relationship and its foundations. In particular, this set aims to answer the following questions:

- What is the relationship between NGOs and the network of activists within social movements after January 25th revolution? Is it one of co-operation or conflict?

- How did NGOs change their agenda and approach after January 25th revolution in relation to the rising social movements?
- Why do NGOs reach out to networks of activists leading several initiatives within social movements?
- Why do networks of activists within social movements reach out to NGOs?

The second set of questions is about the features and dynamics of this relationship.

The study aims to answer the following questions in particular:

- How do NGOs and networks of activists within social movements interact with state institutions?
- How do the organizational and institutional structures of NGOs affect social movements in general?
- How do networks of activists within social movements impact on NGOs' strategies and programs?

Chapter 1 Conceptual Framework

In this section, through exploring the literature, the concepts of Civil Society, NGOs and Social Movements are defined and conceptualized for the purpose of this study.

1.1. The Concept of Civil Society

Before attempting to tackle the concepts of NGOs and social movements, it is important to look at the concept of civil society in both the Liberal and Marxist schools of thought. Civil society is the arena in which the two actors explored in this study interact. According to the Liberal tradition, civil society is all types of organization between the family and the state. (Veltmer, 2004, Abdel Rahman, 2004, Perace, 1993). Within this school, civil society is vital to counter the authority of the state and this goes back to the classical argument of Alexis de Tocqueville on the importance of having a vibrant and independent civil society that would enhance democracy and participation and counter the state domination of “natural rights” of human beings as described by Tocqueville and minimize state intervention (Mercer 2002). This direct and classic relationship is often described in the literature as of the “liberal” school of thought. It continued with Verba and Almond concept of civic culture, Huntington also adopts this same trend in his work on modernization and democratization theories as well as Putnam’s “social capital”(Suleiman 2012).

Civil society was not only addressed by the “liberal” school of thought, but was also addressed by the Marxist school of thought based on works of Gramsci and Habermas on the public sphere. (Abdel Rahman 2004) and (Mercer 2002). In this school of thought, civil society is not an independent space to counter state intervention, rather for Gramsci”...*it is a sphere that is occupied by the struggle for material, ideological and cultural control over the society, and this included for him, the state*” (Suleiman 2012).

1.2. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

The concept of NGOs and social movements are no less controversial than the concept of civil society. There are disagreements not only in terms of the definition but also in terms of role and typology. The definition of NGOs has been difficult, diverse and used by different authors to refer to different concepts. Altan-Olcay and İçduygu (2012) refer to this controversy and the various typologies of NGOs based not only on the type of activities and membership, but also the differences between northern “autonomous” NGOs and southern NGOs dependent on foreign funding.

Some studies refer to the World Bank definition and many other definitions, yet most studies acknowledge that the lack of a clear definition of an NGO and civil society as a whole makes the study of this phenomenon more complex (Abdelrhman 2004).

Pearce (1993) identifies two main factors in differentiating between NGOs or what she calls intermediary which are social compositions as NGOs are usually made of middle class people who choose to work with the marginalized for a certain cause, grassroots is composed of people with specific identities and interests, dependent on their class, gender, ethnic origin, or cultural background who are in need for collective representation and organization. The other factor is the organizational structure of NGOs and grassroots organizations. For Pearce, NGOs are institutions with permanent structures in place that aim to survive based on the effectiveness and efficiency model of non-profit institutions, while grassroots organizations are more dynamic and represent certain social interests. Holmen and Jirstrom (2009) adopt a similar definition to Pearce when they differentiate between NGOs that are based in urban centers, have institutional structures, are managed by professional middle class staff, and receive funding. While on the other hand they name grassroots organizations “Local Organizations” or LOs, which are rural, its members are the beneficiaries themselves. They are small, scattered, and lack managerial capabilities and, in Holmen and Jirstrom's words, *“Although much hailed in development literature, LOs have no voice and, apparently, everyone wants to speak on their behalf.”*

In several empirical studies and literatures reviews, authors refer to the same debate but tend to define “NGOs” according to the scope of their study.

In her review of literature on NGOs and democratization, Mercer (2002) defines NGOs as official, well-established, well-funded and supported organizations run by middle-class professionals. Mercer clearly distinguishes NGOs from Grassroots organizations (GRO), which according to her definition are local organizations, based on membership, without paid staff and dependent on donor funding. In her study of the role of NGOs in democratic development in Bolivia, Bouilding, on the other hand, (2007) defines NGOs based on her scope of study as *“...organizations which are “nominally private, nonprofit agencies that act as intermediaries between international financial donors and local residents and whose function is to implement projects favoring the so-called popular sectors...or to provide services to grassroots*

constituencies". Such a definition focuses on international NGOs, or national ones based in the urban centers that work with grassroots local NGOs to empower marginalized communities.

Another important debate in the literature of NGOs is about its role. Pearce (1993) again refers to the variety of roles expected from NGOs including advocacy, mobilization, democratization, and reconstructing civil society and others. Holmen and Jirstrom also refer to "Great Expectations" from NGOs. These expectations could be explained by several reasons; the first is the assumption that the proliferation of NGOs as autonomous actors creates a voice for a wider number of groups, and creates momentum for more pressure on the state (Mercer, 2002). A second argument refers to NGOs as entities that work with grassroots organizations on the alleviation of poverty and the empowerment of communities, which in turn increases participation in the political realm (Boulding 2007). Both arguments escalated within the rise of a global neo-liberal economic policy (adopted by the International Financial Institutions as well as many donors) that preached a limited role for the state, and the cutting of subsidies and support for the poor. Hence NGOs would play a role in empowering the poor, buffering the consequences of the retreat of the state and, in some cases, even becoming partners with the private sector in the provision of services . (Abdel Rahman, 2004, Perace 1993, Holmen and Jinstrom, 2009).

Central to the debate of the diverse typologies and roles of NGOs lies an important critique, especially of NGOs in the south which are dependent on foreign funding that makes them reluctant to get into wider campaign alliances as they become competitors for funding, and hence weakens civil society rather than strengthen it. Foreign funding shifts the accountability of these organizations towards their donors rather than their communities and wider constituencies. It creates a new class becomes the primary beneficiaries of the NGO business, rather than the target audiences of grassroots groups and more marginalized and impoverished groups (Suleiman 2012, Abdel Rahman 2004). In addition to the debate surrounding the accountability of NGOs, there is also the debate and criticism of representation, as most NGOs claim that they represent marginalized groups and the interests and needs of grassroots organizations, yet in many cases they are not aware of the real needs and complexities of these groups. (Holmen and Jristrom, 2009). These critiques are even more valid in the case of authoritarian regimes that may co-opt NGOs, as well as NGOs flourishing within undemocratic tendencies within existing political

structures as Altan-Olcay and İçduygu (2012) emphasize in their study on civil society in the Middle East, including Egypt. Abdel Rahman poses similar critiques of the lack of accountability to beneficiaries, as well as lack of internal democratic governance in the NGO sector in Egypt. (Abdel Rahman, 2004). In her article (2002), Abdel Rahman refers to another factor that weakens civil society in Egypt- political polarization. The state is no longer the repressive actor, but rather civil society organizations of different political affiliations repress each other in what she calls “the privatization of the repression”.

For the purposes of this study, NGOs are defined as non-profit, non-governmental organizations based in urban centers, particularly Cairo, with a focus on advocacy and lobbying for the human rights of women, children, labor, and religious minorities. The study focuses on these NGOs in particular, as they have been important actors in the political scene both before and after January 25th Revolution. NGOs also played a role in paving the way for the January 25th Revolution, despite the debate in the literature about the level of impact of this role and its limitations. (Bayat 2002 and Abdel Wahab 2012).

1.3. Social Movements

Conceptualizing social movements is no less problematic than conceptualizing NGOs. There have been several attempts to define social movements as well as different theories explaining their rise, internal dynamics and interaction with other political and social actors. Most studies define social movements as voluntarily formed collective action that includes wide participation, with a wide popular base, around a certain issue and within loose structures and non-institutional channels. (Pearce 1993, Sugge & Dutting 2009, Bendana 2006, Davis 1999).

Two main schools approach the definition and study of social movements in two different ways. These schools are the political opportunity structure (POS) and the new social movements (NSM). According to Davis (1999), what distinguishes NSM is its autonomy from the state and its institutions, as well as all formal political processes. On the other hand, POS is about the state and its actions, and the conditions that would make state actors respond to the demands of movements.

Sugge and Dutting (2009) based on Tilly’s account of the theories of social movements differentiates between both approaches by referring to NSMs as answering the question of why do social movements rise while POS explains more

the question of the how behind social movements as they interact with the state and politics. In his study of social movements in Latin America, Davis (1999) gave an account of the need to re-theorize social movements outside the dichotomy of both approaches, and suggests that both the NSM and POS models may be inadequate to study social movements in under-developed Latin American countries. He presents an alternative model based on an overall analytic emphasis on citizens understood in relation to an unevenly developed state.

Most of the empirical studies on social movements in Egypt explore its development during the Mubarak era, its rise in the aftermath of the January 25th revolution, the challenges of organization, and questions of activism. It suggests that the authoritarian nature of the Mubark regime suppressed this quest for collective action, and in spite of this many social movements evolved around different issues including the peaceful change of regime, combating torture and police brutality, and the independence of universities and labor movements. (Abdel Rahman, 2012, 2013, El Mahdi 2009, Benien 2011). There have also been many attempts to classify these movements in the literature (Ghobashy, 2011) but, as Abdel Rahman states, "*the loose structure of protests, the interchangeable membership of different groups and movements, and the fluid and metamorphosing nature of the demands promoted by various groups makes any attempt to classify these protests a difficult task.*"

In spite of the theoretical debate about social movements in both the POS and NSM and approaches to studying social movements, this study adopts the definition based on the agreement of the two schools on the key elements of the concept of social movements as being "collective action", "gathered around a particular issue", "with loose structure", and "wide and voluntarily participation". In particular, the study focuses on the different networks and groups of activists within selected social movements for the purposes of this study.

Looking at the definitions of both NGOs and social movements, it is clear that the features of each concept show the complex of the relationship between both given the loose, voluntary nature of social nature of groups and networks within social movements on one hand, and the institutionalized, professional nature of NGOs on the other hand.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

This section looks at the relationship between NGOs and social movements in both the international literature and in the studies conducted on the same relationship within the context of Egypt. It also aims to identify the gaps in the literature and how the study contributes to accumulation of knowledge that would narrow this gap.

2.1 NGOs and social movements in the International Literature

The relationship between NGOs and social movements in the literature is controversial as much as the two concepts are controversial in terms of definitions and approaches. It usually comes from researchers and practitioners of NGOs who refer to networks and groups within social movements as an alternative to NGOs for development in the third world, or in reference to critiques of the NGOs sector. Within this context, social movements are also referred to as “grassroots organizations”, “community based organization” or “organizations based on membership”. When discussing the relationship between NGOs and social movements in Latin America, and based on his experience of the World Social Forum, Bendana (2006) defines NGOs as the intermediary NGOs that are based in the North with huge operations, institutional structure, secure funding and access to representative forums like United Nations and governmental organizations. Social movements are, according to him, more grassroots community-based organization, without institutional structures and based in the south.

Empirical research from Asia, mainly India and Bangladesh, presents several criticisms of the so-called “NGO business” and blames the international donor community and International Funding Institutions (IFIs) for shifting Community Based Associations (CBAs), based on membership, advocacy and more profound understanding of the social and economic needs of their communities, into professional, non-politicized NGOs, a phenomena in which civil society eradicates political society rather than expanding it, and undermines the role of the state in development. Here again social movements are defined as CBOs and grassroots

organizations. (Kamat 2003 and Rahman 2006). When discussing the relationship between NGOs and social movements in Palestine, Jad (2007) also accuses NGOs of depoliticizing the rich social movements and rather professionalizes the social cause.

2.2 NGOs and Social Movements in Egypt

The studies conducted in the Middle East and Egypt present similar critiques. In their comparative study of civil society in the Middle East, Altan-Olcay and Içduygu (2012) show evidence that the ability of civil society (including NGOs) to shape political liberalization and to promote democracy is limited as with states and international funders present in these networks of NGOs, the thing that undermines the concept of an autonomous civil society that can help develop democracy.

With particular reference to Egypt, the authors recommend the importance of studying other forms of association and mobilization movements that paved the way for January 25th Revolution, rather than focusing on the formally organized networks of civil society, including NGOs. In her study about “NGOs and Dynamics of Labor Market in Egypt“ (2007), Abdel Rahman explores an additional role for NGOs as employers for skilled middle-class professionals, and the dynamics of this new role in relation to the labor market in Egypt with a focus on community development NGOs as “ service providers” rather than “advocacy\human rights” NGOs. In another study of the political and economic protests in Egypt, Abdel Rahman (2012) refers to the role of human rights “groups” in supporting and providing legal aid to the labor movement. These studies did not elaborate on the nature of this relationship, its dynamics, and its impact on both movements and human rights NGOs. It is also notable that human rights are referred to as “groups” rather than organizations or institutions. Furthermore, most of the studies focusing on Egypt did not differentiate between community development NGOs, who play a role as service providers in coordination with the state, and human rights NGOs who play an advocacy role pressuring the state to change or adopt new policies.

In his study of the legal restrictions that impact on NGOs in Egypt, Hassan (2010) touches upon the relationship between NGOs and the state embodied in the legal framework, and how it restricts the effectiveness of the work of NGOs. Hassan also refers to the fact that human rights NGOs face more restrictions than educational or services NGOs given their political agenda that causes friction with the state. This study did not explore the relationship between these NGOs and wider civil society

including social movements, especially as the study was conducted in 2010 prior to the January 25th Revolution. Azer (2009), on the other hand, looks at cyber activism as a New Social Movement and touches upon its possible relation to human rights NGOs, especially in the “role” of documenting and exposing human rights violations, yet the study focuses on cyber activism as a movement and its future rather than a possible relationship between human rights NGOs and this movement.

The concern with social movements increased after January 25th Revolution, as many scholars became interested in studying the phenomenon and its role in paving the way for the revolution. In her study, Abouzaid (2012) looked at the institutionalization of social movements into the newly emerging political parties after the revolution. This study, however, looks at the growing relationship between social movements and newly emerging political parties rather than the relationship with NGOs. The study, however, captures the essence of the loose nature of social movements, and the challenge facing its institutionalization into organized structures.

The previous review shows the complexity of studying the relationship between NGOs and social movements given the diverse definitions for both concepts. The literature coming from Asia and Middle East also shows a rigid conceptualization of the duality of both concepts. It is either “NGOs” which are being corrupted by foreign funding, lacking accountability and representation of communities and wider constituencies, professionalizing the grass-root movements or “social movements” that are dynamic, down to earth, empowering the voiceless and marginalized. Such a duality is further reflected in the literature on civil society in Egypt, which addresses the role of NGOs, and challenges on one side or social movement's role and challenges on the other sides. None of the studies, however, examined the interaction between both NGOs and the networks of activists within social movements, particularly after the January 25th Revolution, and how this contributes to the broader quest for political and social change in Egypt. Furthermore, most of the studies address NGOs collectively, focusing on community development NGOs rather than human rights NGOs.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

To explore the reasons, motivations, and dynamics of the relationship between human rights NGOs and networks of activists within social movements, the study adopted several qualitative techniques for gathering data. Qualitative methods were chosen to conduct this study as it explores a relationship that was not widely examined in the context of Egypt.

As a qualitative study, the study begins with general questions based on the literature of NGOs, social movements and their relationship, gathers data through interviews, observations and desk reviews, and follows by sorting out data and identifying key themes in relation to the literature and conceptual framework to ensure the validity and reliability of the data collected. The literature is re-visited at each stage to further develop the questions of the study and validate the analysis.

3.1 Selection of case studies

Case studies are more suitable to study both NGOs and networks of activists within social movements and their dynamics. The case study technique allowed for field visits to three NGOs, access their programs, approaches and agenda before and after the revolution, and review them.

3.1.1 Selection of three NGOs as case studies

The study focuses on three case studies of Cairo-based human and women's rights NGOs established within the past ten years. The profile of the NGOs selected was based on the following criteria:

- Human Rights NGOs based in Cairo;
- Human Rights and Advocacy NGOs aiming to impact policies and endorse social change
- Established within the past ten years as part of a new generation of human rights organizations including a new generation of human rights defenders;
- Their presence in social media to issue statements and voice opinions and positions;
- Their programs and studies being related to the three movements of concern to the study

- Their interaction with movements studied demonstrated through hosting press conferences or issuing recommendations in collaboration with movements.

For the purposes of academic integrity the three chosen NGOs are named after the cause of focus and program as the studied NGOs preferred not to disclose their names.

- Free University NGO, in its relationship with the student movement. Free University NGO has published several reports regarding the student movement, and has a program on Academic Freedoms that interacts not only with students but also professors and teachers in state universities who are active defenders of the independence of universities and the academic realm in general.
- Women's Rights NGO in its relationship with anti-sexual\physical violence and harassment groups. Women's Right is a feminist organization that led many NGOs to voice concerns about violence against women during the protests in Tahrir. It also published several testimonies from survivors of violence\rape in the protests, as well as hosting several joint press conferences with groups combating violence against women.
- Adequate Housing NGO in its relationship with urban initiatives groups. The housing program of Housing NGO published several leading studies on the right to housing and housing policies. It also led a coalition of NGOs and social movements, which submitted several recommendations regarding housing and urban planning to the Committee of 50 that formulated the 2014 constitution.

3.1.2 The selection process of Social Movements

Three movements were selected to explore the nature and features of networks of activists within each of them and their relationship with the selected NGOs. The selection followed the conceptualized definition of social movements used in this study as being “collective action”, “gathered around a particular issue”, “with non-institutionalized structure”, and “wide and voluntarily participation”.

These movements are the student movement, the Anti-sexual harassment/violence movement, and the new urban planning movement.

- The student movement witnessed a drastic rise after 25th Revolution manifested in the 2012 election of students unions, calls for having campuses free from security forces, and a new students' charter. The study reached out to students from Cairo and Alexandria Universities and explored their relationship with Free University NGO, which also provided contacts and access to active members of the student movement in both universities. Additionally, and in the case of student movements and groups, two political parties were interviewed in order to further explore the relationship between the triangle of political parties, Free University, and active student unions in university during the study's three-year span.
- The movement emerged to combat physical and sexual harassment as well as violence against women. Several groups emerged after January 25th Revolution to combat the issue of sexual harassment against women in public spaces. For the first time these groups for engaged both women and men in combating this phenomenon, especially inside Tahrir Square during the major marches and demonstrations that witnessed sever physical and sexual violence against women. In addition to creating actual intervention groups for the protection of women in the square, these groups managed to inform public opinion about this serious social problem that is almost becoming normalized in Egyptian society. I sought groups that had interacted with Women's Right NGO and also staff in the NGO provided some contacts. Many of these groups also had Facebook and Twitter accounts, which they used to mobilize of volunteers during the marches in Tahrir Square.
- Urban Initiatives Movement. Several young architects and urban policy activists started scattered initiatives before the January 25th revolution to contribute to the right to the city and engaged with people in urban planning in their neighborhoods. These initiatives proliferated after the revolution and started to call for coordination efforts with civil society organizations, mainly human rights NGOs, to develop an urban policy that would benefit marginalized neighborhoods in greater Cairo such as Maspero Trainable and Ramlet Boulaq. Adequate Housing NGO provided some contacts for these initiatives and groups. Other contacts were provided by the groups themselves, which led to contact with other initiatives they coordinated with.

The groups and networks within each movement were initially reached and accessed through each of the three NGOs and social media or Internet pages for these groups. Once one group was interviewed they provided contacts and access to other groups within the same movement in a snowball technique.

3.2 Data Collection Techniques

3.2.1 In-Depth Interviews

In-depth interviews are the most appropriate technique to learn about NGO workers, their perceptions, and views about engaging with networks and groups of activists within social movements. The same tool was also the most suitable to learn about the motives of members of networks and groups of activists within social movements, and how they assessed their relationship with NGOs and their impact on the development of the movements they belonged to. The interviews were semi-structured, and there were key questions asked for each group that would open the discussion to gather the necessary information. Interviews included the executive directors in the three NGOs, and the key program staff in each NGO that was directly interacting and managing the program with the selected movement and its group members. As for the selected three movements, the selection of key members in each group was difficult as most activists in these groups and networks are volunteers. At least three groups were interviewed within each movement, and each group included 2-3 members who agreed to be interviewed. In addition to the three NGOs and groups within each selected movement, two senior members in two political parties established after January 25th Revolution were also interviewed. Most newly emerging political parties had a student division that played a role in supporting active students and unions in the selected two universities. These interviews aimed to validate the data about the students' movement in particular and its relationship with both NGOs and political parties.

3.2.2 Desk review of NGOs programs in relation to the three movements

In addition to the in-depth interviews, the three NGOs also provided access to studies and policy papers describing and defining their programs in relation to the three movements. These documents that most of them are also available on the websites of

the studied NGOs, added to the aspect of the triangulation of gathered data of needed for the study. It provided the study with more data and evidence of the programs of NGOs, and their outreach towards the groups within each movement, which further helped to explore this relationship and analyze its dynamics.

3.2.3 Participant Observation

Additionally, the researcher's background as a professional NGO worker has allowed for further observation of the evolving relationship between NGOs and social movements during the period of the study. It is important to note that the data collection for this research was conducted in 2014, but the researcher attended several meetings with three NGOs on an informal basis in different capacities as a colleague, friend and activist during post January 25th Revolution. The researcher also joined many of the protests against sexual violence against women that took place in Tahrir, and also met with some of the survivors. The researcher was also a member of one of the political parties involved in the three movements studied, and witnessed several debates about engagement with NGOs in different incidents. Finally, the researcher conducted preliminary unpublished research for the Non-for-Profit Management class in this Master's Program that focused on studying the governance models of five NGOs, including the three studied in this research. All of these experiences enriched the researcher by providing a deeper understanding of the relationship between the entities studied, and also provided the researcher with access to the organizations, groups and members. It also helped in building trust between the researcher and informants during the data collection process.

Chapter 4 Foundations of the Relationship between NGOs and Networks of Activists within Social Movements

This chapter relied on the first hand data gathered from the interviews, reviews of studies on NGO websites, and programs in relation to the groups and networks in each selected movement. It is divided into four sections. The first three sections describe the relation between each NGO and the selected movement. It presents the data and establishes the nature of the relationship between each NGO and selected movements through examining the programs, strategies and relations of each NGO and designated movements before and after January 25th Revolution. The fourth section summarizes in two tables the key themes in motivating both NGOs and social movements to develop a cooperative relationship based on the data analysis.

4.1 Free University NGO and the Student Movement in Cairo and Alexandria Universities

This section examines the foundations of the relationship between Free University NGO and groups of active students as well in student unions. The data collected is based on interviews conducted with the Deputy Executive Director of the organization, the program manager of the students' related programs, elected members of one of the student unions in Cairo University, and active student members of political movements who also volunteered with Free University NGO.

The section is divided into two main parts. The first part looks at the NGO's programs and strategies related to the student movement as well as providing an overview of the movement before January 25th Revolution. The second part looks at the NGO's programs and strategies related to the student movement after January 25th Revolution, and the interaction with state institutions as well as with political movements and parties that active students were members in as well.

Before 25th January Revolution

Free University NGO started its program on academic freedoms, focusing on support for students, in 2008 before the revolution. The main objectives of the program from 2008-2011 were; 1) training students on university regulations and bylaws regarding

students' rights freedom charters, 2) creating an electronic library about students' rights, and students' movements that would include; books, papers, dissertations, and administrative and supreme administrative court verdicts. In addition to these two objectives and as part of being a human rights organization, Free University NGO provided legal aid to students who faced disciplinary measures inside university or who had to go to courts to appeal administrative decisions that affected their status as students. As a human rights organization, Free University NGO worked with the whole spectrum of students in universities including students affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Deputy CEO of Free University NGO stated that *“we were aware that we have a human rights mandate that included everyone, and we were determined to avoid any political discourse in our relation with active students.... there was not much political polarization in university before 2011 anyway”*.

During the period prior to 2011, student movements within Cairo and Alexandria universities were limited to scattered activities led by some strong political groups who had arms\branches inside universities. The movement was, however, generally weak due to state and security control over universities during the Mubark era. (Menshawy, 2013).

After January 25th Revolution

The January 25th Revolution created an opportunity for the mobilization of young people in Egypt. The weekly Friday peaceful demonstrations in Tahrir Square created a space for political interest, discussion, debate, and possibly engagement. Free University NGO expanded widely after January 25th Revolution; the number of staff increased from 6 to 28, the programs expanded to include the Academic Freedoms program and even the physical space expanded as the organization moved to bigger premises. It also expanded its activities in universities outside Cairo, reaching out to universities in nine governorates.

As for the student movement, January 25th Revolution created the atmosphere for the expansion of the student movement its. It expanded to include a wider audience of students than the usual group of active students belonging to certain political groups, such as the Pro Muslim Brotherhoods or Revolutionary Socialist students, as most of university students were interested in engaging in activities related to the students right. As Mai Shams El Din notes *“the student movement inside universities was a*

mirror to the political changes Egypt has been witnessing outside the campuses” (Mada Masr, 2014). The mobilized active student movement inside universities worked on three main issues seeking more independence for universities both academically and administratively, these are; 1) the implementation of the administrative court ruling prohibiting police and security guards from entering campuses, 2) ending the system that allowed the state to assign university presidents and faculty deans their positions rather than through elections among faculty members, 3) the abolition of the student charter and bylaws of 2007 that were challenged in front of the Supreme Constitutional Court, (Ibid).

According to Free University NGO the violations of student’s rights in 2011 were so limited that “*we did not have anything to report about or document*”. Deputy CEO Free University NGO. This led to a shift in the role of Free University NGO to focus on two key areas; 1) to widen the mobilization of students around their rights and demands without being part of the movement, 2) to provide capacity building and knowledge to empower activities and cadres to lead the student movement further.

The students’ unions elections of 2012 were a key event that was also reflected in this role shift. Student unions are the main mechanism for students to further their rights, to monitor the student-related budgets, to plan activities, to play a role in the administration of their own schools and faculties, and also to establish a channel of communication with professors and the administration concerning the quality of education. Free University NGO provided support to the unions who, in many cases, approached the organization for to learn more on the students’ charter, guidance for their electoral campaigns, resource persons, and speakers for activities related to raising awareness of student rights in universities.

Free University NGO also decided to expand its outreach after January 25th Revolution in light of the openness of the public sphere and began to target “independent” students. The term “independent” was widely used in media coverage, as well as by interviewees from both Free University NGO and students, to describe “active” students that do not belong to political affiliation\party\movement yet are active defenders for a new student charter, independent unions and students’ rights. The outreach for “independent” students continued to be a challenge until the students’ union elections of the scholastic year 2012\2013. With the dismantling of the old pro-National Democratic Party (NDP) unions and the emergence of new networks and groups of active students interested in leading the students’ demands,

they needed knowledge and capacity building and consequently approached Free University NGO.

According to the program manager of student-related programs in Free University NGO *“it started with one faculty in one campus, the news flew everywhere and hence we were approached by other unions from other faculties and campuses”*.

The main requests were; a) knowledge about the student’s charter, bylaws and rights, b) training on campaigning and reaching out to students, 3) use of Free University NGO’s premises to hold press conferences and meetings.

State Institutions and Political Parties

Due to the student movement being governed by internal laws and regulations inside campuses, Free University NGO did not establish advocacy channels with the Supreme Universities Council*. They did, however, facilitate several meetings with the leaders of the student movement to iron out disagreements over the new student charter. They also facilitated several meetings between students in each university and the board of the universities in discussions also related to the students’ charter.

Immediately after the ousting of Mubarak regime, several political parties started to register themselves after years of political stagnation. These new political parties represented the whole political spectrum; Muslim Brotherhood, and several Center-Left and Liberal parties. These parties also attracted many young people (as well as students) to join their membership. Political parties became a new force inside university campuses, as well as the wider political scene.

According to interviews conducted with students who were members of one of the student unions in Cairo University, they were attracted to join political parties after January 25th Revolution in order to voice students’ rights and demands. When the student union elections started in 2012, they decided to run in the elections to represent their colleagues. Nevertheless, one of the key criticisms used against them from previous members of the union who belonged to the National Democratic Party was that they represented partisan interests rather than the demands and interests of

* Supreme Universities Council is the main governmental authority that regulates public universities through policy recommendations that impacts independence of universities in Egypt. It was established in 1950 and is usually headed by the Minister of High Education and includes in its membership all the Deans of Public Universities in Egypt.

the student movement. The students' decision was to give up their membership in political parties if elected in the unions. When asked why they were leaving the same political party they were eager to join, one said,

"Political parties were a channel or tool for me to represent my colleagues and get engaged in the students' movement". Another student replied "and what is the difference between all the secular parties, they are the same, name a difference between the Social Democratic Party or Destour for example, they are the same".

They also felt that the secular political parties were more concerned with the outcomes of the union elections in 2012 to prove that the Islamists parties that won the majority in the 2011 Parliament did not dominate the whole political scene, and that it was possible to "beat" them in other battlefields. The political affiliation of the active members of the student movement has been a challenge for Free University NGO both before and after the revolution. As Free University NGO's programs depended on volunteers/correspondents in each university to provide information on the status of students' rights or coverage of the union elections, for example. Most of these volunteers had their political affiliations. It was a difficult to train these volunteers to provide non-politically biased information, and to adopt a non-biased human rights discourse. One of the students who volunteered with Free University NGO in Alexandria University for a year after 2011 belonged to a radical leftist political movement. He described his experience as a volunteer with Free University NGO in and being an active member in his movement as being difficult at the beginning, but which gradually became easier.

"At first you have your own political biases and views, for example I hate the Muslim Brotherhoods but if any of their students faced violations I had to report it, because they have rights as students".

He also added that sometimes the line between his role as a political activist and volunteer in a human rights organization was blurred, as " *...I would go document violations, meet with the families of arrested students, provide them legal support and report...I do this with my political movement and with Free University NGO)*"

4.2 Women's Rights NGO and the Groups Combating Sexual\Physical Violence and Harassment against Women

This section examines the foundations of the relationship between Women's Rights NGO and groups combating sexual\physical violence and harassment against women. The data collected is based on interviews conducted with the Executive Director of the organization, the program manager of the student-related programs, and members of three groups combating sexual violence against women. The section is divided into two main parts. The first part looks at the NGO's programs and strategies related to violence against women as well as providing an overview of the evolution of these groups before January 25th Revolution. The second part looks at the NGO's programs and strategies related to anti-sexual violence groups after January 25th Revolution, and the interaction with state institutions.

Before January 25th Revolution

Women's Rights NGO was founded as an NGO in 2007 by a group of feminists. Its main mission was to build a feminist group to represent new ideas for feminist discourse in Egypt. Its main programs before 2011 mainly focused on conducting research and holding public roundtables on different feminist debates. According to the CEO of Women's Rights NGO, before 2011 *"we knew that it would be difficult to reach out for feminist initiatives and networks of activists on the ground and we never thought that we shall work in the field of advocacy, but after 2011 the huge expansion we did was unexpected"*.

Women's Rights NGO and many other women's rights NGOs tackled the issue of violence against women in their programs. The main tool and mechanisms used were studies, roundtables, and workshops. The phenomenon of sexual harassment was widely identified and documented by NGOs and the media as an overwhelming issue threatening all women in Egyptian society in public spaces, (ECWR, 2008). The terms sexual violence in public spaces, "gang rape", and "circle of hell" were not used, however, before 2011. These terms came with the serious evolution of the phenomenon from a societal problem into the systematic targeting of women and their bodies in the public space.

After January 25th Revolution

After the January 25th Revolution the number of staff in Women's Rights NGO staff reached 42, with a very flat and flexible institutional structure. The issue of violence against women continued to be present in the core programs and concern for Women's Rights NGO since its establishment. An important aspect of violence against women was harassment in public spaces that escalated in Egyptian streets after 2011. The main mechanisms for handling the issue continued to be providing safe medical services and psychological counseling for those survivors who approached organizations.

In June 2012, Women's Right NGO met with three victims of sexual violence and rape in the Tahrir protests, and documented and published their testimonies. It was only then that they realized that there was a serious pattern and practice of targeting women with sexual violence in Tahrir and other protest areas. The team decided investigate further in order to verify the systematic practice of sexual violence. The team also decided to take the following measures immediately; 1) publishing instructions and check lists for female protestors in case they becomes victim of an attack, 2) producing kits and guides for handling cases of survivors for circulation among other NGOs, 3) holding meetings with the media to start spreading information about the issue. The core principal that guided Women's Right NGO in its program of violence against women and mainly sexual violence that took place in Tahir was "protecting women's bodies in public space".

As the team of Women's Right NGO said, *"we felt the systematic and intentional practice of excluding the existence of women from the public space, as a feminist group before being an organization, this phenomenon needed to be combated"*.

Several groups of young women and men started to establish groups at the same time that aimed to intervene in the protests and around Tahrir square to remove women from what they called "circles of Hell". These groups came from different backgrounds, with diverse political opinions, and different intervention strategies. Nevertheless, they together created a movement active and engaged on the ground that combated violence against women and also managed to create a new feminist discourse. (Ahmad Zaki, 2015). Each group mobilized volunteers through social media, assigned roles, and developed its own intervention strategies. Two main motivations guided all the interviewed groups; 1) political motivation to maintain the momentum of the revolution through providing a safe space for women, 2) personal

motivation aiming to protect friends and fellow protesters facing incidents of harassment or sexual violence. As a member of one of the groups said, *"We get power from the Square; it is our power supply and inspiration"*.

The groups approached Women's Right NGO seeking cooperation, training and support. The coordination between Women's Right NGO and these groups was difficult, because, as the program manager of the Violence against Women program states, *"As an NGO, our role is not to intervene physically to protect women protesters, this was beyond our mandate and capabilities"*. Women's Right NGO decided to maintain good relations with all these groups but kept sufficient distance from them to acknowledge their different roles. As the CEO said, *"For us, what we cared for is to protect women and rescue them, we cannot do it but they did"*. Another reason for working with these groups was, according to Women's Right NGO to connect and reach out to a developing and growing feminist movement on the ground, which was never one of their expected outputs before January 25th Revolution. Women's Right NGO provided space for the groups to meet helped them to share their strategies and, more importantly, provided the post intervention support to the survivors. After rescuing survivors these groups did not have the tools or the funding necessary to provide medical care and psychological assistance. Also, these groups only knew about each other at the premises of Women's Right NGO. There were several areas of disagreement among the groups, and in their relationship with Women's Right NGO. The main point of disagreement was accepting female volunteers as part of the intervention groups inside the square as they were consequently put at risk of sexual violence. Some of the groups were established by young men who decided to protect the right of female friends and family members to exist safely in the public space. They could not accept women as part of the intervention on the ground, but other groups insisted that women become involved in the intervention. As a feminist organization, the mission of Women's Right NGO is to empower women and part of this mission was therefore to bring their feminist discourse into the core of the groups' discussions. Over time and through the debate a new, more feminist discourse began to be adopted by most of the groups and the groups allowed women to be part of the intervention groups. The debate was backed by experience from the field in which "male" members of the groups felt that everyone inside "circle of hell" was vulnerable to violence and attack regardless of sex or physical strength.

The relationship with State Institutions

The courageous act by a victim of sexual violence, Yasmin el Barmawy[†] to appear on television in February 2013 to speak about her ordeal and the violence she faced marked an important juncture in developing the movement combating sexual violence against women. Before Yasmin's public testimony, public opinion did not accept or believe that such acts of violence, gang rape, and the 'circle of hell' existed. According to interviews conducted with the Women's Right NGO team and the intervention groups, this was for reasons; 1) people who were part of the revolution during the 18 days did not see any acts of harassment in the square, as, on the contrary, the dominant narrative was so idealistic for those who participated and believed in the revolution, 2) political parties who called for protests in 2012 and 2013 preferred to deny the existence of such incidents without documented evidence for political reasons. Women's Right NGO formulated a comprehensive strategy to approach all these players. Firstly, they conducted meetings with most political parties (members in the Salvation Front at that time), and provided them with evidence of acts of violence against women in protests.

"Our message was of sharing the responsibility, if you call the people to protest, you need to provide security to them and their bodies and on the top of them Women". (CEO of Women's Right NGO).

It was a difficult task but after several efforts, and help from supporters of the cause inside political parties, parties responded and cooperated. In many of these meetings, members of the intervention groups accompanied key staff from Women's Right NGO to speak about the incidents and why had they decided to intervene. This was another reason why political parties eventually gave their support. Finally, Women's Right NGO was called to the premises of the National Salvation Front[‡] several times before major protests in order to coordinate security of the square with parties. Women's Right NGO also acted as a bridge between the groups combating violence

[†] Yasmin El Barmawy, a survivor of sexual violence that took place in Tahrir Square in November 2012. Yasmin was the first survivor who decided to go publicly on television and speak about the violence she faced. Her public appearance marked a shift in the public opinion position as well as the state's position from the alleged incidents of sexual violence against women that took place in protests from 2012 and until 2014.

[‡] National Salvation Front is the platform of opposition political parties and figures that called for the protests against the Muslim Brotherhood rule from November 2012 until July 2013.

against women, political parties, and their volunteers in coordinating efforts to secure the demonstrations.

The relationship with the state institutions was another area of disagreement between Women's Right NGO and the groups. Most of the groups had a strict position against coordination with security and police in their work for many reasons. The first is that the police abandoned from the beginning their role in securing the square. The second reason, which was of the real concern for all the interviewed groups, was that they could not be sure that the arrested "suspect" was one of the gangs committing violence and they did not trust the police to treat them according to human rights norms.

As a member of one of the most radical groups said *"We were part of this revolution because we were against the police violations of human rights, so how can we hand a person to them that we know for sure he could be mistreated or tortured"*. Yet for most of the other groups, the real challenge was to confirm that the suspect they had caught was the real criminal.

The groups of the movement combating sexual violence were aware that their role was different to that of Women's Right NGO. Women's Right NGO coordinated with the state bodies, especially as they were responsible for handling the survivors after they were rescued from the square. Part of the after journey was to head to hospitals, and if the survivor decided, to go to the police and report the incident. Women's Right NGO and its team coordinated with the state and its institutions at all stages. A similar debate applied to the relationship with the National Council for Women (NCW)[§]. NCW's earlier statements denying that there were no incidents of rape and violence against women in the square were not welcomed by many of the groups. *"We could not coordinate with an institution that denied facts we had seen and went through"*, (Member of one of the groups combating violence). The picture was, however, different for Women's Right NGO, as they cooperated with NCW, held meetings with it and other state institutions, and went through the whole battle. For Women's Right NGO, the security of women and their bodies in the public space was the responsibility of the state and had to be brought to the state's attention. As the

[§] The National Council for Women was established in 2000 as an independent institution to advance the status of the Egyptian women through social, economic and political empowerment. It is the main state institution in charge of advancing women's rights through recommendations of polices and draft laws as well as formulation of strategies and programs aiming at enhancing women's rights in Egypt.

CEO of Women's Right Ngo said, "*if it were not for these efforts, we could not have had the first department for combating violence against women in Ministry of Interior during Morsi time, this only happened because of the efforts of all players in voicing out the serious phenomenon*". In 2014 the NCW also started to develop a national strategy to combat violence against women that included several NGOs, and invitations were extended to some of the groups although only a few accepted the invitation.

4.3 Adequate Housing NGO and the New Urban Planning initiatives

This section examines the foundations of the relationship between Adequate Housing NGO and urban planning initiatives and right to the city groups. The data collected is based on interviews with the Executive Director of the organization, the program manager of the housing program, the program officer in the same programs, as well as members of three groups leading initiatives for urban planning and right to the city. The section is divided into two main parts. The first part looks at the NGO's programs and strategies related to housing and urban planning, as well as providing an overview of evolution of the groups concerned with the same topics before January 25th Revolution. The second part looks at the NGO's programs and strategies related to housing and urban planning after January 25th Revolution, and the interaction with other stakeholders, political parties and state institutions.

Before 25th January 25th Revolution

Adequate Housing NGO was established in 2002 as an initiative of young human rights activists with only one program. In 2004, the number of staff reached 3 and the scope of the programs was still limited to some rights programs. By June 2010, the organization's staff convened at their annual retreat and reflected on the human rights community which shared the same features; Cairo based lacking in-depth relationship with the community, and dependent on foreign funding. The team headed by CEO and his two deputies formulated the new mission of the organization to be "*Human rights, national, community based and institutionally healthy organization*". Prior to 2011, Adequate Housing NGO did not have any programs focusing on the right to housing, the right to the city, and urban planning. Other human rights NGOs worked on some incidents of housing crises like the eviction of the dwellers in Qalet el Kabsh in 2007 and Dowieka in 2008. The role of NGOs was mostly to provide some legal support for the evicted dwellers via legal aid and litigation. They mainly gathered the complaints and started a lawsuit that would demand the government provide alternative housing or, in cases of forced evictions, adequate monetary compensation.

Prior to January 25th Revolution, there were also several groups of architects who started to appear and started several initiatives calling for new concepts like "right to the city" and the engagement of the community in urban planning. These initiatives were born from a new awareness of the importance of a bottom-up approach in the field of urban planning that engages the residents of the city, and in the case of Egypt the mega city of Cairo, (Nassar, 2015). These initiatives also developed and coordinated with each other in resistance to the famous Cairo 2050^{**} project, adopted by Gamal Mubarak and the National Democratic Party that attempted to re-plan the whole urban structure of the city of Cairo without engaging with communities.

After January 25th Revolution

From 2011 to 2013, Adequate Housing NGO started working towards a new mission, and expanded rapidly with the total number of staff reaching 8 with offices in 7 governorates, and started to work on several rights programs with a wider scope, with nine team leaders in place. While both the expansion plan and the goal of the wider outreach were decided in 2010, the Revolution of January 25th created an atmosphere that helped Adequate Housing NGO to achieve its plans.

To achieve its mission Adequate Housing NGO used two main mechanisms. The first was to reach out to existing community initiatives inside or outside Cairo. The second mechanism was to change the structure of the organization to include two main units; a litigation unit and a research unit. This new structure transformed Adequate Housing NGO from a human rights organization that only provided legal aid into an organization that uses strategic litigation as a tool to propose new policies in all fields and programs.

The right to housing and land program in Adequate Housing NGO was established within these attempts to achieve the organization's new mission. It was not surprising that the program manager of the housing program was an architect who was an active member in several urban planning initiatives. Another member of the team was recruited because she had also started an initiative about the right to the city, with series of workshops and discussions in different communities on the topic. In the case of Adequate Housing NGO, the starting point for the relationship between the

^{**} *"Cairo 2050 is a visioning document created by the former administration to prioritize urban development projects in the Greater Cairo Metropolitan Area. The authors of this website argue the document, if followed, would create social, economic, political and environmental injustice"* (Cairo From Below, Cairo 2050, <http://cairofrombelow.org/cairo2050/>)

organization and the urban initiative groups was to recruit two of its members to become professional, full time staff in the organization. The housing program in Adequate Housing NGO, with its program manager coming from the world of architecture and urban design, continued to work in cases of forced evictions based on dwellers' complaints, as was the case previously in the human rights field. The movement of urban designers and planners, however, contributed to the development of the traditional litigation strategies of Adequate Housing NGO. They introduced what the program manager called "strategic litigation". Strategic litigation is a mechanism in which the evictions do not only become an individual case; rather, litigation becomes a tool to change policies or to challenge legislation before the Supreme Constitutional Court. For this purpose, the program became based on the following aspects; 1) Building up a guide or manual for handling cases of eviction inside and outside Cairo. This included the whole process from receiving a complaint, documenting the violations, building relations with the evicted dwellers, gathering data and documents, and starting the lawsuit. 2) Legal and policy research. The program and its team started to read and study all the laws and legislation related to areas including housing, urban design, and land tenure. They also kept a full record of the reports, policies and decisions from the Ministry of Housing and other state bodies, and commented on them. 3) The third pillar of the program was to lobby the state bodies concerned with housing and urban design policy and regulation. These includes; 2011 parliament before being dissolved by the Constitutional Court Verdict., the committee of 50, working on the amendment and formulation of the current 2014 constitution, and the Ministry of Housing and Ministry of Urban Renewal and Informal Settlements (MURIS) ^{††} established in 2014.

As an established architect and urban designer with his own initiative for a more engaged urban planning strategy, the program manager of Adequate Housing NGO describes the contribution he made to Adequate Housing NGO strategies as follows; *"Lawyers only think about the law, about winning the case but not about how winning this particular case could impact the whole polices and benefits all the citizens of Egypt"*.

^{††} Ministry of Urban Renewal and Informal Settlements is a ministry of state established in 2014 with the objective of consolidating efforts for the renewal of informal settlements in the outskirts of Greater Cairo.

The main purpose of the housing program is not to be reactive once the incident happens, but to be proactive and work for better urban and housing policies. On the other hand, Adequate Housing NGO added to him a legal perspective towards the whole field of urban planning and urban design. *" Before joining Adequate Housing NGO I have never read one law related to housing or urban planning, this was an important value added that the organization had provided me as an activist in the field urban planning and as an architect with an eye on the community".*

The 25th Revolution also had an impact on groups and initiatives focusing on urban planning and design. They were able to voice their criticism of the Cairo 2050 project and consolidate their efforts for a new approach towards urban planning in the city based on community engagement. Members of these initiatives stressed in the interviews that they depended on human rights NGOs to provide them with access to the community. As a member of one of the urban planning platforms said, *"We wanted to get into communities in the slums areas, we wanted to contribute to the renovation and the urban design of their neighborhoods and engage them but we did not have access, the human rights NGOs had this access as the dwellers approach them for legal aid to face the eviction orders".* In addition to access to the communities, members of groups of urban planners also referred to the wider understanding of the legal issues related to housing, principally the problem of land tenure, after working with human rights NGOs. They realized that many Egyptians do not own the land of the houses they live in, and hence evictions could not easily be resisted.

Relationship with States Institutions

There were several attempts to cooperate and coordinate between Adequate Housing NGO and the different initiatives and groups within the movement. The most important was the Urban Reform Coalition (URC), which include several of these initiatives along with other NGOs, principally those focusing on human rights, in an attempt to coordinate their efforts regarding housing policy and the right to the city. Perhaps the most important output of this coalition was the document titled "the Urban Constitution" or *Destour Al Omaran*. This document consolidated the suggestions and proposals regarding housing and urban planning in order for them to be incorporated into the constitution. The document was sent to the Committee of 50 (C-50) that amended the 2013 constitution.

According to the program manager of Adequate Housing NGO, *"We cannot prove that our proposal impacted the C-50, but we know for sure that the articles related to housing and urbanism in 2014 constitution was better than the previous constitutions"*.

Adequate Housing NGO saw in the ministry of Urban Renewal and Informal Settlements (MURIS) an opportunity for cooperation in order to reach out for policy change and the provision of a new model of urban renewal based on community engagement. The several urban planning and right to the city initiatives also saw the same window of opportunity. As a member of one of the groups for urban planners said, *"the window was Dr. Laila Iskander, who when took over this new ministry, asked for a meeting with all our initiatives and valued our efforts and opinions"*.

In addition to the government as the principal player in the relationship between Adequate Housing NGO and the urban planning movement, newly emerging political parties were another player that complicated the scene. A campaign was launched at the beginning of 2013 called "Alive by Name Only" or "*Ahiala Bel Ism Faqat*", launched by a leftist party that was also targeting informal settlements and shanty are communities. An example of this complicated scene was the neighborhoods of Ramlet Boulaq and Triangle of Maspero that have been in a long conflict with the state regarding eviction from informal housing. Several human rights NGOs (including Adequate Housing NGO) provided legal aid regarding the eviction orders and land tenures. Urban planning initiatives had also intervened with the communities through drawing maps, holding discussions with members of the communities, and consolidating the urban plan for the neighborhood. At a later stage, MURIS became involved as the representative of the government that was willing to solve these neighborhoods' problems. The "Alive by Name Only" campaign also worked in these neighborhoods, as part of a leftist political party, to help these communities organize and establish a community league. They also held several press conferences in solidarity with the dwellers and supported their demands to keep their houses and to stay in their neighborhoods. In such a complicated scene, the different urban planning initiatives were concerned by the involvement of political parties. The first concern was losing the trust they had built with the community. Once parties were involved, questions would be raised about their vested interests in the neighborhood to secure votes in the parliamentary elections. The second concern was the fear of complicating the cooperative relationship with the government and MURIS,

especially in case of the involvement of an opposition party. This was not, however, the opinion of all members of the urban planning platform. One member of these initiatives was, at the same time, a member of the political party that started the “Alive by Name Only” campaign. While NGOs provided legal aid and support to the dwellers, urban planning initiatives provided the technical support, MURIS provided the support of the state, and political parties were important as they organized people in the neighborhoods. Although they recognize the importance of the role of the political parties in informal settlements and communities, the urban initiative groups prefer to work with NGOs hand in hand to have an impact on housing and urban policies in cooperation with MURIS. “.... well, we are creating a model in both Maspero and Ramlet Boulak in cooperating with MURIS, and we are determined to give it a chance until the end, we want this model later to launch wider policy and legislative reform regarding housing and urban planning”

4.4 Motivations and Features of the Relationship between NGOs and Networks of Activists within Social Movements

The previous section showed three different models of interaction between three different NGOs and three movements. There are both similarities and differences in each model. Key themes were identified when analyzing the data, marking the foundations and motivations of the relationships between NGOs and social movements. These are divided into two main categories; A) the foundations and motivations for social movements to cooperate with NGOs, B) the foundations and motivations for NGOs to cooperate with social movements. Under each category, several themes were identified as follows;

A) Motivations for Social Movements to cooperate with NGOs

NGO	Physical Space (resources & legal protection)	Legal Aid	Training & Capacity Building	Research and Information	Access to State Institutions and Advocacy
Free University	Students held meetings, press conferences, materials for students unions campaigns	Legal support to students referred to disciplinary committees, or suspended from scholastic year	On students' charter, rights, bylaws & campaigning for union elections	Published reports on the state of student rights in universities, annual reports on violations of student rights	Facilitated informal meetings between universities' and students' union on the new students' charter
Women's Rights	Intervention groups held meetings, de-briefings and counseling	Legal support to survivors of violence, legal protection & support to members of intervention groups	On intervention with survivors of violence and rape	Documentation & testimonies of survivors of violence, trends of violence against women	Provided survivors with access to public hospitals and police protection, channels with National Council of Women
Adequate Housing	Hosted roundtables and discussions about the right to the city and engaged in urban planning	Legal support to evicted dwellers and strategic litigation for policy change	On handling cases evictions of dwellers and intervening in communities facing evictions	Guidelines on strategic litigation for evictions, commentary and reports on policies announced by Ministry of Housing	Channels of cooperation Ministry of Urban Renewal and Committee of 50 formulating 2014 Constitution

B) Motivations for NGOs to cooperate with Social Movements

Movement	Outreach Outside Cairo	New Models of Intervention with target audiences	Wider Audience, Public Opinion and Credibility	Recruitment of Engaged Staff
Students	Access to universities in nine governorates	Campaign design and training for students' unions	Access to non-politically affiliated students, co-ordination with the 9 th of March movement for independence of universities	Program manager and teams of volunteers in different universities
Anti-Sexual Violence	Access to feminist groups outside Cairo	Intervention techniques for support	Access to survivors of violence\rape, access to media and shaping public opinion	Many of the newly appointed staff post Jan 25 th were from intervention groups or survivors of violence against women
Urban Initiatives	Access to eviction cases outside Cairo and field offices in seven governorates	Strategic litigation & new techniques for engaged urban planning	Increased credibility and trust among communities with eviction cases, introducing urban plans & designs	Program Manager of housing team and officer of the right to the city initiative

Chapter 5 Analysis and Conclusion

In the previous chapter findings of the study and collected data showed the existence of an evolving relationship between NGOs and networks of activists within social movements after 25th Revolution. This relationship developed mainly due to the sudden expansion in the political sphere in light of a major event like January 25th Revolution. During the three years following the revolution and until the adoption of new Constitution in 2014, NGOs opened up new groups, communities and networks, reached out to new cities outside Cairo, and adopted new mechanisms and strategies in their work. On other hand, the groups and initiatives in each movement opened up on organizations with their structures, mandates, and missions and more importantly with their human rights and feminist discourses. They also managed to reach out for state institutions and lobby for the causes that guided their course of action.

The first section of this chapter further analyzes the dynamics of the relationship between NGOs and networks of activists within social movements. The last section is devoted to concluding remarks of the study.

5.1 The Dynamics of the Relationship between NGOs and Networks of Activists within Social Movements

In his article on the contrasts between NGOs and social movements, Demirovic (2000) differentiates between the nature and structure of both NGOs and social movements as follows: NGOs are “organizations” dependent on “funding” with high level of “professionalization”, their internal structures and processes are both “centralized and bureaucratic” and their relationship with the state is of “reformist nature through lobbying and advocacy. Social movements, on the contrary, are more “flexible”, “non-professional” and unorganized structures without “formal membership” or “systematic funding”. Their internal processes and structures are both “decentralized” and “un-bureaucratic”, and their relationship with the state is distant and mostly critical.

The interaction between these two pillars of the civil society with different structures, mandates and membership complicates the dynamics of their relationship. In her study of the relationship between NGOs and social movements, Earle (2004) refers to the stereotypes and assumptions that studies impose on the relationship between

social movements and NGOs. Earle identifies the following key areas in the study of the relationship dynamics between NGOs and networks of activists within social movements: 1) Level of politicization, 2) Level of radicalness, 3) the risk of cooptation by the state, 4) the risk of professionalization and institutionalization. The following section analyzes the dynamics of the relationship between the studies of NGOs and networks of activists within each movement accordingly.

I. Institutionalization: Organizational Structures and Loose Structures

NGOs by definition have organizational structures, hierarchy, rules, regulations and also legal obligations that derive from their registration status. On the contrary, social movements have loose structures, its members are volunteers, and although there may be decision-making mechanism they are not as rigid as those in organizational bureaucracies, including NGOs. Networks and groups of activists within social movements are not legally registered and do not have legal obligations or internal regulations. The dynamics inside each group within the different movement are more informal, and are based on the common cause and interest that has gathered these members together inside the wider movement unlike the formal, systematic machinery within NGOs.

On one hand, movements have benefited from the interaction and sometimes “hosting” of NGOs as they have provided them with legal protection, helped them sustain their initiatives, and have also provided funding and logistics that they had to raise through donations or from their own pockets. It provided them with safe and supportive spaces to implement their initiatives and further develop their movements. But on the other hand the organizational structures of NGOs restricted the flexibility of action and creativity of loose initiatives based on volunteers rather than hired staff. The program officer of the housing program, who also was a member of an urban planning groups, describes her experience of working as full time staff in Adequate Housing NGO *"we used to call the office of executive director, the black hole, you send your reports, findings or initiative to him by email, and it could get stuck there for one year or even more"*.

At the center of the relationship between NGOs and networks of activists within movements there is an imbalance of power that governs the dynamics of the relationship. NGOs have physical space; funding and legal protection while all groups and networks of activists lack all these resources of empowerment. Networks

of activists and groups within movements used different mechanisms to handle this power imbalance. Some of the groups decided to develop internal decision-making mechanisms and a type of non-formal structure that would strengthen groups as independent entities in their relations with other groups and organizations. Other groups-especially in the case of anti-sexual harassment groups- decided to be “incubated”^{‡‡} inside NGOs that is to work under the umbrella of a registered NGO. This NGO would provide them with space, legal personality and funding but would not intervene in their programs. Some other groups decided to register as NGOs, or as consultancy offices in the case of groups of urban planner and designers to become independent entities. There is an embedded risk of losing the flexible nature of movements in registration and becoming organizations. This flexibility and the loose decision making mechanism is what enables social movements to respond quickly to social questions using creative techniques of intervention.

II. Relationship with the State: Conflict or Cooperation

During the period of study, Egypt experienced major political changes. A new freely elected parliament was in place by 2012, and a new constitution was formulated in 2013 that was also revised and amended by another committee in the later in the year, becoming the current 2014 constitution. In the middle of such a dynamic and changing political scene, the role of NGOs in advocating for legal and policy changes increase and becomes more influential. Housing rights and equal rights for women were crucial topics to advocate for in 2013 constitution and the amended version of 2014. Legislations related to academic freedoms and criminalizing violence against women are crucial laws that NGOs played important roles advocating the law to come out in adherence with international standards. NGOs attended several meetings with designated ministries, and lobbied the parliament of 2012 and later the Shura council for all of these laws. Some of the efforts were successful and some were not. In the case of amending the students' charter, NGOs facilitated the dialogue between students, their unions and the universities authorities regarding the new students' charters. The relationship between networks of activists within social movements and

^{‡‡} Most of the groups interviewed have differentiated between the terms “incubation” and “hosting”. By incubation they meant to become a separate program inside an NGO, by this they become indirectly a legal entity and hence are able to receive funding but they also abide by the regulations of the NGOs even though they have high level of autonomy in their program. On the other hand, “hosting” is only to use physical space of the organization to hold meetings or open discussions but the NGO do not have any authority to intervene in the activities of the hosted groups.

the state was more complicated. Inside each movement, groups had different positions about cooperating with the government. There are several factors that defined the willingness of networks of activists within each social movement to cooperate with NGOs in lobbying state institutions. The first is the level of political radicalization. While it cannot be generalized, the tendency was that the most politically radical groups combating sexual violence were against cooperation with the state, while groups of the urban planning movement adopted a less radical position towards working with the state. The movement to combat sexual violence against women evolved and developed around an accusation against the state of abandoning its role in protecting women. This position that most groups within this movement adopted made it difficult for them to consider working with NGOs in their efforts to lobby the state. The different groups of urban planners on the other hand, had a different approach. They had seen their relationship with NGOs as an opportunity to reach out to the government to achieve wider impact for their efforts,. Another factor that shaped the social movements' willingness to join the NGOs in lobbying the state is the state institutions themselves. Some state institutions were more willing to cooperate with civil society (including both NGOs and networks of activists within movements), like the Ministry of Urban Renewal and Informal Settlement that, once established, its minister decided to build on the efforts of civil society and start a pilot model in Maspero and Ramelt Boulaq. This call and invitation had made many of initiatives within the urban planners' movement to perceive this new ministry and its minister as a window of opportunity that they should explore until the end. On the other hand, the unwillingness of state institutions to acknowledge that there were incidents of sexual violence inside Tahrir Square cast shadows over the relationship between the state and networks of activists combating sexual violence. Nonetheless, when some of these groups were invited by the National Council for Women for discussions over the National Strategy Combating Violence against women, a few decided to cooperate.

III. Politicization of NGOs and De-Politicization of Social Movements

The main mandate of human rights NGOs is to defend the human rights of all people regardless of political and ideological stands, or any other ground for discrimination. A successful and credible NGO is one that adheres to international standards of human rights and advocates equal rights for all. Movements are biased by nature, as

there is a certain cause that drives networks of activists within each movement to mobilize and work collectively. In its course of work with the student movement, Free University NGO worked with active students who mostly belonged to political movements and groups outside campuses. Free University NGO kept an equal distance from all political movements and groups inside universities, and provided its services and support to all without any discrimination. Working with students who volunteered in reporting and documenting violations against students in university nevertheless made it difficult to introduce the non-biased human rights reporting style to their work. The challenge further increased with the escalating polarization of the political scene in Egypt that was reflected inside campuses, with students holding strong opinions on political developments in the country in late 2013.

In the case of the networks of activists combating sexual violence, their political affiliation was even more influential in shaping their actions. Some of these groups refused to intervene in protests if they did not agree with its stated political demands. Their objective was to provide security to female friends or those who belonged to the same political camp, as this was the main motivation that had triggered the mobilization of their groups. For NGOs, however, all women who could become victims of sexual violence should be protected, assisted and supported legally, medically and psychologically.

The de-politicization of social movements is a risk that that literature from Palestine, India and Latin America has referred to. (Jad, 2007, Kamat, 2003, Bendana, 2006). An important aspect of the mobilization of social groups is "common cause" or "interest", and this common cause is, in many instances, politicized and loaded with strong political positions. The networks of activists within all the movements studied hold strong position pro the democratic demands of the January 25th Revolution. This political position gave these movements the strong momentum necessary to develop and mobilize members. Once adopting a non-biased human discourse, this momentum maybe lost.

IV. Members of Social Movement: Activists or Professional NGOs Staff

The interaction between networks of activists within social movements and NGOs did not only impact on structures, discourses and strategies. The boundaries between both

networks of activists within movements and NGOs were further blurred with the recruitment of activists as NGO staff.

In many cases groups within each movement were aware of their different roles and preferred to keep their distance from NGOs, and NGOs were also aware of the same differences and kept the same distance. In many other cases, active members of social movements joined NGOs and became full time staff. The motivations for active members of movements to join NGO varied. The sustainability and funding provided for them, to become a full time staff and get paid and continue do the same work they used to do before on voluntary basis. For some of the newly hired staff, on the other hand, this was a whole career shift. For NGOs, hiring engaged activists who are true believers in the cause-engaged urban planning, feminism or academic freedom- was a great value added. It is a trade-off between professional staff or activist staff. An activist staff added to the NGO and its work through his/her passion, creativity and dedication. The housing program officer in Adequate Housing NGO complained from the black hole that her work disappears once sent to the CEO's office, whilst the CEO also complained that the longer time is needed to review her reports and studies to ensure that they meet the standards of the organization. The trade-off was more difficult for Women's Right NGO. Many of the newly hired staff were survivors of sexual or violent harassment during their work with the intervention groups. The CEO of Women's Right NGO referred to the psychological burden of leading a team of staff/survivors as the atmosphere in the organization was sometimes depressing due to the continuous support groups and rec-cap discussions. For the CEO of Women's Right NGO, however, this is the cause a feminist organization should adopt and support.

5.2 Conclusion

The January 25th Revolution created a growing interest in political engagement and activism. This wave was stronger amongst young people who felt disengaged and marginalized before the revolution. Within this atmosphere, the relationship between human rights NGOs and network of activists within social movements evolved. It evolved as both NGOs and movements were flourishing, expanding, and mobilizing members and volunteers.

NGOs were criticized for being Cairo-centered, accountable to donors rather than communities, and unable to engage with growing social movements. (Abdel Rahman, 2007). The revolution gave NGOs a window of opportunity to get out of Cairo, connect with grassroots groups, and become accountable to communities through engaging with groups and networks within social movements.

Networks of activists within Social movements, on the other hand, needed the institutionalized structures of NGOs for legal protection and also needed access to state institutions to lobby further for their causes and impact development of policies.

While the relationship between both groups is a relationship of cooperation, the dynamics of the relationship defines its further development and impact on the development of civil society as a whole in Egypt. The imbalance of power between NGOs and networks of activists within social movements may end up with social movements being dominated by NGOs as the literature in Latin America and India suggests. NGOs, as the powerful side of the relationship given their resources, may dominate movements and turn the groups and networking within them into institutionalized structures, either through hiring, incubating or encouraging groups and networks to register as organizations (for profit or non-profit). A vibrant civil society nonetheless, includes both movements with its groups' loose structures, critical relationships with the state, flexibility of action, and NGOs as reformist players able to lobby and advocate with the state.

Regarding the Egyptian case, the relationship between both is still premature. The studied NGOs are all newly established, having been founded within the past 10 years, and witnessed a wide expansion after January 25th Revolution with rapid changes in their programs, strategies and networks. The studied movements on the other hand, started to evolve after January 25th Revolution as groups and initiatives sought to expand and develop into wider movements with a broader social impact.

While the expansion of NGOs activities and programs was related to additional funding from several philanthropic foundations, this expansion did not impact NGOs decision to outreach for groups, initiatives and networks of activists within social movement. According to interviews with the three NGOs, the expansion of space and staffing was related to expansion of funding, but donors were flexible and did not impose an agenda regarding the outreach of NGOs towards social movements. One example that Women's Rights NGO stated is that once they decided to support and coordinate with the intervention groups in the Tahrir Square, donors accepted that the whole funding becomes designated to the protection of women facing sexual violence in protests. The same applies to the other two NGOs. While donors were not interviewed, but the gathered data had shown that they played a role in the expansion of NGOs activities yet did not impact their agendas or their relationship with groups and networks within movements.

Another concluding remark regarding the relationship between NGOs and networks of activists within social movements is that the boundaries between the two worlds are not completely shaped. Many activists in networks and groups within social movements are professional staff in NGOs, and in many cases also active members of political parties. Political parties are another stakeholder that interacted with NGOs and their relationship with social movements. The newly emerging political parties post January 25th Revolution in particular were seeking mobilization of membership from within both social movements and NGOs. Many members in parties were NGOs' professionals and/or were activists in a social movement. Also in some cases campaigns initiated by political parties intersected with communities that NGOs worked along with networks of activists. This mixed membership status as well as intersection of interests added further to the unclear boundaries between the two worlds.

Finally the dynamics of the relationship should be also seen within the current political context in Egypt. If this relationship is to further evolve in a context of balanced power relations there is a need for a new, less restrictive law for association. Human rights NGOs are facing from end of 2014 and onwards challenges concerning their registration status, as they have mostly refused to register under law no.84/2000, which according to them, is a restrictive law, and are instead registered as law or

consultancy firms. The crisis of the law and the legal status of NGOs did not only impact on NGOs and their ability to outreach groups within social movements. It also posed a challenge for groups and networks of activists within movements to develop and evolve due to similar legal challenge. This restrictive environment has interrupted the evolution of this pre-mature relationship with the shrinking of both NGOs programs and the activities of networks and groups within social movements.

There are limitations to the findings of this study. Firstly, the fieldwork was conducted in late 2014 when the whole political scene in Egypt had changed.

NGOs were in the middle of their crisis with the Ministry of Social Solidarity during the conduct of the fieldwork. NGOs and their staff were worried and concerned with the future of their institutions and took further steps to downsize after three years of expansion, which are the focus of the study. Also, protests in Tahrir ended and consequently intervention groups against sexual violence stopped their activities as well. Universities also witnessed strong waves of violence and security had to enter campuses again. To overcome this challenge I also relied on my observations during the three years being part of the human rights NGOs community in Egypt and a member of political party to gather the information and get access to the interviewees and gain their trust in such a difficult environment.

Secondly, it is difficult to generalize the findings, as this is a qualitative study. There are many other NGOs that have interacted and reached out to social movements and many other groups, but the findings contribute to the study of civil society in Egypt and explore the interaction between its actors. Further studies may tackle other models and may also use other methodologies to enrich the field.

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