3 Overview of CSOs Status in the State

3.1 Background

Up to the mid 1990s, other than the SRC and Beja club, CSOs in the modern sense were almost nonexistent in the Red Sea State. The SRC was in fact a branch of the national society and was recognized and particularly strengthened by huge relief operations during the famine of the mid 1980s, when it became the main partner to most of the international relief organizations that came to provide assistance.

Several factors contributed to undermining the growth of CSOs, including

- Outside the main urban centres, Beja as pastoralists in a marinal environment, the main adaptation mechanisms were mobility and dispersed settlement and large settlements were extremely limited

- Traditionally and largely up to now, the Beja community was primarily organized along tribal and sub-tribal lines. Even when they moved into towns (Port Sudan), the British policy was to keep them in residential areas along those lines mainly to maintain control, through the traditional (Native) administration

- At the work place, the Beja historically provided the main manual labour for freight handling in and outside the port. Again to organize the work, to maintain balance in job opportunities and to prevent conflicts, workers were organized along the tribal lines in what is known as kalla (work group).

Such structure within towns provided the sense of belonging, social protection and mutual support, which made the formation of new organizations largely unnecessary. Even with the spread of education in other parts of the country, and discovering its value in the absence of State support, the Beja opted to form tribal education funds to support youth education in and outside the country, encouraged by the experience of the Beja Education Fund which was first established during the colonial period in Sinkat area and was dissolved in 1963 when the state started to open schools in the area.

For migrants to the Red Sea State from other parts of Sudan (mainly Port Su-
dan), who were mainly the white collar public sector employees, traders or
skilled workers, organization took two forms. The first was traditional –
tribal/area-based – going across professional and economic strata, which was
performing three main functions; (a) maintaining identity, (b) providing mutual
support to migrants, and most importantly (c) providing support to the home
area, basically supporting social services. Thus the development function of
these organizations was not within the RSS.

Migrants' second and modern form of organization was membership of trade
unions and professional associations, which was in most cases national organi-
zations and its membership was compulsory by law for public sector employ-
ees. These organizations have largely lost their independence since the 1970s
when they were dissolved by Numeiri regime and were restructured and be-
came affiliated to the state apparatus as it is the case now.

Another factor the delayed the formation of CSOs in the area, was that till the
1990s, the state was providing almost all basic services (health, education, wa-
ter) free of charge or at a nominal cost. Even when the state was struck by the
drought and famine of the 1980s (1984-87), relief operations and provision of
these services were largely undertaken by the International organizations that
flooded the region and the role of local population was very limited.

3.2 The Current Situation: Survey Results

As shown in Fig. 1, of the surveyed CSOs about 18% were established before
1990 compared to over 56% established after the year 2000.

Fig. 2.1: Percentage Distribution of Sample CSOs by Date of Establishment
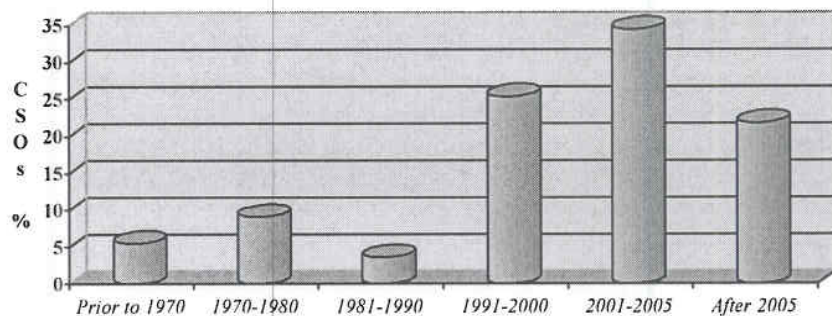
Urban-based organizations constitute about 40% of the total number, with an-
other 25.5% that operate all over the state but are based in Port Sudan, while
the remaining 38% distributed among the eight localities (Table 2.1). CBOs and
NGOs constitute about 84% of the surveyed organizations, Trade Unions 9%
cooperatives 3.6% and cultural groups and Business names (Newspapers) 1.8%
each about 14% of all organizations are registered as national organizations
(branches in the state), the rest are registered at the state level.

Concluding Remarks:

1. Over half of the surveyed organizations are CBOs that have recently been formed or supported by INGOs. In urban areas, most of them are women groups in squatters and low-class residential areas and most of them are IDPs. In localities, outside Port Sudan, most of the CBOs are serving pastoral, agro-pastoral and fishing communities. While both groups share emphasis on education and other basic services in their interventions, they differ in the market orientation (credit, small business) of the urban CBOs and natural resources exploitation and management for rural CBOs.

2. Other than PASED and Abu Hadyia, no organization has fulltime professional staff nor long or medium-term secured funding

3. Most of the CBOs are very localized in activities and interacting more with their supporting INGOs than networking with other CBOs. Thus, activities such as collective campaigns or solidarity are totally absent and most of the organizations are service-delivery oriented

4. Several of the rural organizations suffer either from high turn over because of mobility (mainly to Port Sudan) or, in contrast, lack of change in leadership. (some re-elect themselves in towns).

5. No professional evaluation of performance has been conducted for any of these organizations and the few surveys conducted focused on need or capacity assessment.

6. None of the local organization managed to establish links with private sector or business community and the relationship with state institutions largely depends on personalities and political affiliation.

7. INGOs (Oxfam, IRC and ACORD) and PASED have significantly contributed to the mobilization of several poor and marginalized communities to form CBOs and to their growth through funding, training and provision of basic technical support. Over 40 CBOs and local women groups are currently supported by these four organizations (See Table 2.16)

8. The INGO–CBO relationship has been beneficial to INGOs as CBOs provided easy entry points to local communities and reduced administrative costs (follow up). For CBOs, on the other hand, the relationship enhanced the culture rights and voluntary work and exposed local communities to their development challenges. The relationship is challenged by the major problem of extreme poverty and absence of basic working facilities, which undermines the feasibility of voluntary work and timely delivery for both parties

9. A Note on Rural CBOs

   a. Rural CBOs are generally working under difficult conditions, particularly those in Rural Port Sudan, Gunub, Gabeit, and Halaib. The harsh

physical environment, conservative nature of rural communities, especially towards women, un-conducive government policy, chronic conditions of food shortage and wide spread poverty which precipitated a relief mentality and a state of dependency among rural communities, have all undermined the development and impact of civil society organizations.

b. CBOs with longer duration of partnership with INGOs (e.g. Omhail, Magadam and SECS with Oxfam) have managed to build strong working relationship with some government institutions and development agencies and acquired some skills in planning, implementation and monitoring of activities, the thing that gained them recognition by their communities and the state. Other CBOs have mobilization abilities but lack resources and have not been sufficiently trained to plan or manage projects

c. With few exceptions, most of the rural CBOs' leadership resides in Port Sudan, away from the communities they represent

d. Despite the targeting of women by all INGOs and most CBOs and with the exception of few organizations (SECS –Arkowit, Hayet- Arbaat) women presence in leadership is very limited and largely symbolic if found. In Hayet, CBO there are five women in the executive committee, including the chairperson and in Arkowit women account for 50% of leadership[12]

e. Rural CBOs partnership with INGOs is still largely donor-recipient relationship and there is very limited transfer of expertise

f. Many rural CBOs are complaining about increased pressure and and restrictions from the newly appointed locality administrations, isolation from the planning process by their donor-partners and quick changes in donors' policy orientation

g. Despite all these problems, rural CBOs significantly contributed to organize their communities and raising awareness, preventing and/or reducing conflicts over resources, engaging rural youth, breaking pastoralists isolation and through women targeting contributed to their visibility at the community level and helped them gain self confidence

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[12] Dr. Hassan A. Abdel Ati and Abu Amna Hashim "Oxfam Pastoral Development Programme, Red Sea State: an evaluation report" Port Sudan, March 2008, Also Abu Amna Hashim, "Participatory CBOs Capacity Assessment', a report for Oxfam GB, October 2007

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Table 2.16: Local Organizations and Groups Supported by INGOs and PASED

OXFAM	IRC	ACORD	PASED
1. Zat Al-Netagain Society 2. Women Dev. Society – Om Al Gora 3. Women Dev. Society – Hay Al Nil 4. Women Dev. – Al Engaz 5. Women Dev. Society – Al Engaz2 6. Al Faiha Society – Habila 7. Women Dev. Society – Al Fardous 8. Builder Society – Habila 9. Al Sadaga Shamal Women Dev. Society 10. Women Dev. Society – Al Engaz 3 11. Habila Community Dev. Society 12. Al Mominat Women Dev. Society 13. Aymas Society 14. Haiyet Society 15. Omhil Charity Society 16. Mogddam Society 17. SECS - Arkawit 18. Aylabouk Society	1. Kalaneib People Ass, 2. Hadayatgaba Society 3. Hambokyab Society 4. Hoshiry Society 5. Tobeen Society 6. Noraiyet Society 7. Kajarait Society	1. Eitbay Fishermen society 2. Mohd Qol Development Society 3. Gebeit Al Maadin society 4. Halaib IDPs in Port Sudan	1. Abrar Society – Al Engaz 2. Al Salam Women Dev. Society 3. Yanabei Al Khair- Dar Al Naiem 4. Al Ehsan Society – Al Gadisiya 5. Bashair Al Khair Charity Society 6. Om Al Momenin Society 7. Al Wefag Society, Hay Al Mataar 8. Hadayatgaba Society North Port Sudan (Total 13)
Localities: Port Sudan town, RPS, Tokar, Ageig, Sinkat	**Localities:** Port Sudan, Gunub, Swakin	**Localities:** Halaib, Gabeit	**Localities:** Port Sudan town, Swakin

4 Capacity Assessment

4.1 Introduction

The surveyed organizations capacity was assessed using two main tools. The first is based on SIDA's Octagon and CARE International NGO Assessment Tool statistical indicators, which were aggregated to provide an overall picture for all CSOs. The assessment covered six basic aspects, each composed of a number of variables used as indicators. These are:

- Identity & relevance

- Structure, governance & management system

- Facilities and Assets

- Planning & implementation capacity

- Relationships and networking

- Financial security & resource mobilization

Each of these was broken into more specific questions and rated by at least three persons in a scale from 1 (nonexistent) to 7 (excellent). The three persons include the data collector and 2 or 3 from the organization's leadership. The average is then calculated to provide the final rating. The results are summarized in the figures 3.1 – 3.6 below. Although the technique gives an overview of the general situation, the results however need to be taken with caution because:

- the assessment depends by and large on value judgement

- it was done by different persons (data collectors) with different experience, level of knowledge and perceptions

- the variations in type, age, areas of operation and past experience of organizations sampled makes the comparison sometimes difficult and misleading

- It was not easy to verify several of the information provided by CSOs representatives, particularly those that could be checked from observations or records

- Because of all the above, it does not help very much in identifying needs.

The second method was the information adapted from the questionnaires and the discussion with the interviewees and groups. Here the indicators used are composition of membership and leadership, assets and budgets, outreach and relationships, type of programmes and projects and own identification of areas of strength and weaknesses. Based on that, an overall classification was made positioning surveyed CSOs in a qualitative scale ranging from total dependency to full control and ability to influence decisions (Table 3.1).

4.2   Assessment

4.2.1   Identity & Relevance

Lack of clarity about vision and mission of organizations was one common characteristic except for the three largest organizations PASED, Beja Cultural Club and Abu Hadyia society where the leadership was very clear about what they want and how they want to achieve it. For the vast majority, meeting the immediate needs of their respective communities was the main objective, sometimes concealed in terms such "community development", "improving living condition"...etc. That can be attributed, in addition to the pressure of need, to the limited experience and exposure of most CSOs members.

Also the standard constitution designed by HAC, to a large extent contributes to lower the ceiling of objectives and hence undermine the mental capacities for innovation. The focus on meeting immediate needs is reflected in the higher scores of compatibility of interventions with community needs and their operationalization as simple shortcuts (Fig. 3.1). Since most of the CBOs are area-based and localized in their service delivery, their representation of their communities is generally high.

Fig. 3.1 Identity & Relevance

Non-existent ☐ Very weak ☐ Weak ☐ Reasonable ■ Good ■ Very good ■ Excellent

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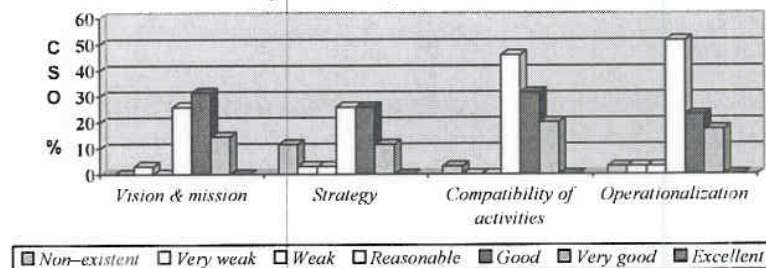
4.2.2 Structure and Governance

As shown in Fig 3.2, for about 40% of CSOs assessment of governance component ranged between reasonable and very good in rating, although from our observations, previous assessments[13] and the results of the questionnaire many of the indicators were reported as non-existent. Although the leadership is elected, in compliance with the law, and participation is reasonably high in implementation of activities, very few of the surveyed organizations have financial and administrative bi-laws, no code of ethics was reported by any organization, women participation in leadership and decision making is very weak and programme support and routine systems are limited to a handful of organizations. The somewhat exaggerated rating can be attributed to leadership defensive attitude or their inability to reasonably assess their situation.

Since most of CSOs lack sustainable funding and have continuously ongoing programmes, management systems are adhoc and linked to the incidence of securing funds or facilitation for external actors. Besides, the leadership of most rural CBOs which is residing in Port Sudan, management is at best carried out among executive committee members and during assessment/ implementation missions by their supporting INGOs.

Fig. 3.2 Structure & Governance
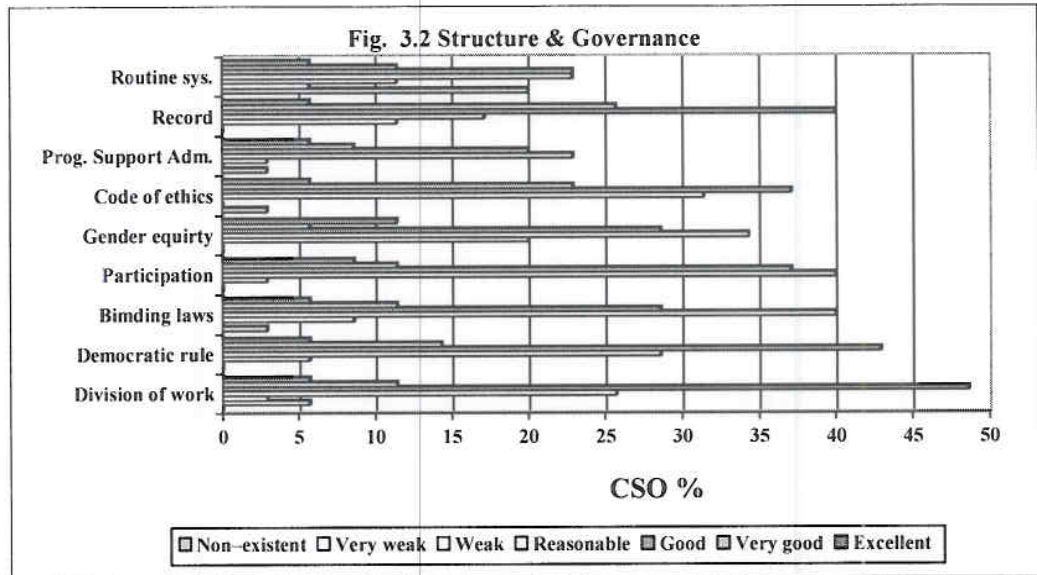
4.2.3 Facilities and Assets

Most of CSOs surveyed lack the very basic tools and equipment for work and this is why for 20% of the organization the highest score was "reasonable" and non-existent was reported by 80% of organizations for means of transport. In fact most organizations are so poor that many claim to be unable to secure stationeries (Fig 3.3). Rural CBOs in particular are very much handicapped by lack of means of transport and communication facilities.

[13] See Abu Amna Hashim, Oxfarm Partner CBOs Assessment, 2007

Fig. 3.3 Facilities & Assets
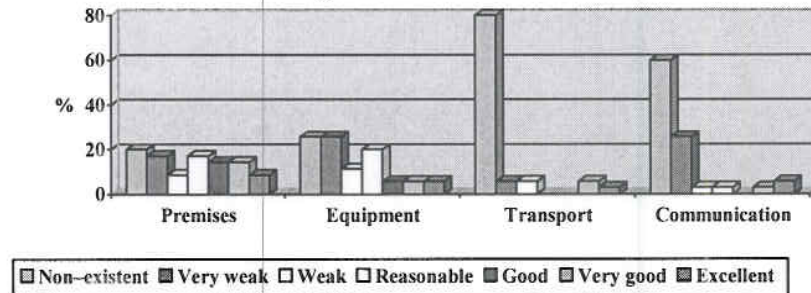
4.2.4 Planning & implementation capacity

About 25% of CSOs have work plans that they have described as good, which reflects the casual nature of work and although about 40% asserted good monitoring, only two of the surveyed organization (3.7%) have a proper M& E system in place. The same applies to qualified staff and management system. The weakest element rated was the environmental soundless of the projects implemented, which seems not to be an issue of concern in the planning process. This may also indicate a recipient mentality, which in neither responsible for monitoring nor concerned with the impact of interventions (Fig. 3.4).

Fig. 3.4 Planning & Implementation Capacity
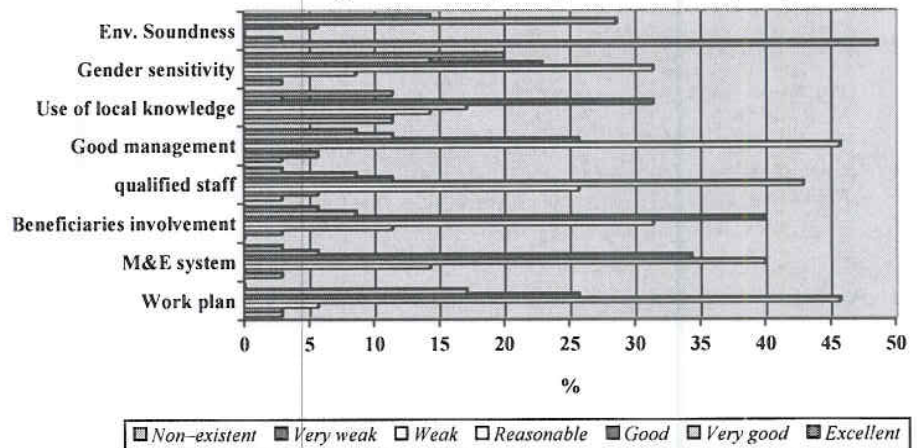
According to the interviewed CSOs members and INGOs' representatives, numerous numbers of training workshops on basic planning were organized for CBOs and NGOs' members but the focus was mostly on need identification and proposal and report writing. The failure to organize cumulative training by supporting organizations and the inability of CSOs members to put to practice what was learned, because of lack of resources, seem to behind the weak planning capacities.

It is important to note that with regards to use of indigenous knowledge and local skills, rural CBOs played a very good educational role to INGOs, particularly in relation to natural resource management.

4.2.5   Relationships and Networking

Most of the CSOs, particularly CBOs, are very much accepted by their needy constituents and maintain reasonable dialogue with them, although it could be intermittent and largely linked to execution of certain activities (Fig 3.5).

Other forms of relationships are generally weak, for understandable reasons. For example, the relationship with the state, private sector or general (urban) public is hampered by the physical isolation of rural communities and the absence of the state and private sector institutions out of towns. In the urban areas, most of the CBOs are composed of IDPs who very recently moved into town and/ or women groups that are hindered by traditional value systems (especially Beja), poor education and lack of experience.

Fig. 3.5 Relationships, Coordination & Networking
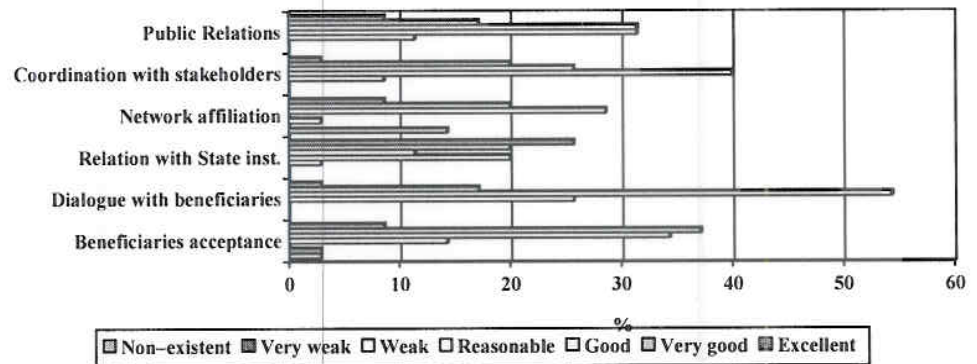
Coordination among CSOs is also weak and largely limited to joint meetings and/ or training organized by supporting INGOs for CSOs which is affiliated to them. The localization of vision and emphasis on service delivery, limited experience and skills and the sheer distance separating rural CBOs are also responsible for limited interaction. It is also important to note that supporting organizations, when they organize meetings for CBOs, they tend to focus on technical aspects relating to their service delivery and implementation logistics. That in some cases led to competition between some INGOs' partners rather than cooperation.

External networking is limited by lack of communication facilities and equipment (computers and internet facilities), poor English language standards and limited exposure. On the positive side, the Beja Cultural Club and Abu Hadyia society have established good links at the national level and developed as focal points for national and international organizations and agencies coming into the Red Sea state. The Beja Club, in collaboration with some national CSOs in undertaking the task of civic education training in the state in relation to issues of good governance, rule of law and elections.

4.2.6   Financial Security

As illustrated in Fig. 3.6 below, only 10% of CSOs claim to have excellent financial procedures, 5% resource mobilization ability and 1% are capable of diversifying their funding sources. Fewer than 15% of organizations described their ability to mobilize internal resources as good. However, in the absence of government support and private sector contributions, as mentioned earlier, internal mobilization here seem to refer to local nominal contributions which is usually very small and mostly linked to service delivery by INGOs.

Other than the four largest organizations and the CBOs that are supported by more than one INGOs (e.g. Urban women groups), none of the organizations pointed to more than one source of funding.

Fig. 3.6 Financial Security
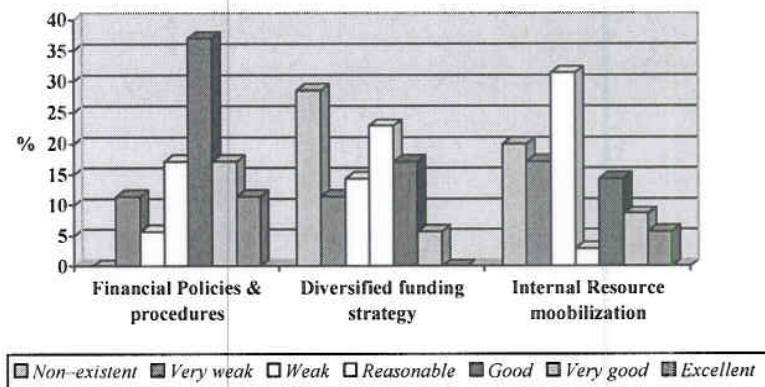
4.3   Overall Assessment

In Table 3.1 below, an attempt was made to classify the surveyed organizations according to their stages of development. The criteria arbitrarily used in the classification include the size of resources (financial, material and ability to raise funds), degree of professionalism and number of professional staff, technical capacity for planning and networking and form and level of outreach.

According to that classification, none of the surveyed CSOs in the state is in a position to influence decisions as civil society in Sudan in general is viewed with suspicion by the state which tries to control activities through legislation and administrative procedures.

Four organizations are in a relatively advanced stage of development, each of them commands a special area of competence that can be put to use in any CSOs capacity building programme. PASED is the only national organization in Sudan that is supporting CBOs and local groups (13) in a sustained manner. It has a well experienced and qualified professional staff and, as a successor or heir of ACORD UK, after 15 years of operation in the area, the staff still main-

tains high international standards with regard to accountability and delivery. PASED, however, is generally weak in its interaction with the public and civil society issues and it tend to focus almost exclusively on its credit and small scale business support programme and hence, its outreach is limited to its clients and direct beneficiaries.

Abu Hadiya society is relatively new, but because of its focus on female education, which is highly demanded, it managed to gain support both from local communities and donors. It is also characterized by diversifying its activities as it is one of the few organizations that worked on peace building and conflict resolution and achieved some success in resolving some local conflicts. It also led the work of combating harmful social practices such as FGM in addition to awareness-raising on the CPA, ESPA and HIV/ADIS. It is rather weak in resources, no of professional staff and geographical outreach.

The SRC is one of the largest organizations in terms of membership with a proven record of efficiency during emergency situations and campaigns. With the gradual receding of emergency conditions in the state, political interventions in its management and activities, in addition to mismanagement, the SRC experienced a drastic drop in its financial and logistical capacity. Yet, it still maintains the largest geographical outreach with trained volunteers in every corner of the state.

The Beja Cultural Club is the oldest CSO in the state but historically was almost totally focusing on service delivery (education and health) funded through educated Beja contributions and administrative and political influence, culminating in the formation of the Beja Education Fund which is now an independent organization but still hosted in the Beja Club. The Beja Culture Club premises contain a library, training rooms and space for public lectures and meetings. The club, in addition to its sentimental value to the Beja, has during the last 2–3 years embarked on an ambition programme of awareness raising and civic education targeting youth from both Beja and non-Beja groups. In the process, it established linkages with several national and international organizations. The club suffer the problems of limited resources and high demand for its support (education), lack of full time professional staff and the negative (antagonistic) attitude by the state authorities which developed when the club started to engage in civil society issues of concern such as good governance, rule of law, human rights ….etc.

These four organizations can become good entry points and means for any CSO capacity building programme, although in some areas, their own capacities need to be built.

The second category of organization, have proven leadership qualities and a record of achievement. All of them are urban organizations (NGOs) with open membership and reasonably good technical skills in the area of development. Although all of them control their decisions and have clear visions about their aims and objectives, they are all still dependent on external funding, which is not secured in a long term manner but irregular and discontinuous.
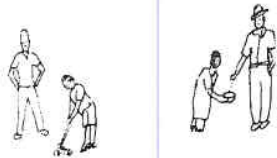
The third category is primarily composed of CBOs and local community groups (urban and rural) formed and/or supported by INGOs and PASED. Most of them have developed basic planning skills (need assessment, prioritization, proposal writing and book keeping) but are extremely poor in resources and heavily dependent on supporting organizations. They maintain strong links with their communities but over issues of direct service delivery. They are more or less closed for membership as they represent villages, clusters or urban residential quarters. There is little coordination or networking among them and they have little contact with state institutions and none with the private sector. Their most important point of strength is their ability to mobilize local communities. What they need, in addition to technical capacities and resources, is to transform their mobilization strength from activities to be over issues to enhance the culture of rights and continuous community participation.

The last two groups are very close in their rating and are composed of three types of organizations. The first are urban groups that have identified good vision and mission but totally lack resources and support and they include all media and human rights organizations. The second group is also urban, have some resources but either lack vision to utilize it or is closed to its members such as trade unions and tribal/regional associations. The third category is CBOs that managed to get support (INGO) but are focused on services delivery in a specific area and are poor in technical skills.

Finally, no organization can be classified as passive recipient that only undertakes tasks assigned by donors. It indicates some development in the CSO sector especially as most organizations are less than 5 years old. Also none of them has reached the stage where it can influence decisions or lead a movement. (Table 3.1)

Table 3.1: CSOs Stages of Development

Development Stage	Organizations	
Passive Recipient Carrying Out Assigned Tasks		
Dialogue for Performing Situation Analysis	Sunna Al Hayat Al Gizour Centre for Art & Culture Amwaj Magazine Yanabei Al khair Women Society Al Sharg Human Rights Organization RSS Journalist Union	Sanabil Al Khair Society Women and Peace Culture Society Youth for Children Society Shulluk Association (RSS) Eytbai Society For Development
Meaningful Exchange of Ideas	In-ship Cargo Workers Ass. Ports & Railway Retired Persons Soc. RSS Pastoralists Union South Tokar Student Ass. Al Gadisiya Women Society Al Housa People Association Hadayatgaba Dev. Society	Al Magal People Association Arakiyay Fishermen Cooperative Arbaat Development Society Artist & Writers Union Kalasib Charity Society Swakin Sector Dev. Committee Port-Sudan Sector Dev. Com.
Participation in planning	Al Gadisiya Com. Dev. Society Sadaga Shamal Com. Dev. Centre Sadaga Shamal Women Dev. Society Arbaat Farmers Union Aymas Society Haiyet Society Mogddam Pastoral Dev. Society	Fishermen Cooperative Ass. SECS -Arkowit Zat Al Netagain Society Omhail Society Mohd Qol Development Society Hadalaweb Women Society South Tokar Graduates Ass.
Shared Leadership Responsibil-ities	Al Yafiatt Organization Beja Education Fund Eastern Sudan Graduates Org. Eastern Sudan Women Development Organi-zation Sudanese Envi. Cons. Society RSS Union of the Blind	Habila Community Development Centre Port-Sudan Madinati Red Sea University Student Union Women & Child Org. for Devel-opment & Services
Control of decisions but dependent for funding	Sudanese Red Crescent Society Abu Hadiya Society Beja Cultural Club	
Full Control & Ownership	Port Sudan Association for Small Enterprise Development (PASED)	
Power to Influence policies	-	