

# Newsletter

## ISRAELI CENTER FOR THIRD SECTOR RESEARCH 10

BEN - GURION UNIVERSITY OF THE NEGEV



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## Are we moving towards a three-sector society?

More than two hundred researchers, guests, government officials and nonprofit leaders participated in our first International Conference honoring the decennial of ICTR. The diversity of the participants and the great turnout this year reflected the growing importance of the third sector and civil society organizations in Israel.

The past decade shows vast changes in the Israeli Third Sector which evolved into a professional active force with a growing impact on society and national decision making. ICTR's conferences have been mirroring these changes throughout the years.

In honor of ICTR's decennial this year's conference discussions revolved around the role of civil society in an international perspective, as opposed to former conferences in which the discussion was on the Israeli national perspective. Joining our Israeli researchers therefore this year, to discuss the international perspectives, were some of the most prominent researchers of the third sector in the world, including Prof. Lester Salamon.

Prof. Gidron: "The decennial conference is an opportunity for researchers, professional leaders and government officials in Israel to learn from prominent international researchers on the global perspectives that face the third sector and its agenda for the upcoming years. This is especially important in Israel today as we are facing a new era in government-third sector relations, led by the Prime Ministers office".

The conference also holds special relevancy due to the important role the third sector organizations in Israel played during the 'Second Lebanon War' which took place in

the summer of 2006, bringing to light the full force and magnitude of work done by third sector organizations, activities which go relatively unnoticed by the public and media in regular times.

Prof. Gidron: "The Israeli Third Sector demonstrated responsibility, reliability and dependability and secured its place as the prominent force in public discourse and proved its abilities to effectively execute services".

### Are we moving towards a three-sector society?

"The future of civil society lays in the cooperation between the three sectors, as each sector brings into the partnership its unique characteristics" these words by Prof. Salamon, the Conference's guest speaker concluded his lecture on the major developments in the past two decades. In these two decades global changes have turned the third sector from a secondary services deliverer to a major stakeholder in the formulation of public policies and provider of primary social service. In his lecture Prof. Salamon also presented major findings from his comparative research "The Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project" describing the third sector's growing economic scale and its increasing workforce worldwide.

While Prof. Salamon presented the International outlook of the future development of the third sector, his lecture was followed by a lecture by Mr. Raanan Dinur, Director of the Prime Minister's office, who heads a new initiative to strengthen and establish an interface between the government and civil society organizations in Israel. in his words: "The challenge faced by the three



sectors lays in their ability to overcome their apprehensions and go forward towards a mutual agreement that will connect the unique interests of each sector and ultimately serve the citizens and the democracy in Israel". Mr. Dinur spoke extensively on the advantages of a three sector partnership.

### The Concept of (Voluntary) Association in the Traditions of the Three Monotheistic Religions

Prof. Giuliana Gemelli's lecture on the "Religions and Philanthropy in Mediterranean Civil Societies: A Differentiated Isomorphism from the Oldest Civilizations to the Modern Era"

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## Thoughts following the decennial conference

In many senses our decennial conference can be regarded as a defining moment in the development of ICTR. The conference concluded an era, the first decade of our activities which was characterized by the need to explain what is the "Third Sector", and occasionally to justify the research on the subject. The title of the conference mirrored this clearly, but it also served to inform about the next decade in research and in the field and the consequences on the structure of our conferences in the future. The following are some points of consideration following the conference:

### **An international conference**

Up until this year we have strictly adhered to a 'Hebrew language' conference. Which would allow researchers and speakers to present their work in their native language, and by doing so ease their interaction with their audience. Typically we brought a single guest speaker who presented his or her work in English. In this conference most of the sessions were held in English. While attendance in the conference was greater than in any of the previous years, not many made use of the translation services we provided. Moreover, being an international conference, the conference attracted participants from other countries too, who thought it worthwhile to attend our conference. The relatively high number of guests from abroad allowed for new interactions with the Israeli participants, interactions that have great future potential, opening new opportunities for collaboration. Therefore I find that there is no reason to wait another decade until our next international meeting. Our conclusion is, therefore, that the conference needs to be opened to participants from abroad and that at least in part, it should be held in English, giving the Israeli researchers a chance to meet and interact with peers.

### **Between theory and practice**

Throughout the years we have been repeatedly told, that as important as our work is, it has little direct relevance to the actual work done in the field. We have been advised to target our work into the more practical sides of nonprofit management in order to attract more participants to the conference. This is the place to clarify that our

annual conference is on research in the third sector. We invite politicians as responders to researchers. We think this approach binds research with activity. Our conferences are not a stage for declarations and we have no interest in using marketing tricks to attract participants. We are aware that we don't supply a framework for tips on how to cope with complex problems. In our work and in our conference we work on building foundations, including foundations for future relations between researchers and professionals. This cannot be done with declarations or at the drop of a hat.

The third sector was until a few years ago a place where the dominant approach was one of amateurism and professionalism was an antithesis to the genre. I am glad to point out that in the past years we are moving away from this approach, especially concerning midsize and large organizations. The new approach is one of professionalism which stresses a methodical approach to management which is based on knowledge. The professional manager is exposed to new knowledge that can influence his work. Regular participants in our conferences are of course researchers in the field but most are practitioners of many sorts – managers of foundations and nonprofits and government officials. Those we regard as "research consumers", coming every year and seeing, like we do, the long road which we have walked.

What we have yet to do in our conference and which may offer some respite to the frustration of practitioners, is the translation of the knowledge to an empirical workable knowledge. Currently, when we have accumulated more knowledge, and even operate a training program (the specialization in Nonprofit management in the School of Management at BGU), in which the knowledge is applicable in an academic program, we see no reason not to offer it in additional frameworks, including our annual conference. Starting next year, we plan to expand the conference into three days, offering in its framework workshops on specific subjects. We may even be able to open workshops for foreign and Israeli participants combining theory and practice among locals and guests.

### **Camaraderie**

During the years a tradition of our conference has developed. It has to do with its remote and secluded location, and the relaxed atmosphere (spa) as only the Dead Sea can offer is another important factor. To this one can add the season – Spring time. All of these make for an atmosphere that cannot be found in a conference that is held in the city, where the office is near and available. One cannot underestimate the importance of interpersonal relations and informal relationships that are formed in this setting. Even if we have a great interest to enlarge the number of participants in our conference – we would not want to do this at the expense of those things that make the atmosphere at our conference so unique. Looking at the lists participants in our conferences we learn that those who enjoy our conference once return annually, and send letters of regret when they are unable to do so. This provides the conference with a feeling of 'reunion' and points to our need to locate new attendants that can soon become regular participants.

As one can see from this musing, planning a conference is not just struggling with timetables of lectures and plenaries, even if these are carried out by the most prominent scholars. In our case the conference itself was never the goal but one of the means in building a complex formation for developing a foundation of knowledge on the Israeli third sector. Looking back, it certainly was one of our major instruments, we hope it will continue to be so in the future.

Finally I would like to thank ICTR's staff which was responsible for organizing the conference, and which has worked intensively and enthusiastically to execute the best possible conference. I would also like to add my compliments to the many compliments and comments we got from our Israeli and international participants and attendants. Both your compliments and comments are very important for us and I'd like to thank all those who gave them.

I hope to be seeing everyone again at our 2008 conference which will be held on March 25-27<sup>th</sup>, 2008 – at the Dead Sea!

**Benjamin Gidron**



פרופ' הדרה בר-מור מעניקה את מלגת המרכז לעבודת מחקר לגב' כרמית ויסליץ  
 Dr. Hadara Bar-Mor presenting Ms. Carmit Wiesslitz with the 2007 ICTR annual scholarship for a doctoral candidate award for research



פרופ' בני גדרון מקבל את פרס החדשנות והיצירתיות בחקר המגזר השלישי לשנת 2007 מידי פרופ' רבקה כרמי, נשיאת אוני' בן-גוריון בנגב  
 Prof. Benny Gidron was presented with the 2007 ICTR awards for Innovation in Third Sector Research by Prof. Rivka Carmi, President of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

## Are we moving towards a three-sector society?

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analyzed how philanthropic institutions, by articulating individual freedom and social responsibility, extend the concept of legacy, as relations between the original founder and the beneficiaries to the principle of responsibility towards the next generations and to create the tradition of applying private wealth to public purposes and benefits.

Dr. Mahmoud Yazbak spoke in his lecture on the "Non-Governmental Organizations in the Age of Reforms in Palestine: 1870-1914", on the Ottoman reforms during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Palestine, which eroded the long-standing division among the urban political, religious and mercantile elite. The new reality, whereby one needed to be "elected" to many of the positions in the administration, led to a new phenomenon in the form of family coalitions, called jam`iyyat, or "leagues". A salient aspect of the jam`iyyat is that those who founded them did not come from the old ruling elite.

Prof. Margalit Shilo presented and analyzed in her lecture on "Pre-modern Jewish Women's Associations as Agents of Change in Jerusalem between 1860-1918" how ultra-orthodox women penetrated the public sphere, changed it and evolved new understanding of female abilities and identities. Prof. Shilo presented three

examples: The Hakhnasat Orchim (soup kitchen) society, Ezrat Nashim (aid for women) and Therese Dreifuss's story.

The plenary was chaired by Dr. Paula Kabalo, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.

### The New Forms of Philanthropy in the 21st Century and their implication on the Third Sector

Prof. Dennis R. Young lectured on "The Market Transformation of Nonprofits and Philanthropy" analyzing the evolution of nonprofit income sources which are becoming more market-like in their forms. Prof. Young provided an overview of the sources of nonprofit finance, especially in the United States, how and why they are changing, and possible implications of these changes for the viability of nonprofit institutions and their impacts on society.

Prof. Margaret Harris spoke on "The Changing Business Relationship with the Third Sector and whether the relationship could today be described as philanthropy, Investment or Exchange, and the pressures on businesses to develop closer relationships with the third sector, as well as the concepts applied to the giving activities of business (not only 'corporate philanthropy' but also 'corporate citizenship', 'corporate social responsibility' and 'community involvement').

Prof. Gidron's lecture on "The Globalization

of Philanthropy, Old and New Challenges" depicted the process of globalization, which changed the nature of business, the media and politics, and also that of philanthropy. At the one end of the spectrum more individuals are donating and volunteering in countries other than their own, at the other end we are witnessing more and more foundations adopting a global view of their mission and investing tremendous amounts of funds in what is termed "cross-border philanthropy". While this is not a new phenomenon, some of the motivations for it and some of the frameworks in which it is practiced are. Prof. Gidron posed a series of questions and dilemmas regarding those new motivations and practices, which constitute major challenges for those practicing it.

The plenary was chaired by Dr. Ilana Silber from Bar-Ilan University

### Civil Society and the Political Process

Prof. Yeheskel Hasenfeld's lecture on "The Welfare State, the Non-Profit Sector and the Politics of Care" described the extension of social rights to the most vulnerable - the poor, children, frail elderly, the ill and the disabled as an historical achievement which was made possible through political advocacy by labor unions, civic associations and non-profit service organizations. Currently a shift in the forces of the political discourse

Save the date:

March 25-27th, 2008

ICTR's 11th Dead Sea Conference for Third Sector Research in Israel

about the rights of the most vulnerable, from the national to the local level, reduces the visibility of their needs, dampens the motivation of the nonprofit sector to challenge the state, pushes the sector toward market oriented calculus in the provision of care, raises serious issues about accountability, and replaces the sector's ideology of care with an ideology of efficiency.

Prof. Adam Habib's lecture on speaking to "Global Debates with a National Lens: South African Social Movements in Comparative Perspective" reflected on the empirical cases undertaken in the first comprehensive national study of contemporary social movements in South Africa and the debates that have emerged in the global academy. In particular responding to two assertions in this debate; first, that the fulcrum of social struggles for a human development agenda has shifted from the arena of production to consumption, and second, that identity movements and struggles are replacing the overtly material ones, especially in post-industrial societies

The plenary was chaired by Dr. Varda Shiffer from Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

### The Third Sector during Times of Humanitarian Crises and War

Dr. Hugo Slim presented his lecture on the "Post-colonial Dilemmas: International NGO Response to War and Disaster", where he focused on the ideology and experience of international NGOs (INGOs) which have responded transnationally to war and disaster in the last 100 years. Analyzing the extraordinary power these organizations have achieved, in post-colonial Africa in particular, and the influence they have over the western imagination and its perception of

distant wars and disasters. Dr. Slim spoke on the critical post-colonial dilemmas for INGOs as they grapple with their extraordinary growth and proliferation.

John Telford spoke on "International NGOs in Disaster Response: A Case for Regulation", examining the effectiveness, accountability and financing of INGO responses to natural disasters, and concluding that there is a need to regulate activities at both international and national levels. He concludes that much, if not most disaster response is achieved by affected-people and their families, co-nationals (including those abroad) and authorities. The potential value of well-targeted and professionally delivered INGO support is recognised. So too is the need for formal regulation of their activities.

Dr. Hagai Katz's lecture on "Developing a Model of Inter-Sector Cooperation in Humanitarian Crises - Lessons from the Second Lebanon War" was based on a study of the role that the Third Sector played in the relief work in the north of Israel during the Second Lebanon War. The study reveals that the strength of Third Sector organizations in disaster settings is expressed in their adaptive capacity, their organizational flexibility and their ability to mobilize philanthropic energies and enhance social solidarity. The weakness of the Third Sector was mainly in the organizations' limited resources, poor coordinative capacity and lack of systemic approach to relief. In light of these limitations and advantages, some considerations for a model of Third Sector-government coordination in humanitarian emergencies were discussed.

The plenary was chaired by Dr. Gila Menachem from Tel Aviv University

Trends in the Israeli Third Sector in the past decade - new findings released by ICTR

Ms. Esther Levinson presented preliminary findings from a national survey of the patterns of giving and volunteering in Israel. Ms. Yael Elon, the director of ICTR's Israeli Third Sector Database, presented data on the Israeli third sector in the past two decades, and particularly on the dynamics of registration and the survival of organizations, as well as on the sector's composition and geographic distribution.

The plenary was chaired by Dr. Hagai Katz from Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.



1. From right to left: Minister Herzog, Prof. Dennis Young , Prof. Margaret Harris
2. From right to left: Dr. Paula Kabalo Prof. Margalit Shilo, Prof. Giuliana Gemelli
3. From right to left: Dr. Hagai Katz, Prof. Rivka Carmi, Prof. Benny Gidron, Prof. Adam Habib
4. From left to right: Dr. Hagai Katz, Mr. John Telford, Dr. Hugo Slim, Dr. Gila Menachem

1. מימין לשמאל: השר הרצוג, פרופ' דניס יאנג ופרופ' מרגרט האריס
2. מימין לשמאל: ד"ר פולה קבלו, פרופ' מרגלית שילה, פרופ' ג'וליאנה ג'מלי
3. מימין לשמאל: ד"ר חגי כץ, פרופ' רבקה, פרופ' בני גדרון, פרופ' אדם חביב
4. מימין לשמאל: ד"ר גילה מנחם, ד"ר הוגו סלימ, מר ג'ון טלפורד, ד"ר חגי כץ

מנהל המרכז: פרופ' בני גדרון  
 עורכת: אילת נבון  
 עיצוב גרפי: סטודיו אורנה כהן  
 מוציא לאור: המרכז הישראלי לחקר המגזר השלישי,  
 אוניברסיטת בן-גוריון בנגב

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