
Who Trust NGOs in Developing Contexts? An Exploratory Analysis of the Palestinian Case

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Résumé

Any form of organisation willing to effectively fulfil its mission requires a basic amount of trust from the individuals and the society in which this organisation operates. Political institutions need to be trusted by their citizens in order to enforce laws and policies more effectively. Private businesses and companies requires stakeholders and consumers' trust to enter and consolidate their market and marketing position. Similarly, cooperatives, voluntary associations and NGOs are able to provide their service and to fulfil their missions more effectively if trusted by the society and the community in which they operate. This is even more salient in developing and post-conflict contexts under state capacity building where trust towards institutions and organisations of any sort is a scarce resource due to the continuous straggling of the individuals against adverse social, economic and human rights conditions. This paper aims to explore which socio-economic and individual cognitive characteristics may predict individuals' trust towards local NGOs in the Palestinian Territories, a small geopolitical context under state capacity building with low generalized trust and strong uncertainty about the future. Even though such context boasts a traditional key role of voluntary associations since the beginning of the last century (Sullivan, 1996), the report of Transparency International suggests that 27% of the respondents felt that NGOs in the Palestinian Territories are corrupt if not extremely corrupt. Our exploratory analysis uses data from a Palestinian public opinion survey conducted on a random sample of 2,508 individuals in 2007 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip by Nasr and Hilal (2007) and administered by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. We claim that a better understating of the perception that local individuals have about the NGOs in terms of trust will help re-think the mission and the operational strategy of these collectives in view of a better matching with the needs and the expectations of the socio-economic environment in which they operate.

Mots-Clés: Trust, NGOs, Social Capital, Palestinian Territories

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