



**Society Voice Foundation**

**Palestine**

**Voice for Empowerment  
Voice for Free Expression  
Voice for Integrity**

**Summary**

**Annual Report - 2009**

## SVF Background

The Society Voice Foundation is a non profit organization, non-governmental, non partisan, established in 2001 - SVF mission is to empower the Palestinian civil society by designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating a series of community actions. SVF has three different offices in Gaza Strip and the West Bank city of Ramallah. SVF looks for improving the situations of the target group by training them on



the concept and skills of good governance to undertake initiatives and campaigns for better community participation, rule of law, transparency, fighting corruption and advocate for women equity and gender balance at all levels. SVF looks at improving the situations of its target groups by effective participation, information access and contributing to transparent and accountable public life.

## Strategic Goals:

First, SVF aims to change social attitudes through direct community involvement and establishing a solid constituency to promote good governance standards through national institutions. Second, to provide an effective platform for social and human rights activists to join forces towards the development of an engaged civil society in Palestine based on democracy and respect for human rights.

- Develop and implement civil society activities for women, youth and children in a variety of sectors and at all levels of Palestinian society.
- Improve the participation of youth integrating them on civil society activities, thereby raising the awareness of these youth, children, and women on human rights, governance, conflict resolution and democracy.
- Spread awareness among people on the importance of societal development which depends on strong basis and how to achieve it, and on making people aware of how they and the society will benefit from it.
- Increase the participation of the whole classes of the society in development and societal issues while opening new spheres to other civilizations.

- Strengthen SVF operations over the next years that will play an active role within the community to foster community participation and informal education of good governance human rights and democracy.
- Empower the researches and surveys activities of SVF within the society thereby strengthening SVF as community resource center for information and expertise.

## **SVF Achievements**

SVF achieved different administrative, financial, and institutional results as follows:

### **A. Capacity Building:**

SVF contributed at developing financial and administrative system to enhance transparency and integrity of the work within the institution as follows:

- Empowered foundation's governance by electing a new board for three years term started on June 28, 2009.
- Developed the electronic archiving system so that it is keeping the documents in the allocated files which need unified archiving system between the offices of the institution in order to retrieve or query them as needed.
- Enhanced the internal network and internet to ensure ease of connection and communication between SVF's staff.
- Developed the financial system through the internal and external financial auditor.
- SVF also cooperated with the UNRWA to provide a placement for 24 young fresh graduates to train and improve their professional capacities. SVF developed their skills on psychological support, activation, coordination, communications and community outreach.
- SVF members also participated at Monitoring Budget workshop organized by IBP in Turkey with TIRI support.
- SVF also improved the capacity of its West Bank office in Ramallah.

## **B. Community Programs:**

### **1. Increase Process of Public Monitoring, Accountability, Transparency of Municipality Services**

This program funded by TIRI to increase Process of Public Monitoring, Accountability, Transparency of Municipality Services to improve the transparent municipal services deliveries of Magahzi municipality to be more accountable to the people, more participatory process and less corrupted. This could be developing a partnership with Maghazi Women Activity Centre, Al Amal Association and the Tawsl Forum. SVF empowered 12 young leaders/monitors aged 20-30 years old and 6 municipality representative and 9 CBOs leaders by training them on integrity, social accountability and anti corruption methods and mechanism.



12 leaders/monitors placed for a month at the municipality to learn about its services before they will go to monitor its actions. A part of the project's community monitoring, SVF prepared to conduct 10 focus groups to discuss the level of cooperation between the municipality and the citizens. SVF's monitors prepared to conduct interviews with key community members to identify their satisfaction about the municipality services. Based on data collection by monitors, SVF also prepared to conduct 5 public hearings and produce the project's newsletter to document the experiences of the monitors and their finds as well. A final report will be issued and circulated on the findings to recommend policies changes. SVF achieved parts of this program as it will be completed in 2010. However, some achievements were done as follows :

- Formalised a partnership with the Magahzi Municipality and three local CBOs to implement the project by signing a memorandum of understanding.
- Formalised a partnership with three CBOs to participate at the project's implementation.
- Formed an Advisory Council of civil society activists to provide advice for SVF, CBOs partners, monitors on project implementation.
- Trained 27 participants (12 young/leaders monitors, 6 municipality representatives, and 9 CBOs leaders) on integrity, social accountability and anti corruption methods and mechanism.

- Launched a community monitoring process on municipality services by 12 young leaders/ monitors in assistance with SVF, and other three CBOs.
- Prepared to target more than 210 citizens / participants by organising 10 Focus groups/baseline survey to get participants' reactions towards the municipality's services deliveries and to propose a package of recommendations.
- Prepared to interview at least 35 community activist, figures to get a proper data on municipal's services.
- Produced and broadcasted 3 Radio programs on integrity and accountability in municipalities.

## **2. Empower Women Participation in the Reform Process: With Emphasize on Preventing of Violence and Torture Against Women Program**

This program funded by Women's World Day of Prayers – German Committee to contribute by creating a transformative state of public awareness within the Palestinian society based on UN Convention against Torture (CAT) and its Optional Protocol. This aimed at contribute to reducing prevalence of torture, increase reporting of torture, better conditions for proving incidence of torture; more effective monitoring of torture, ratification and implementation of the CAT and the Optional Protocol to the CAT with the respective international standards in close cooperation with decision-makers and establishing networks of information. . SVF achieved these results so far :



- SVF formed a national coalition of 25 Palestinian civil society organizations representing different sectors to encourage drafting a package of laws and legislations based on UN Convention Against Torture (CAT) and its Optional Protocol to prevent torture against women and children due to civil conflict and protecting her from all forms of violence through organizing and implementing a series of community actions such as awareness sessions, hall town meetings, publishing materials, seminars etc
- SVF trained 120 psychologists, journalists, and women leaders counselors on of all aspects of the UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) and the Optional Protocol in order to run public awareness campaign and field investigations; aiming at reducing prevalence of torture, increasing reporting of torture, better conditions for proving incidence of torture;

- SVF enhanced cooperation among public, community stakeholders, media agencies, women organizations, policy makers and universities to form a national coalition to set up a dialogue on encouraging official bodies to sign, ratify and effectively implement UN Convention against Torture (CAT) and its Optional Protocol.
- SVF provided particularly serious and exceptional cases with advice on social assistance, employment, and legal assistance for women and children threatened with torture.
- SVF conducted 25 hall town meetings to disseminate information concerning the mechanism of preventing of torture against women based on effectively implementing UN Convention against Torture (CAT) and its Optional Protocol.
- SVF produced and produced and broadcasted 13 live radio programs to discuss women issues related to torture against woman and the procedures combat violence against her.
- SVF circulated 18.000 copies of the SVF's newsletter to cover all the project activities and activate the community to assume the woman issue towards protect her from torture.

### **3. Empower Future Young Leadership on Parliamentary Work and Monitoring Corruption**

This program is supported by MEPI to assist SVF in increasing capacities and knowledge of 150 young leaders aged 22-35 years old to be active local future leadership in the parliamentary work who will able to fight corruption by using their newly acquired knowledge of transparency, accountability and integrity systems. This is to assist an essential segment of the society and a number of CBOs contributing to recommendation or suggestions as a growing imminent needs and priorities of the



community in related political, social and economic spheres. This is very indispensable to strengthen the accountability and transparency of the legislative processes in its wider concept in the Palestinian Territories. One of the SVF's goals through such project is to develop a Palestinian youth political participation based on good governance and the rule of law. To achieve that, SVF formed a united Module Youth Parliament to assist young trained leaders. SVF succeeded to conduct a group of the project's actions in cooperation with a number of local organizations aimed to empower and increase capacities of young leaders to take an active role in the parliamentary work and monitoring corruption. SVF achieved a number of results as follows:

- Trained 160 young leaders on parliamentary work, transparency, accountability and integrity.
- Organized 6 hall town meetings attended by at least 400 participants of graduates from genders, volunteers and social activists, addressed youth issues, youth role in developmental issues and the mechanisms to encourage young leadership in the parliamentary work to fight and monitor corruption.
- Produced and broadcasted 6 live radio programs discussed youth participation on the parliamentary work to empower their role to combat corruption as well as educating people in transparent in the reconstruction process.
- Composed the Model Youth Parliament consisted of 150 young leaders from all the Palestinian Territories.
- Hold youth campaigns and monitoring corruption meeting to assist the youth to collect and analyze information about the public projects on the themes of monitoring issues.
- Formed a local coalition of 30 CBO's and NGO's to promote youth participation in the parliamentary work.



#### **4. Gaza Emergency: Psychological Support for Slow Learners' Children**

This program funded by OFID to provide psychosocial services for Gazan children in response to bloody situations, high level of violence and economic deterioration. SVF utilized a range of tools based on community intervention support to educate and promote the psycho-social services in order to integrate them in societal activities in certain areas and in order not to imitate or to be a violent champion due to the high level of violence. SVF aimed through this project to provide psycho-social support for 750 children who were affected by the war on Gaza live and the violent scenes in the Palestinian street by using many means of informal education such as playing, drawing and drama . SVF also aimed at helping 750 children to be integrated in societal activities and overcome their problems



to improve their capacities through useful activities. SVF also aimed at raising their parents in fighting the culture of violence and starting looking for a brighter future and not to activate the violent practices, which affected the healthy life of children.

### **Achievements Summary:**

- SVF provided psychological support for 500 children from all the Gaza Strip Areas distributed on 25 groups.
- Provided educational support for 250 children with slow learning difficulties.
- Produced 16 Radio programs on psychological support for children and women.
- Organized 32 hall town meetings to raise awareness of women and target groups on psychological support issues.
- Produced a project magazine documenting children achievements .
- Organized a training session for 20 university psychology graduates .

### **Donors in 2009:**

- OFID – OPEC Fund for International Development
- TIRI Integrity Network
- Middle East Partnership Initiative – MEPI
- European Community
- Individuals