

# Newsletter

ISRAELI CENTER FOR THIRD SECTOR RESEARCH

BEN - GURION UNIVERSITY OF THE NEGEV



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## Local and global changes in the role of Philanthropic Foundations The 9th ICTR Annual Spring Conference 22-23 March, 2006

ICTR's annual conference will focus this year on philanthropic foundations and their changing roles. At the conference Prof. Gidron and his associates will present their groundbreaking research on philanthropies in Israel. The research is a milestone on philanthropy research in Israel, presenting, for the first time, empirical data on the sector of philanthropic foundations and funding organizations in Israel, both those foundations registered in Israel as well as foreign foundations that are not registered here.

The study's findings will be debated in its local context concerning implications of future funding of the Israeli third sector, and globally on the role the foundations will seek in the future and their influence on civil society.

Our guest speakers this year are Dr. Diana Leat, an independent consultant and visiting Professor at the Centre for Charity Effectiveness, Cass Business School, London. Prof. Helmut K. Anheier, Director UCLA Center for Civil Society School of Public Affairs. Prof. Masayuki Deguchi from the Center for Research Development, National Museum of Ethnology (Minpaku), the Graduate University for Advanced Studies, Osaka, Japan and President of ISTR. Our guest speakers will lecture about the changing roles of philanthropic foundations in the US, Japan and Europe. Among our guest speakers are Ms. Shira Herzog from the Kahanoff Foundation, Canada; Ms. Rachel Liel from Shatil, New Israel Fund; Mr. Zeev Bielski from the Jewish Agency, Israel; Ms. Naomi Stuchiner, Beit Issie Shapiro; Dr. Shlomit

Barkan-Shulov, The National School for Nonprofit Boards of Directors.

The conference will provide a framework for additional activities; it will host the first meeting of our new journal, The Israeli Third Sector and Civil Society Journal, whose first copy will be published in summer 2006, and will provide means for publishing Israeli third sector and civil society research. Prof. Anheier will lead a workshop for directors of foundation on Creative Philanthropy.

Continued on page H



Prof. Helmut K. Anheier



Dr. Diana Leat



Prof. Masayuki Deguchi

### Contents:

The 9th ICTR Annual Spring Conference	A
Director's Column	B
The Sector of Philanthropic Foundations and Funding Organizations in Israel	C
Women and Third Sector Organizations	D
Researchers Forum	E
A Pioneer of Volunteers- The Story of Jacob Maimon	F
Learning from the field – the Observations to the Third Sector project	G
Developing organizational transparency	H

The 9th ICTR Annual Spring Conference

22-23 March, 2006

Save the new Date!

# Director's Column

Our newsletter, will concentrate on foundations, and for good reason. The research on Israeli foundations ("The Sector of Philanthropic Foundations and Funding Organizations in Israel: Its Characteristics, Functions, Relationship with Government and Patterns of Management") was recently published, and to a large degree this year's symposium will be devoted to this subject, and will feature some of the most respected researchers in this field who will offer a broad international perspective, contributing to our understanding of the activities of local Israeli foundations.

Why foundations, and why now? Foundations are one of the categories of third sector organizations. Their uniqueness in comparison with other organizations in this sector is that they deal with financing and not with providing services or with advocacy, and therefore, the types of problems that they contend with are fundamentally different from those of other third sector organizations. Some of the foundations - those that draw their income from] fixed assets - do not require the collection of funds, and are thus to be distinguished from the "regular" third sector organizations, which as we know devote a lot of effort to this undertaking. All of this diverts our attention to an interesting group

of third sector organizations, to which we have thus far not devoted enough attention.

Yet foundations are not merely a subdivision of the third sector, they are also an important factor in financing the third sector organizations. In this capacity they are able to influence how certain aspects of life (environment, relations between different societal groups) are conducted, and of course the whole direction of the third sector. In this era of decreasing direct involvement of the government in society, the role of these foundations becomes invaluable. An appreciation of the dynamics of the activities of foundations in general and in Israel in particular is a necessary condition for embarking on the process of improving the existing frameworks and for the creation of new frameworks in which to operate.

I am confident that the research and the conference will provide the public with an awareness of this important topic, and at a later stage will lead to the development of a process in which the activities of the local Israeli foundations and the policies adopted in this regard will be evaluated, and that it will be commensurate to the present needs of Israeli society.

After last year's annual conference we were approached by representatives from a number of mostly small sized, civil society organizations, who had wanted to take part in the conference, but were constrained

because of the costs involved. It is needless to say the importance of these civil society organizations to our symposia. This year we allocated a special budget for dealing with this problem which means that 10 scholarships have been set aside for representatives of civil society organizations, whose participation at the conference will be subsidized so that they will be charged the same fee as students. We aim to broaden this horizon so that we will be able to host a greater number of civil society leaders at our symposia - an accomplishment that will, without doubt, benefit all of us.

In the previous edition of this newsletter we bade farewell to the outgoing executive director of the Voluntary and Non Profit Sector, Sara Silberstein-Hipsch. This time we have the opportunity of welcoming the incoming Director, Dr. Yaron Sokolov and wishing him wholehearted success in his new position.

I wish to end this column by extending the Center's hearty welcome to Keren Kadosh, the new administrative coordinator, who will be taking over from Hadas Blinder, who was employed in this capacity for the past year. Hadas will soon be leaving us on account of her upcoming maternity leave, which will be followed by an overseas trip. We wish both of them much success in the future.

**Benjamin Gidron**

## From theory to practice – Graduate students lead social programs

### The Maccabim Association for Education and Soccer in the Community, with the aid of foundations, donors and the police built a soccer field in a drug and crime district in Lod



Effi Toledano, Director of Maccabim, and a student majoring in the Management of Non Profit Organizations headed a new project to help children in a poor, crime and drug filled neighborhood. The problem, initially identified by the Lod police: lack of recreational activities for children after school hours, causing many to hang around drug addicts, roaming the streets. The situation brought to his knowledge, Effi recruited partners, including some untraditional ones such as the Israeli Police force, and lead the project of building a soccer field on what was once marshland, in a crime infested multigenerational neighborhood. The outcome is a sea of green in a rundown depleted neighborhood, packed with smiling enthusiastic children.

# The Sector of Philanthropic Foundations and Funding Organizations in Israel:

## Characteristics, Functions, Relationship with Government and Patterns of Management

Prof. Benjamin Gidron, Yael Elon, Avital Schlanger, Dr. Raviv Schwartz  
The Israeli Center for Third Sector Research, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

In the era of globalization, market economy and the decrease in public spending for social issues, philanthropic foundations are playing increasingly significant roles in society, throughout the world and in Israel too. The study presents, for the first time, empirical data on the sector of philanthropic foundations and funding organizations in Israel. The research provides two perspectives:

**The macro picture** - An analysis of foundations and funding organizations registered in Israel based on data from the Israeli Third Sector Database. These are third sector organizations whose major role is to provide funding in the form of grants to individuals or organizations.

**The micro picture** is provided through an analysis of in-depth interviews with managers or presidents of 28 foundations and funding organizations active in Israel, most of which are registered here and others not. In order to complete the picture, in-depth interviews were also conducted with representatives of 15 third-sector organizations that receive grants from foundations and 5 current or former directors-general of government ministries that work with foundations.

In addition to the quantitative data, a glance at the sector of foundations and funding organizations active in Israel reveals two prominent characteristics:

Foreign foundations are very active in Israel. It is estimated that the total annual amount of income that enters Israel via foreign foundations or foreign donors to Israeli foundations reaches US\$ 1.5 billion. This

figure can be attributed to the traditional support of Jews from the Diaspora; however, in recent years more and more non-Jewish foreign foundations have been active in Israel as well. In the era of globalization, foundations in Western countries invest in international projects outside their own borders; thus the large amount of philanthropic funds that Israel imports is very significant.



An analysis of the ethos of foundations in Israel compared with that in the US shows a completely different orientation. In the US, the development of a philanthropic foundation is related to the activity of wealthy individuals who devote their money to goals they determine and who build a framework that will ensure such activity for many years. In Israel, however, the ethos of the institution of foundation is related to the “national institutions” (JNF, Keren Hayesod), which were established during the pre-state era. The latter are based on funds from a large number of individuals from abroad, and those who determine the goals for which the funds will be used are

the recipients of the grants, not the contributors.

### Data

There are 6,377 foundations and funding organizations registered in Israel. This group comprises 17.9 % of the total number of registered third-sector organizations. Sixty percent of the registered foundations are active, as compared to 59% of active organizations in the third sector.

### Types of Foundations and Funding Organizations

Foundations that support individuals make up the largest group (3,239 foundations). This group includes those providing financial assistance, such as free-loan societies or foundations that provide scholarships. The second group is foundations that support a specific organization (1,895 foundations), such as Friends’ Organizations that financially support cultural, educational and medical organizations. The third group consists of foundations that support multiple organizations, which often focus on a specific issue (such as religious pluralism, Jewish-Arab relations, etc.). It is the smallest (557 foundations) of the three groups, but carries special weight because it provides support for many third-sector organizations and because it is perceived to impact Israel’s social landscape. The remaining foundations (686) were classified as “other.” The ratio of active foundations to the total number of registered foundations is highest among foundations that support a specific organization (74%).

*The research is available in English.*



## Women and Third Sector Organizations

Yael Elon\*

Women's organizations began to play a vital role in the public arena already from the beginning of the twentieth century. The Hadassah Organization was established in New York in 1912 with the aim of "promoting Jewish institutions and enterprises in Palestine, and strengthening Jewish ideals"<sup>1</sup>. Eight years later the WIZO Organization was founded in London with the stated purpose of "training the Jewish adolescent and adult woman for a productive life in Israel, and providing care and education for the infant and child"<sup>1</sup>. In the 1920s the Women's Labor Council was set up, and today it forms part of Na'amat.

Concurrently in Poland an ultra-Orthodox woman by the name of Sarah Schneierer founded the Beit Yaacov educational network, to the chagrin of the Jewish ultra-Orthodox leadership, which was opposed to women being taught Judaic studies. Her success was instrumental in convincing the religious leadership to approve of this phenomenon, and in 1924 the network was incorporated into the Agudath Israel movement.<sup>1</sup> The schools which operate under this network have spread far and wide across the state.

From 1993 onwards there has been an upsurge in the number of new organizations that deal with women, or which were founded for them, and on average 72 organizations registered every year, some of which deal directly with women's issues, while the rest provide a framework for women to have their voices heard, and to take part in general socio-political issues.

Hereinafter is a brief description of the

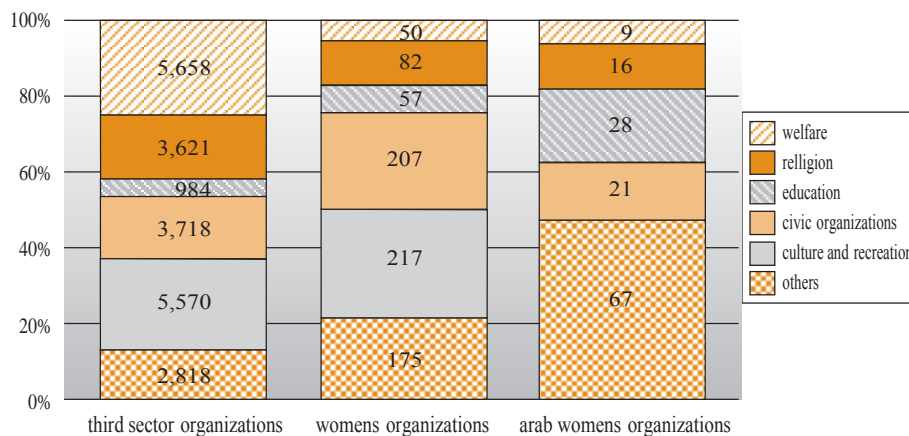
<sup>1</sup> Hebrew Encyclopedia

\* Yael Elon, ICTR Database Manager.  
The ICTR Database provides researchers of the Israeli third sector with data on Non-Profit Organizations in Israel. (yaelalon@bgu.ac.il)

principal areas of activity occupied by women's organizations. For our purposes women's organizations are defined as organizations that have been set up by women, and/or organizations whose target audience is women, whether this is exclusively so, or whether a specific and differentiated group in the community. By the end of 2004, 1,246 women's organizations had been registered, out of which 788 are still active i.e. they have been defined by the Registrar as active organizations. 58% of the women's organizations are Jewish Religious organizations, and 11% are Arab organizations. This is relatively high in comparison to the respective share in all

organizations are active in the area of welfare, whereas general welfare organizations only account for 13% of the overall third sector organizations. The activities of most of these organizations are aimed specifically at women and include, among others: assistance to women giving birth, help to working women, to single-parent mothers and to agunot [wives of husbands refusing to grant a divorce], female empowerment, shelters for physically abused women, and victims of sexual harassment, and organizations that have a feminist agenda. Very few of these organizations are aimed at the general public like Ya'el- (A Hebrew acronym for) A Helping Hand to the Sick.

*The distribution of the principal operational environments of active women's organizations in comparison to all other active third sector organizations, and the number of organizations*



organizations (41% and 5% respectively). We may attribute this high proportion to the status of women in traditional societies which mandates the establishment of separate operational frameworks, and which also reflects a desire to effect change in the status of women in these societies.

### Welfare

Welfare is the traditional operational environment of women. 22% of women's

### Civic organizations and organizations for Social Change

The share of women's organizations in this field (7%) is almost double the general sector's share in this field (4%). Most organizations are involved with promoting women's issues: the advancement of the status of women, equal rights and leadership training. Approximately half of these

# Researchers Forum

Eilat Navon

Twenty researchers took part in the end of semester meeting that took place at the beginning of February under the auspices of ICTR's effort to promote research of the Third Sector in Israel. Two researchers presented their findings, Dr. Moshe Sharir and Ms. Lina Wyman. The forum's guest speaker was Prof. Ram Canaan from the University of Pennsylvania who delivered a lecture "Congregations and Faith-Based Organizations as Community Hubs and as Service Providers". Prof. Canaan provided an overview of the importance of religion among the American population, the growth and diversity of prayer houses, the attitude of the authorities towards these religious organizations and the functions of these organizations as central service providers for those reliant on welfare.

The research that was conducted in Philadelphia supplies information on the diversity of religious organizations according to the geographic area and the diversity of its local population, and the research also focused on the services that these organizations provided to the needy.

Dr. Moshe Sharir from the Emigration, Absorption and Social Integration Institute of the Rupin Academic Center, and a head of the "Management of Non Profit Organizations" track at the Ashkelon Academic College presented his research paper "They do not count them: Third Sector Organizations, Local Authority and the activity zone between them". The research which was conducted together with Dr. Sybil Heilborn and Dr. Alon Lazar, was financially supported by the National Insurance Institute (Bituah Le'umi) focused on the ties between 3 municipal authorities and 3 regional councils on the one hand and third sector organizations that were registered in each one of these locales, on the other hand.

Ms. Lina Wyman from the Israel Center for the Research of the Third Sector, University of Ben Gurion presented her research paper "Social Entrepreneur Émigrés from the Former Soviet Union in Israel: the significance attributed to entrepreneurial activity". Her research deals with the speedy integration of FSU

immigrants in Israel in the non-profit organizations, and the entrepreneurial steps adopted in founding these organizations. This integration is an interesting phenomenon, since these immigrants came from a culture where collective behavior of this nature was unheard of. The aim of this research was to gather information on the activities of Third Sector Organizations amongst immigrants from the FSU that are active in supplementary education and it focuses on those people who are behind the establishment of this organization- the entrepreneurs. This research evaluates the coping mechanisms relied upon by the émigré entrepreneur from the FSU in relating to organizational aspects of a social enterprise, the environmental conditions with which they are empowered in order to initiate a project and the various stages in the experience of immigrant social entrepreneurs. The research used a qualitative method. Ten half structured interviews were held, with entrepreneurs of immigrant organizations in the area of supplementary education.



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organizations are Arab organizations whose aims reflect a combination of welfare and social change activity. A majority of these organizations cater to the local population, for example: Bat Hamidbar (Daughter of the Desert) a non-profit organization for the advancement of the young Bedouin woman in Hura. Another phenomenon of this field is the coordination of women's activities for promoting peace and for other political aims. The more well known organizations in this category include: "The Four Mothers" and "Women in Green"

## Religion

Two hundred and seventeen organizations are active in the area of religion. Almost all are synagogues or local religious cultural

organizations that run study programs for men. Separate religious lectures for women also take place. These are traditional frameworks, but the fact that these organizations have found it necessary to define their goal as providing religious lectures specifically for women is evidence of burgeoning change in this area: the door has been opened to an area which used to be the exclusive domain of men- learning Torah. There are a few organizations that cater exclusively to women and that were founded in order to produce change in women's rights in the Orthodox world like: Livnah a women's prayer group whose aim is "...to establish prayer groups that are only for women, and which include (in their prayer services) reading from the Torah, and receiving aliyot (being called up to recite a blessing over the Torah).

## Education

Out of 207 educational organizations, about 90% are religious educational institutions: kindergartens, schools, teachers' seminaries, one academic college, and religious seminaries. The rest of the organizations comprise mainly of Arab educational organizations. An exception to these standard organizations is the Israeli Union for Feminist Studies and for Gender Research. We should nonetheless bear in mind that research departments for Gender Studies have spread across our universities.

## Culture and Recreation

Approximately half of these organizations are women's sport organizations, and the rest are country clubs and theatrical arts groups etc.



# Researching the Source

## A Pioneer of Volunteers- The Story of Yaakov Maimon

Paula Kabalo\*

Among the various non-profit organizations that deal with immigrant absorption in all its different facets, one of them stands out for its unique name- “The Yaakov Maimon Volunteers”. Not many know about the man for whom this association was named, and why he was granted the honor of having a non profit organization named for (after) him. This article seeks to sketch out this man’s personality and through this exercise to present a model for voluntary organizations that began as the product of one man’s initiative, and, against all of the statistical odds- has fifty years later not only survived but has continues to thrive.

Yaakov Maimon was born in the Russian town of Liboi (later, part of Latvia) in 1902 and he immigrated to Palestine in 1921. Amongst the veterans of the Yishuv (Israel’s pre- State Jewish community) He was known as the expert of Hebrew stenography after he developed a [special] Hebrew stenography system, and played a role in recording the speeches of [famous] Zionist personalities. When the State of Israel was declared and the seat of the government was transferred to Jerusalem, he was asked from time to time to record government sessions, and it was he who recorded the words of all those present at the meetings of David Ben Gurion's Bible group.

Maimon became involved in volunteering at the beginning of the 1950s and from then onwards his activity expanded, diversified and became formally established over the course of his life up until his death in 1977.

After he died, a non- profit organization was set up.

The immigrants that poured into Israel over the course of the 1950s were sent to immigrant camps and later to the outskirts of the towns, where living conditions were very harsh. Maimon became aware of what was happening at the Jerusalem Corridor Yemenite transit camp of Luzim from his wife Esther who was active in the "Working Mothers Organization" [Irgun Imahot Ovdot] and had been sent there on its behalf to assist the immigrants. Under her influence, Maimon decided to go to Luzim and he was accompanied by students of the

Alice Seligsberg Trade School for Girls. That was in the winter of 1951. Within a short period of time Maimon formalized this arrangement so that these (female) students would regularly arrive once a week to this transit camp to teach the new immigrants the Hebrew language

“It appears to me that the time has come to jot down a few notes on the progress of my work” wrote Maimon to David Ben Gurion whom he knew very well from his work as a stenographer in the [pre- state] National Institutions. This letter was merely the first of many, found among Ben-Gurion's correspondence section in his archives that consists reports on his activities. In March, 1954, his group already boasted 25- 30 volunteers per day, most of them hailing from the youth movements, but also including some men and women from “other circles”. Maimon worked very hard to persuade the youth movements to place volunteer activity high on their agenda: “Two months ago I was successful in encouraging the Scouts (Hatsofim) Movement to adopt a resolution curtailing some of their activities in their city headquarters and sending some of their members on various missions, first of all clearing out the pits in the transit camps, but also caring for the neglected youth who roam the town, etc....one month ago several members of the Bnei Akiva [religious youth movement] joined us. A number of adults...have begun to come here once a week to teach...”

Maimon started his work “from nothing”, the initiative of one man, without any institutional framework to support him. Yet he understood the importance of keeping in touch with the state authorities: “I informed the Ministry of Education and Culture that

### An historical look into the origin of the Israeli third sector

As the research of the third sector deepens and expands, so does the need to illuminate its historic roots, as an understanding that things do not happen by chance or accident but have evolved and consolidated over hundreds and thousands of years of human history. This is also the basis of the decision to add an historic feature to the newsletter providing an additional view point of Israeli third sector research.

Third sector researchers and Israeli historians, occasionally stumble upon certificates and stories which describe organizations and civil entrepreneurs which belong in the framework to what we today call the third sector. Many of the stories will one day become part of extensive research, few will be exposed, but those that will, tell the story of the Israeli third sector- its roots and origins, dilemmas, and sources of inspiration. We welcome our readers' participation in the column by sending certificates, stories and even personal memories which we shall do our best to include in this column.

Please communicate directly with  
Dr. Paula Kabalo at:  
[pkabalo@bgu.ac.il](mailto:pkabalo@bgu.ac.il)

\* Dr. Paula Kabalo, the Ben Gurion Institute for the study of Israel and Zionism, Ben Gurion University

\*\* The author wishes to thank Joel Durkam from the Yaakov Maimon Volunteers Non-Profit association for sending books and providing additional information.

# Learning from the field – the Observations to the Third Sector project

Hagai Katz\*

ICTR will begin a new project aimed at improving the understanding of policy makers, the general public and third sector organizations themselves, as to the challenges the organizations face, the pressures they withstand, the resources available to them and the innovative ways they develop to face everyday challenges. The project isn't merely another survey – it will use an innovative technique used around the world to gather information from the bottom- a listening posts approach.

According to this approach, ICTR will

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\* Dr. Hagai Katz, Department of Business Administration, Nonprofit Management Program

recruit 100-150 third sector organizations that are at the forefront of civil and social activism and service rendering in Israel. These organizations will serve as observation posts for the sector, and will be periodically be requested to express their opinions on a specific current issue concerning the sector or policy towards it, sharing their experiences with ICTR and the other observation posts. Organizations serving as observation posts will not only report, they will also assist ICTR identify the critical issues of the hour and participate in determining the topics of future observations.

The project will provide accurate and current information on the experiences,

capacity and difficulties of third sector organizations that are combating head-on with the greatest social problems facing Israeli society today, and make this information known to the sector's activists and leadership, to foundations, public officials and elected politicians, and to the general public. Thus improving public awareness of the roles the sector plays in society, separating myth and reality and consequently improving the sector's tarnished public image.

The information will improve organizations' understanding of their working

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this summer I am prepared to set up a few more branches across the country if they provide me with the means of transportation for an allotted period of time. According to information that I have received the general feeling is that such [an initiative] would be welcomed.

In his dealings with the government authorities Maimon presented his innovative way of thinking in terms of which “the form many of the services should take should be one of volunteer activity, while the expenses involved in coordinating such activity, provided they are minimal, should be covered by the state institutions” Maimon thought that voluntary activity that is funded by the state would be more efficient and cheaper, and after exerting some pressure he succeeded in persuading the Absorption Department of the Jewish Agency to cover the volunteers' travel costs (which at times he would have had to cover from his own pocket) (letter to B.G 31.3.1954)

“We encountered distrust from all sides”, Maimon said after summarizing ten years of voluntary activity. “There was distrust from the immigrants who suspected that we only came to see them for political reasons, or because someone paid us a fixed amount of cash. Most of all they could not believe that we would come to visit them on a regular basis, especially since we had already paid for the sins of others who would only come once in an eon for some celebration or other” and then disappear for the rest of the year. There was distrust on the part of the volunteers, who feared that they would not be successful amongst illiterates, and also grave distrust from the state institutions and inspectors who did not believe that the youth and women who didn't hold a certificate, would be able to teach” (3.11.1960 excerpted from Hello to you my dear Lina)

In contradistinction to other initiatives that frequently don't last for long, Maimon's initiative just carried on growing. It spread out across the whole country attracting

volunteers from Israel, and from the Diaspora and catered to all different immigration waves that this country has witnessed since its founding. In 1976, a year before his death Maimon was awarded the Israel Prize for his contribution to immigrant absorption. In 1977 he passed away but his enterprise continued to operate and after a short time a non-profit organization was established which until this day offers assistance to immigrants and, through its network of volunteers, reaches the various immigrant centers spread across the length and breadth of the country.

## For Further Reading

Maimon- Marinov, Rachel, and Maimon, Dina (editors) Shalom Lakh Lina Yekara-Ya'akov Maimon- Ha'Ish U'Pe'alo (Hello to you my dear Lena- Yaakov Maimon- the Man and his Lifework), Jerusalem, 2000. Yardeny Katz, Ruth. Mi Hameshugah Hazeh (Who is this Madman?), Tel Aviv, 1990, Correspondence section, Ben-Gurion Archives.



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environments as it is seen through the eyes of their peers, and thus their own capacity.

The living experience gathered from the organizations can also assist in developing best practices and in improving training and professional education in the sector.

The project will be long-term and will allow us to expose trends and processes in the sector and in the sector's environment and understand their impact on sector organizations, and to determine if the ways organizations choose to respond to challenges are truly effective. Beyond the benefits inherent in participating in such a project to the organizations, it is ICTR's intention to reward our observation points in different ways, through subsidized conference participation, free publications, personalized data products based on observations data, and through networking.

Organizations interested in more information or in participating as observation posts can contact Hagai Katz or Hila Yogev through the ICTR office.



Continued from page A

## The local and global changes

At ICTR we believe that our ongoing dialog with the Third sector organizations is important, this year we are granting participation stipends to small organizations that are financially unable to attend the conference. We are very happy to have them participate and look forward to hear their input and perspectives on the discussions.

Back to the Dead Sea. We have decided to return the conference's original venue of the Dead Sea, after spending last year in Tel-Aviv. The mutual agreement at ICTR was that the Dead Sea offers us unique inspiration, not available elsewhere.



# Developing organizational transparency

Nissan Limor\*

Accountability and Transparency are often used phrases, when requesting information from NPO's. In Israel we do not, at this time have a means for universal implementation, for we are without the medium that will provide the organizations with the equal opportunity to present their work and annual reports, which make up the 'Transparency Issue'. Guidestar, the American (and today, International) internet based website provides an answer to the question – how can we provide our stakeholders (the public and funders) access to information about our work? How can we become transparent?

A decade ago in the United States a process begun in which NPO annual tax reports were uploaded to the internet and made available for public scrutiny. This simple yet effective method of publication became the number one source for information about NPO's. the information stored on the Guidestar site ([www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org)) became a one stop resource for funders, researchers, federal and state authorities and the organizations themselves. The site allows free accessibility to information about organizations that report to tax authorities, and include data, description of activities financial profile, number of employees, compensation and additional data. The site offers paid primary analysis services.

The success of the American site, persuaded the British government to build a similar site. A 2.5 million pounds budget was allocated to the British organization which was established to execute the project. It's mission (at its website declares) "the first place to look for comprehensive information about every charity - from the largest national charity to the thousands of small charities that are active in every community" the British Guidestar is headed by leading statesman such as Arthur Buzz Schmidt who founded GuideStar in the US with the Institute for Philanthropy and GuideStar UK in 2002.

In a report written in Summer 2004 "Israel's Third Sector"\*\*\* after studying the issue of the presentation in the US and Europe, a recommendation for a similar site was proposed for Israel. Following the report's recommendations Mr. Schmidt, founder of Guidestar was invited to Israel. In discussions with government officials, non profit organization, academy and foundations the possibilities for building a guidestar for Israel were examined, in respect to the Israeli law and third sector needs.

Other nations among them Germany, Japan, Hungary, South Africa, India and the Caribbean Islands are also in the midst of planning similar sites. Guidestar's global activities are channeled through an entity build for this purpose – Civil Society Systems (CSS) which is independent from the American Guidestar.

The world-wide interest brought an additional initiative – the "Guidestar Alliance", whose first meeting was held in December 2005 in London with participants from 13 countries who met in London. Israel was represented by Prof. Benny Gidron, Director of ICTR, who was invited as a CSS consultant; Adv. Yaron Keidar, Registrar of nonprofit organizations, Dr. Shimshon Zelniker, Director of the Van Leer Institute, Yad Hanadiv representatives from London and myself who has come up with the idea in Israel.

At the conference, Adv. Keidar, lectured on government-third sector relations (Toward a Vibrant Market Place for Civil Society: The Role of Information and Reporting").

In Israel the law does not allow use of tax reports. Therefore, the possibility of using the compulsory annual reports given to the Registrar and is open to public scrutiny.

\*Consultant, ICTR

\*\* "Israel's Third Sector" Nissan Limor, Ms. Suzanne Aisenberg, adjunct member, Prof. Benjamin Gidron, academic advisor, August 2004