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COMMENTARY

CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES OF THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD

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Despite its tradition of secretiveness, the Muslim Brotherhood, once highly influential, has been analyzed recently in several informative publications, some of which cover the more inclusive field of "political Islam." One approach is to treat the brotherhood as a monolithic object of study, an implacable enemy of liberal democracies determined to impose Islamist values, even a restored Caliphate, on the West. Such analysts note the posthumous influence that the brotherhood's "second founder," Sayyid Qutb, executed by Nasser in 1966, exerted (albeit indirectly) on jihadist groups such as Al-Qa'ida. Other analysts however have emphasized the brotherhood's many-sided and factional character, the current outcome of which is that surviving hard-line elders with Qutbist sympathies are challenged by a younger generation committed to nonviolence and disposed to cooperate with secular democrats. One country, Tunisia, established itself as the only authentic, albeit fragile, Arab democracy, when the Islamist party originating from the Muslim Brotherhood, Ennahda ("the renaissance"), embarked on a politics of pragmatic gradualism and cooperation with secular parties (Marks, 2017, pp. 32–37).

After the overthrow in Egypt in 2015 of Mohamad Mursi's short presidency, and the brutal reprisals subsequently taken by President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi against the brotherhood, the movement is now at the lowest ebb in its history. It was founded in 1928 by Hassan al-Banna, a schoolteacher, with the aim of fortifying the Islamic character of Egyptian society, then under British occupation, but also more generally of standing up to Western domination of the Middle East after Arab lands were divided after World War I and the Ottoman Caliphate was dismantled. Opposition to Zionism has been a constant theme. Members of the brotherhood have experienced several periods of imprisonment

and torture since its foundation and later after Egyptian independence in 1952, though at various times secular nationalists tolerated and even cultivated them (Gerges, 2018).

Some analysts (such as Frampton, 2018) assume that the motivation of the brotherhood has been entirely political in nature. Others (notably Kandil, 2015) treat it as a kind of millenarian sect. If the brotherhood in Egypt itself is hard to understand, its international branches form a kind of franchise operation whose mechanisms for maintaining a loose consistency are inscrutable to outsiders. External commentaries on the Muslim Brotherhood vary according to differences in the personal approach adopted. Several recent publications (Hamid & McCants, 2017 being an exception) barely touch on its voluntary welfare activities. As a student of philanthropic traditions, I shall try here to show the importance of this omission.

The brotherhood always maintained a studied ambiguity as to the weighting of religious, political, and welfarist elements in its aims, which are deemed in their distinctive worldview to form a comprehensive and seamless whole, the *shumūliyya* of Islam. "My brothers," Al-Banna wrote in a message to his followers in Egypt six years before his assassination in 1948, "you are not a benevolent society, nor a political party, nor a local organization having limited purposes. Rather, you are a new soul in the heart of this nation to give it life by means of the Qur'an" (Mitchell, 1969, p. 30). One cannot ignore the strong presence of religious moralism, as well as political resistance and campaigning, in the biography of Al-Banna. He was initiated as a boy into a Sufi order and at the age of thirteen became secretary in Mahmudiyya (his home town some 90 miles northwest of Cairo) of the Hasafiyya Society for Charity (*al-jam`iyya al-khairiyya al-ḥasāfiyya*), which he was later to look back on as the root and forerunner of the Muslim Brotherhood (Mitchell, 1969, p. 2). One of the priorities in the early years of the brotherhood was public health. It was active in cleaning up villages and responding to epidemics, and it also set up dispensaries, clinics, and hospitals throughout Egypt, though these were at various times closed down by the government. It founded educational institutions and small industrial enterprises. In 1945, it was required to split into two divisions: one concerned with politics and one with welfare and social services (Mitchell, 1969, pp. 36–37, 289–291).

The courtroom of history, since the rise of global jihadism, has put Sayyid Qutb in the dock. He held that the Qur'an contained all the necessary answers to the world's problems; he recommended revolutionary violence, and anathematized all actually existing societies as forms of *jāhiliyya*, merely prolongations of the "time of ignorance"

held in traditional Islam to have existed in the Arab world before the divine revelation (Gerges, 2018, p. 249). By way of extenuation, it may be recalled that Qutb began his career as a secular *littérateur*, and the tone of his most radical publications was sharpened by years of imprisonment and torture. In less aggressive mode, he wrote with eloquence on the importance of *zakat*, "the outstanding social pillar of Islam." *Zakat* was distinct from socialism, he argued, but also had nothing to do with "charity," a non-Islamic concept (Mitchell, 1969, p. 253). This claim for the superiority of *zakat*—in that the needy are accorded a right (*haqq*) to material support from the well-off (cf. Qur'an 51:19), whereas "charitable" gifts are made at the whim of the donor— is often heard today from Muslim intellectuals. The leader of the Syrian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood between 1945 and 1961, Mustafa Al-Siba'i, took the view that Islam was compatible with socialism and that *zakat* was "a powerful factor for the diffusion of love and goodness between people" (Carré & Michaud, 1983, p. 87). An exhaustive study of how *zakat* payments should be calculated and distributed was published by Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi (Qaradawi, n.d.), widely regarded as the most influential spiritual guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, though he has never accepted a formal position as such.

An analogy has been drawn between local Islamist institutions such as mosque committees and the South American Christian "base communities," marginalized groups who start by coping with small local issues and work their way up slowly to larger ones (Sullivan, 1992, pp. 8, 157–158). The Muslim Brothers' theology, however, does not aim at liberating the poor but rather at establishing a broadly Islamic order. Their social programs have been characteristically paternalistic, supported by marginalized professionals as much as by poor people, with special attention given to professional associations and with a strong emphasis on service provision rather than galvanizing disadvantaged communities (Bayat, 2002, p. 13). Some scholars have argued that Islamist charitable structures in the Middle East, for instance in Jordan, have typically promoted horizontal networks among the middle classes rather than prioritizing the alleviation of poverty (Clark, 2003). For the Muslim Brothers of Egypt, political justice was arguably more important than social justice. In 2009 it was observed from a leftist standpoint that their leaders had benefited in recent years from the freedom to acquire wealth through economic links with the State and had little in common with the impoverished masses (Tammam & Haenni, 2009, pp. 5, 16). It must be added that since its origins the brotherhood has shown a tendency to scapegoat, and sometimes stir up serious violence against, the Coptic minority in Egypt (Meral, 2018, pp. 83–84, 88–89).

A historically balanced account of the charitable commitments of the Muslim Brothers has yet to be written. Without doubt, Islamist voluntary associations have shown themselves capable of delivering effective welfare and relief services in many contexts where the State has been unable or unwilling to provide them; and it is equally certain that they have often sought a political dividend. In Egypt, the Muslim Brothers played a leading role after a serious earthquake in Cairo in 1992,and again after flooding in southern Egypt in 1994. In February 2002, after a terrible railway accident at Al-Ayatt, 70 kilometers south of Cairo, the Brotherhood was reportedly banned by the Mubarak government from raising funds or organizing help for the victims (MacFarquhar, 2002). This was an early instance of the clash between, on the one hand, political and security priorities set by governments and, on the other hand, humanitarian imperatives. This clash was to become particularly dramatic in many other humanitarian crises, with adverse consequences for the victims of disasters and conflicts, when, as part of the "global war on terror," the United States government strengthened its measures penalizing material support for terrorism. These measures claim in effect a worldwide jurisdiction and bear especially hard on Islamic charities deemed, justly or not, to have links with terrorism (ACLU, 2009; Benthall, 2016, 2017; Maxwell & Majid, 2016, pp. 46–48, 176–178).[1]

My own broad conclusion, based on published sources and on some firsthand observation in Algeria, Jordan, Britain, France, and the Palestinian Territories, is that it is a mistake to reduce the charitable and welfare activities of the Muslim Brotherhood and their affiliated organizations to mere political calculation. For Benoît Challand (2014), Islamic charities inspired by the Muslim Brotherhood are characterized by what he calls a "diffuse subjectivity": at its core is the association of *zakat* with moral purification. But in the absence of hard evidence, agreement among commentators is unlikely. It may be agreed, however, that the Islamic symbolic repertoire—including *ṣadaqa*, *infāq*, and *waqf* as well as *zakat*—is highly pertinent to questions of social justice, voluntary giving, and volunteering that arise in Muslim-majority countries and in countries with Muslim minorities.

In an article in *Foreign Affairs* in 1996 that should have attracted wider attention at the time, Abdullahi Ahmed An-Naim set his face against the rising tide of Islamist militancy but reminded his readers that Islam "has intense spiritual and political appeal among Muslims who look to it for the organizing principles of their lives. It is difficult to

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[1]   See also the Charity and Security Network, *https://www.charityandsecurity.org/*.

imagine predominantly Muslim societies abandoning their belief in an Islamic order as an ideal to be pursued, regardless of how elusive and problematic such an order may prove in real life." Casting doubt on the realistic possibilities of secular politics in the Middle East region, An-Naim argued that the pressing political challenge was to try to capture the symbolic imagination of the same populations who are targeted by the militants. After over twenty years his message seems even more apposite. In particular, an increasing recognition of the importance of Islamic philanthropic and humanitarian traditions may be seen as an indispensable counterbalance to the pull of jihadi extremism, which is sure to remain attractive to some of those who have endured, and are enduring, unrelieved suffering and humiliation as a result of conflicts in the Greater Middle East.

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A COMPARISON OF NONPROFITS' APPLICATION OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES.

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The article examines how nonprofit organizations apply project management standards. The analysis draws on a study of practices in four purposively selected and compared organizations in the United States and Lebanon. The findings from the case study indicate that even though some nonprofits apply and follow project management standards, the labeling and framing might be different from what is done in for-profit organizations. The nature of the nonprofit sector's priorities, activities, and environments (e.g., donor requirements) sometimes necessitates adjusting traditional project management standards, tools, and techniques. It is more important for nonprofits to make their projects transformational, innovative, and flexible rather than to adhere strictly to inflexible, disciplined, and standardized project management practices.

Keywords: nonprofit; NGOs; project management

Introduction

Project management principles are often associated with the private sector; however they often find some ground in the nonprofit sector. Generally, these principles are promoted to ensure the quality and effectiveness of an organization's work and also bring valuable direction to the hands of leaders and managers of organizations. Nonprofit managers, who are often tasked with managing projects funded by government grants, donations, or philanthropic investments, would benefit from principles that provide guidance on executing strategic goals and objectives. Given its significance, research on this subject is fruitful and deserves in-depth focus and empirical investigation.

Scholars and practitioners are not in full agreement on the efficacy and applicability of using project management principles in the nonprofit sector. Some arguments are based on the notion that project management success relies on the individual manager's expertise, which is constant across all fields and sectors (e.g., Bruna & Pulmanis, 2011; Carden & Eagan, 2008; LaBrosse, 2007). Less favorable arguments reflect some skepticism in regard to the net benefits from the project management approach due to the added costs and complexities involved in measuring success of goal achievement in the nonprofit sector (Bygstad & Lanestedt, 2009; Markic et al., 2012).

This article provides a bridge between concepts and practice with the objective to build on knowledge for scholars of nonprofit management but also for practitioners in the nonprofit sector. It unveils how nonprofit organizations apply project management standards as well as how they coordinate time and resources to implement projects (i.e., short-term activities with a specific start and end date). Four organizations are compared. Two nonprofits in two different countries, adopt formal standards from the private sector; the other two organizations serve as "negative cases" in that they do not formally follow these standards. The article is organized into four sections. The first discusses project management concepts and practices. The second and third present the research methodology and key findings of the case study. The article concludes with a discussion of the findings and future research directions.

Project Management in Concept and Practice

Project management dates back to times of apprenticeships, craft guilds, and various networks where skilled workers could exchange project information (Carden & Egan, 2008). It evolved throughout the industrialization and modernization periods into a new framework that not only structures the project itself, but also organizes individuals,

teams, and organizational units acting within the project. The framework includes strategic planning, organizational development, and systems of on-the-job learning. Broadly speaking, project management can be defined as "the planning, organizing, directing, and controlling of resources for a relatively short-term objective that has been established to complete specific goals and objectives" (Kerzner, 2009, p. 4). Over time, interest in project management has increased as business, industrial, governmental, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have grown and become more complex.

Merits of Project Management in the Field

The increased interest in the completion of new and complex endeavors at, or below, preset time and budgets without sacrificing quality has added to the appeal of project management tools and techniques (Carden & Egan, 2008). With the increase in cross-sector collaboration, boundaries between sectors have become blurred (Lewis, 2005). Many nonprofits have adapted to this situation by adopting a market-oriented culture and an entrepreneurial perspective in their operations and management (Anheier, 2005). Adopting tools and concepts such as strategic planning, standardization, and new measures of organizational effectiveness are expected to boost or promote greater managerial and policy expertise, transparency, capacity, and operational efficiency (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2010; Lecy et al., 2012). Attention to these practices may impact nonprofit performance and guide funders and managers as they direct their activities and address any challenges that may arise (AbouAssi et al., 2018).

The conceptual base of project management draws from various related theoretical perspectives. A broad look at the projects and their management is of critical importance, as the projects in which an organization engages can affect its scope more than its mission statement (AbouAssi et al., 2018). Projects are institutional arrangements reproduced from previous experiences in implementation (Packendorff, 1995) and are temporary endeavors within the framework of organizational goals and objectives (Turner & Muller, 2003). They are based on dynamic knowledge flow—building and learning—(Snider & Nissen, 2003) and require both understanding of practicalities—such as delays—and strategic thinking (Jugdev, 2004). Project management today views performance through the lenses of quality, timeliness, and budgets that interact in a global and mutually dependent environment (Carden & Egan, 2008).

Due to the fact that resources are often limited in the nonprofit sector, strategies that promote efficiency, transparency, and accountability are increasingly more essential and appealing to donors and funders of projects. These organizations are often bound by limited resources and adapt to donor requests to obtain grants and other sources of funding (Atia & Harrold, 2018). Donor funding has become an integral component within civil society, the lack of funding hinders their ability to complete projects and workshops for their communities (Chahim & Prakash, 2014). Furthermore, donor assistance has become very technical under the assumption that these types of approaches and expertise should guide policies (Bush, 2015), which allow projects to be well-defined with quantifiable objectives rather than "longer-term social objectives" (Lannon & Walsh, 2016, p. 2). The basic principles of project management are built on a traditional model of judging project performance based on how well time, scope, and cost are balanced (Mantel et al., 2011).[1] The actual project management practices or mechanisms are pre-project initiating, planning, executing and monitoring, and closing. Projects are developed and implemented based on plans and budgets and according to timeframes. This allows managers to use time and cost trade-offs, identify a critical path of tasks that must be completed on time, and identify slack activities that could be delayed without extending the overall project timeline (Mantel et al., 2011). Finally, every project must be evaluated to determine its effectiveness before terminating it.

Some research on the application of project management standards in public and nonprofit organizations indicates positive outcomes. Crawford and Helm (2009) highlight the importance of project management in the public sector, as it provides a suitable framework for enhancing transparency, accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness (p. 74). In a study of 38 projects in the nonprofit sector in Latvia, Bruna and Pulmanis (2011) found that organizations that did not follow the basics of project management were burdened with non-relatable goals that did not fit into the project environment. Mengal, Cowan-Sahadath, and Follert (2009) showcased the Canadian Federal Bureau to demonstrate the positive impact of the application of project management in the public sector. In the IT division, which closely followed project management standards, employees reported a positive management culture; they felt connected not only to the project and organization, but also to the "national effort." Such connections can

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[1] Some bodies, such as the Project Management Institute and Australian Institute of Project Management, have created "rules or standards" for project management and issue professional certificates.

reflect on enhanced personal and collaborative productivity, further impacting the culture of the organization.

Scholars (e.g., Brown & Duguid 1996; Ebaugh et al., 2005; Vanderwoerd, 2004) suggest that an organization can learn due to funding requirements or from the knowledge its members acquire through practice, experience, and exposure. The more engagement in knowledge-building and sharing within the organization, the more likely new knowledge will become institutionalized as part of the organizational culture, which can influence the actions and decisions among the top levels of management.

The Limitations of Using Project Management in the Field

Project management has some drawbacks for the nonprofit sector, stemming largely from the "tension between intended new performance-enhancing institutions and unwanted old practices," which risks creating institutional dualism (Brinkerhoff, 2005, p. 200). Over time, NGOs have witnessed rapid professionalization, experienced increased regulation and surveillance, and were held accountable to donors instead of communities. Given this phenomenon, nonprofits must prioritize their accountability to donors (in terms of targets and outputs) "over their broader goals of empowerment for poor or marginalized groups" (Banks, Hulme, & Edwards, 2015 p. 710). Some scholars (Lewis, 2005; Markowitz & Tice, 2002; Martens, 2008) forewarn that the push toward professionalism can divert nonprofits from their main focus; the attention shifts from project goals to time-consuming and complicated quantitative data systems and procedures.

Markic et al. (2012) recognize that cost, time, and quality are important indicators of the success of a project. However, in a study of public health organizations in Slovenia, they found that flexibility in managing people and loyalty to the social cause and to project participants are by far more important. Brinkerhoff (2004) agreed that public health organizations face different interests and incentives, particularly in regard to policy (minimum level of care to all) and individual interests (quality of care and customer feedback). A more stringent form of project management does not appear to fit in the public health sector, where flexibility and responsiveness are paramount. Furthermore, Bygstad and Lanestedt (2009) argued that information and communications technology projects in the public sector cannot focus solely on traditional project management factors of cost, time, and quality. Integration and knowledge of services, along with an understanding of stakeholders, are necessary and important. Completing

a project on time and budget does not necessarily equate to successful implementation and might hinder innovation.

In the nonprofit sector, organizations "operate with relatively organic structures and fluid procedures, avoiding excessively rigid and bureaucratic organization forms and systems" (Antlöv et al., 2010, p. 426). A highly systematic approach, or what Brinkerhoff and Ingle (1989) termed the Blueprint Model, has no room for flexibility in a highly fluid environment. Nonprofits need "a planned structuring of action…. with a concern for creating the capacity for flexibility and iterative learning" (Brinkerhoff & Ingle, 1989 p. 490). This suggests that nonprofits could learn from the private sector when it comes to project management and strategic, long-term planning to ensure institutional sustainability (Brinkerhoff, 1992). However, nonprofits also need greater flexibility and responsiveness, less standardization, more risk-taking, and enhanced innovation in their work (Jaskyte et al., 2018; Natsios, 2010). We now proceed to consider whether project management standards can be adopted from the private sector to the nonprofit sector through a comparative discussion of four organizations.

Methodology

This research is exploratory in its nature. Purposeful selection was used to identify information-rich cases that fit the study. It is more important to select a nonprofit that is a confirming case in which the outcome of interest is present (Mahoney & Goertz, 2004; Patton, 2001); that is, a nonprofit that adopts project management practices and standards. It is also important to pay attention to relevant cases where the outcome of interest is possible, but absent (Snow & Trom, 2002); other nonprofits are then selected as a negative or disconfirming case.

Accordingly, two sets of organizations were purposively selected and compared. The first set includes two organizations that clearly state and publicize that they follow project management practices in their programs and operations (Nonprofit 2 and NGO2). The second set do not claim to apply project management and therefore serve as "negative cases" (Nonprofit1 and NGO1). Each set includes a nonprofit based in the US and another based in Lebanon. To ensure comparability, the selected organizations from each country operate in the same geographical location, deliver the same types of services, and are of the same size. This purposeful selection criteria help reduce variation and simplify analysis (Patton, 2001).

Data Collection

Data collection relied on semi-structured interviews that were conducted with mid- to senior level managers in four nonprofit organizations in the summer and fall of 2013. To ensure validity of the data, at least six members from each organization were interviewed. To ensure compatibility of information quality across organizations, the interviewees held similar positions in their organizations, considering the local context. In addition, information was gathered through participant observations of meetings.

The interviews provided a longitudinal window on the work of the nonprofits. Interviewees were invited to discuss the background, work, and operations of their organizations and were also asked to elaborate on the management of their programs and activities. These interviews help capture the perspectives of this diversified group of practitioners and allow a better understanding of the semantic context (Blee & Taylor, 2002; Rubin & Rubin, 2005; Yin, 2003). The collected data was transcribed and then entered into the NVIVO qualitative data analysis program for coding and analysis. In addition to the semi-structured interviews, archival research was conducted.

Background on the Nonprofit Organizations Selected

The nonprofit organizations included two in the Philadelphia-New Jersey area and two in Beirut, Lebanon, that provide a wide range of affordable and accessible social services to meet local needs. Some of the selected American nonprofits' activities are licensed and audited by state agencies.

As Table 1 depicts, the organizations from each country are of similar size. In the US, Nonprofit1 and Nonprofit2 operate with a comparable annual budget and employ an average of 42 full-time staff members and around 70 volunteers. Senior manager positions in both organizations are occupied by highly educated staff, with a moderate turnover rate of around four years in Nonprofit1, and Nonprofit2, whose executive director has been running the organization for the last 15 years, has a lower turnover rate. Each organization is governed by a board of directors representing a diverse local community.

The two Lebanese nongovernmental organizations are smaller in their budgets and scales of operation. Both are membership associations with an average of 60 members and small numbers of paid staff and volunteers. NGO1 is directed by a group of well-educated professionals, including an executive director who has been serving the

organization for seven years. NGO2 is managed by a young professional director who recently joined the organization after working for several years in consultancy and after completing a degree in project management.

There are three main differences in the organizational setting of these organizations. First, Nonprofit2's board has more members from the private, for-profit sector than Nonprofit1's, which consists of representatives from the local government, clergy, academic institutions, foundations, and, to a lesser extent, banking institutions. Second, key Nonprofit2 and NGO2 officers, including the executive directors, have substantial experience in the for-profit, private sector. Third, besides private sector experience, a considerable number of both Nonprofit2 and NGO2 staff hold professional certificates and training in project management.

[Table 1 Here]

The next section reports on the four organizations' approaches to project management: from the inception to the close-out phases passing through execution. These approaches are then compared and juxtaposed with project management standards that were discussed earlier.

Two Main Approaches to Project Management

Representatives of the four organizations were asked about the mechanisms used to develop and implement projects. They were invited to describe the process of project development and management from initiation through implementation to termination/conclusion. The following discussion depicts the approaches to project management as described by the interviewees and observed by the researchers.

An Impromptu Approach: Nonprofit1 and NGO1

In Nonprofit1, many projects come from the vision of the Executive Director (ED), which results from networking with local organizations or receiving requests from community organizations and state agencies. "When community organizations say, 'We need services here,' we try and provide them," the ED explains. Staff can still suggest ideas to address problems in the community and could help the nonprofit be more efficient and reach more people. In NGO1, projects are identified by a leadership team, based on the experience and assessment of members and agreed on and defined for the staff, who then work on implementation.

Project Initiation

In Nonprofit1, the ED identifies projects to be implemented, sometimes as a result of meeting with community organizations to discuss needs and possible funding. In a recent example, a local community organization approached Nonprofit1 about the possibility of starting a particular project. To determine the project goals, the organization had to engage in a planning exercise. The ED meets with senior staff to assess the need, determine the best approach, and develop a concept idea or note. In this particular example, "since we have a similar program that has been running for several years, we considered if we could easily duplicate that program. We discussed potential benefits and barriers to such a program and necessary changes we need to make. We agreed with the community organization on the idea," according to an interviewee. The senior staff studies the situation; prepares a plan with a schedule, a budget, a logic model if needed, and staffing requirements; and then reports back to the ED. Upon ED approval, a funding proposal is submitted.

In NGO1, the initiation process is similar but less centralized. Committees within the organization can propose and implement projects in their domains. Ideas are brainstormed based on the knowledge of the committee members and then refined and submitted to the ED for approval. However, the organization faces a funding challenge. One interviewee commented: "We try to run projects on our own personal stamina; but at times, we need the funding and then have to take into consideration associated requirements. This definitely leads to some changes in the original initiatives but we try keeping it to the minimum."

Project Implementation

When funding is available, project implementation begins. In Nonprofit1, senior staff hires new staff or assigns appropriate staff from within the organization. "All appropriate management team members involved in program development are involved in implementation," the ED stated. A hybrid team from different departments is then formed to manage the project according to the approved plan. The team regularly communicates with partner organizations to ensure smooth operation.

In NGO1, the initiation process takes place at the committee level. Members of these standing committees work with project staff hired by the ED. The organization tries to involve different stakeholders in the process, citing an example of having school students sit on the committee that was implementing a project at elementary schools. To

that end the ED noted that: "We enjoyed having them with us, but it was logistically challenging. I can say it was a learning experience for us."

In both organizations, there are mechanisms in place to monitor and audit work quality and implementation. In Nonprofit1, employees report on project implementation at each weekly staff meeting. An interviewee commented, "these regular meetings ensure that forward movement of projects is maintained." In addition, monthly progress reports are submitted to the ED and client satisfaction surveys are conducted on a regular basis. A senior manager noted: "We want to know what is going well and if any barriers have been discovered we find ways to address them."

In NGO1, a committee member explained, "the whole committee is always on top of things and everyone is fully committed and anxious to smooth the progress of all related matters." The implementing committee meets regularly, communicates frequently with the executive director and external partners, and prepares reports as needed.

Evaluation and End of Project

In Nonprofit1, the project team concludes the project by conducting an impact assessment through surveys and interviews to measure outcomes and effectiveness. The assessment report is submitted to the ED and other partners. It should be noted also that the organization has to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local government laws and regulations.

The situation is similar in NGO1. Each committee prepares a final report to the ED and to all relevant members of the organization. As one senior manager added, "We also submit a wide variety of reports on a multitude of measures and factors even to a single donor." Due to unexpected challenges and problems, one interviewee noted that some projects are extended, while other projects, however, may be expedited through a re-engineering of tasks and re-sequencing of activities to minimize or avoid delays.

This approach has improved the financial viability of Nonprofit1, however a new venture can stretch management resources too thin. The ED commented, "The one problem that I feel this process creates is one of stress and the ability to balance community need with speed of expansion." The staff agreed and noted: "We have sometimes redirected staff without fully appreciating the impact on our core program." And, "It seems we always lack resources that allow us the luxury of adequate staff and time to complete projects on a preferred

timetable." Another concern with the need-based approach is the weak communication about changes, growth, and new projects between leadership and direct staff in Nonprofit1 and among committees in NGO1. This risks some resistance or dismay among staff and competition among committees.

A Systematic Approach: Nonprofit2 and NGO2

There were more similarities than expected between Nonprofit2 and NGO2. For both, developing a project starts at the senior management level. Managers brainstorm ideas based on a funding opportunity or an identified need. Nonprofit2 responds to requests from state agencies, but usually follows the same approach to assess project ideas. NGO2 as well tries to brainstorm and undertake problem identification while screening available funding opportunities.

Nonprofit2's ED works with the management team to determine the feasibility, viability, and suitability of a proposed project and to provide insights on possible applications. This serves as the basis for a "Project Charter," which explains the project idea, resource needs, beneficiaries, approach, and expectations. When the charter is reviewed by the management team, a coordinator is assigned to lead. The coordinator then completes a Management Plan Template, which includes all project activities, schedules, a stakeholder's register, log frame, risk register, staff, and budget. The ED reviews the template based on the Project Charter, and once approved, funding is secured and then the project is launched.

NGO2 follows the same process, however, when asked about funding availability, the ED admits, "you can say that we start backwards then. We would scale down the process, for example, the needs assessment as we work within some guidelines or given themes; it makes things easier for us. But we try not to skip any step; we have these systems in place and I want to see us follow them."

Project implementation is strictly guided by the Project Charter and a management plan template. Nonprofit2's ED works with the project coordinator to proceed with the execution, ensuring that the project is on track in terms of scope, time, and resources. The ED conducts ongoing monitoring and control. As a senior staff member noted: "There is always room for improvement in all that we do, whether it was in the process, plan, or even in something as minor as dates selected to hold an activity." This suggests assessment and evaluation is a non-stop process and take place at different levels within the organization. The same applies in NGO2, except when a project is

funded by a donor agency. Being legally binding, a grant agreement corresponds to, but takes precedence over, the Project Charter. The management plan template governs the whole project. Monitoring and evaluation become more frequent and can be external, and reporting takes place on a regular basis.

All NGO2 projects are evaluated annually in a strategic planning retreat. Project coordinators prepare an assessment report based on the management template, verifying whether the project is being implemented within the specified timeframe and approved budget. The assessment also includes the quality and impact of the deliverables and the satisfaction of the project clients. Based on the outcome of the retreat, staff members discuss whether there is a need to expand, amend, or terminate a project. A project charter may be drafted again and shared with the team to get input and assess feasibility. The whole process begins again by assigning or reassigning a project coordinator to launch and manage the project.

Both Nonprofit2 and NGO2 follow a project management process derived from the private sector. Interviewed staff of Nonprofit2 referenced the same scheme:

1. Idea Generation
2. Project Charter Development
3. Assessment and approval of Charter
4. Board Approval of Charter
5. Assignment of Coordinator
6. Development of Project Management Template
7. Approval of the Template by ED
8. Securing funding
9. Implementation according to the template
10. Ongoing monitoring and control by ED
11. End-of-year assessment (close out, extend, etc.)

According to interviewed staff, this approach makes it easier for everyone to be on the same page and to bring newcomers on board, "to hit the ground running," as a Nonprofit2 staff member commented. An NGO2 interviewee noted that this approach has helped his team better understand each other. "It is also an ongoing training for our staff, allowing us to efficiently utilize resources and time and do more. You cannot always secure additional resources [and] you definitely cannot create time." The ED also adds that this approach is impacted by practices from the private sector.

Comparing the Two Approaches

Analysis of the four cases yields several observations. The first observation relates to adopting private sector practices. Nonprofit2 and NGO2 try to emulate private sector's performance and standards. Many board members of Nonprofit2 are leaders from the private sector and key staff of both organizations have private, for-profit sector experience and training. This diffusion of practices from one sector to another through normative isomorphism, associated with professionalization (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Guler et al., 2002), is useful and appreciated. The push toward professionalism is manifested in a somewhat common culture across the two organizations, albeit thousands of miles apart. The staff members in both organizations share the same language (Brown & Duguid, 1996; Ebaugh et al., 2005); the shared language is echoed in the following comments:

> *"I know what to do without waiting for someone to tell me what to do. I can quickly refer to the charter or the template."*
> *"I personally feel that there is both higher demand and higher reward on individual accountability for performance, just like in the private sector, having worked in both."*
> *"We need to look to expanding markets to provide services as a means of growth. Operating on a business efficiency model, we can ensure that services meet standards that keep us competitive in what we do. I can then keep my job!"*

The benefits are at both the organizational and personal levels, as reflected in both attitude and performance (Mengal et al., 2009). Evidently, project management focused on building a standardized system based on best practices may increase productivity both on an individual employee level and in collaborative settings (LaBrosse, 2007). Therefore, ultimately achieving the objectives expected from the organization.

In contrast, Nonprofit1 distances itself from the perspective of the private sector. When staff members were specifically asked about adopting some modules from the private sector, there was some degree of resistance. One interviewee explained, "I cannot think of a comparable organization in the private sector that does our work," and another added, "The private sector relies on a product or service that people want but may not necessarily need. In our work, members of the community need and not just rely on our services." Additionally, staff are given training provided by state agencies on measuring and planning

related to management and operations processes, which reflect positively on staff and organizational performance.

The second observation relates to a difference in focus on processes versus leadership and teamwork. The adoption of certain standards by both Nonprofit2 and NGO2 resembles a self-regulation mechanism that can guide the organizations during implementation. This requires a continuous assessment to ensure understanding and compliance with perquisite and success factors, create new knowledge, and refine operations and performance (Bies, 2001, 2010). Consequently, there is a vested interest in the process itself. The process is not just followed but is adopted as part of the organizational culture through practice and learning (Brown & Duguid, 1996; Mahler, 1997).

In comparison, Nonprofit1 relies on strong leadership. "The leadership 'vision' shapes activities more than a 'mission' statement," the ED confirmed. Staff looks to the ED for decisions, directions, and answers. In the case of NGO1, personal commitment and teamwork are the driving forces. An interviewee commented, "Our mission constitutes a part of our personal convictions." The staff comes together to brainstorm ideas, implement projects, and run the organization. The ED affirmed, "it is all done as a team; it is always a mix of a personal and collective initiative and work."

The third observation concerns the project management practices that the four organizations follow. Interviews with staff members from these organizations, a review of published materials, and the observations of meetings and actions indicate that the four organizations follow almost the same practices with some variation in systematic application and labeling. Nonprofit2 and NGO2 adopt and consistently apply a very well-defined, systematic process in managing projects, to an extent that it becomes part of an organization culture (Mengal et al., 2009). The important variation between the two sets of organizations (1 and 2) is in how things are labeled. The table below compares the terms used by the four organizations to describe the same concept or subject. For example, instead of using a "Concept Idea," as Nonprofit1 and NGO1 do, interviewees in both Nonprofit2 and NGO2 refer to a Project Charter, which is commonly used in project management in the private sector.

[Table 2 Here]

Project Management in Practice in the Nonprofit Sector

Nonprofits have been borrowing practices from the private sector for some time—whether formally or explicitly stated—and regardless of contested practical benefits (Lewis, 2005; Mulhare, 1999). This is the case of the four organizations under study here. Nonprofits create elaborate plans and detailed budgets to ensure every project dollar is matched according to the objectives and goals, and managers can oversee sophisticated evaluation systems that guarantee the funds are enlisted in the most cost-effective way possible.

However, based on extant literature, three challenges should be considered. Nonprofit objectives (such as social service or education or empowerment) are usually long-term. Approaching these issues as "projects" with a specific scope, time, cost, and deliverables, the basic constraints that project management standards are developed to address, is not practical. Furthermore, resource availability is highly uncertain and fluctuating and, at the same time, nonprofits tend to scale up their operations to achieve impact. This makes it difficult to securely establish scopes, schedules, or costs (Uvin et al., 2000). Nonprofits work in a turbulent context characterized by fluctuating needs, challenges, and complexity and uncertainty in international development, which compels continuous adaptation and change in work and operations that risks running into mission creep or adjustment of activities (AbouAssi, 2013; Kelleher et al., 1996).

Second, the private sector heavily weighs project costs, utilizing detailed cost-benefit-analysis. In nonprofits, cost-benefit analysis may not be used or is used occasionally, especially in small to medium-sized organizations, as they do not always have slack resources that they can allocate to such operational activities. In addition, funders either do not require or do not allocate resources for such management tools (Lecy et al., 2012). Furthermore, cost-benefit analysis will not quantify social benefits and, consequently, may lead to an unfavorable outcome for project justification (Brinkerhoff, 1996; Ebrahim & Rangan, 2010).

Value measurement in the nonprofit sector impacts whether organizations can or should apply project management standards. In the private sector, a major success factor of a project is the "value" it adds to a firm by introducing change, which can most often be measured in dollar terms. For nonprofits, measuring value monetarily is not always possible and sometimes even misleading. Even scientific program evaluations that measure nonprofit outcomes and impact can be less effective in creating hoped-for change as compared with other participatory forms of evaluation (Fine et al., 2000).

The third challenge relates to stakeholders. Stakeholder management is an integral element of project management standards, as applied in the private sector. Although such a practice may exist in both the for-profit and nonprofit sectors, its application in each differs considerably. There are two sets of stakeholders: those who are interested in or benefiting from the work of the organization and those who can influence the work done. A private sector manager usually spends time and effort managing "influencing" stakeholders more than "interested" stakeholders (Dobel and Day, 2005); the stakeholder base is limited compared to the nonprofit sector. To put this point differently, the correlation between 'interested' and 'influencing' stakeholders is much higher in the private sector than the nonprofit sector. Generally, the interested actors in a private sector project are probably 'influencing' actors as well.

In the nonprofit sector, multiple stakeholders (donors, beneficiaries, taxpayers, government, etc.) are involved in decision-making and service delivery (Crawford & Helm, 2009). Thus, nonprofits spend as much time and effort managing "interested" stakeholders as "influencing" stakeholders (Brinkerhoff & Crosby, 2002) and they need greater flexibility in participation and external awareness (Brinkerhoff, 1992). For example, for a vaccination project, the "interested" parties (the larger community) may not be as influential as politicians, public agencies, or pharmaceutical companies. Reaching, educating and convincing "interested" parties is much more time consuming than the same activities with "influential" parties.

These challenges are exacerbated in the case of the Lebanese NGOs. While in principle there are no major differences in practices between Nonprofit2 and NGO2, three additional factors are worth noting. First, project conceptualizing in Lebanon is driven by donor interests more than actual social need (AbouAssi, 2013; Edwards et al., 1999), i.e., donors develop programs and priorities and set criteria to provide funding through piecemeal interventions, causing NGOs to react to the latest preoccupation of donors (Doornbos, 2003; Rahman, 2006). Second, NGOs in developing countries are under intense pressure to involve beneficiaries in the initiatives that affect them. Despite the benefits from the participatory approach, there is weak organizational readiness and commitment (AbouAssi & Trent, 2013) and possible negative implications on the effectiveness of organizational performance and delivery of services (Kilby, 2006). Third, several mechanisms such as reporting and monitoring are usually imposed by donors (Markowitz & Tice, 2002; Martens, 2008). Although these mechanisms enhance professionalization, they are constricted according to each donor's

needs, focusing on what was proposed not on what actually happened and measuring efficient and quantifiable delivery of assistance (Henderson, 2002; Jellinek, 2003).

In brief, nonprofits work in domains that overlap with or model the private sector; here, the possibility of drawing on management approaches from the private sector is immense. However, some nonprofits stand opposed to private sector norms, remaining true to more altruistic principles. These types of organizations cannot be expected to benefit from private sector approaches. Nevertheless, project management standards can still be important for the processes organizations have to follow, rather than for the results they generate. The process might help the organization build a strong culture and commitment, increase transparency and accountability, refocus and redefine goals, and increase knowledge of impending risks and limitations (AbouAssi & Trent, 2013; Ebrahim & Rangan, 2010). Nonprofits should strike a balance between applying project management standards while ensuring innovation, flexibility, and creativity. As Natsios (2010) indicates, "good development practice requires experimentation, risk taking, and innovation" (p. 35). Nonprofits vary in their capacities, hence, the balance will neither be the same across all organizations, nor will it remain static over time.

Conclusion

Project management is a viable option for nonprofit organizations. However, this approach has limitations and needs to be investigated further. This article provides a bridge between concepts and practice and assesses the adoption of project management skills across four organizations (two domestic nonprofits and two international NGOs). The interviews raised numerous questions on how nonprofits select and apply project management frameworks and the influence of top management on them. This article argues that nonprofits apply project management standards similar to those applied in the private sector, even if it is not formally recognized or explicitly stated. The two key issues here are the following: 1) labeling and framing and 2) the nature of the sector necessitates tailoring some of these practices and standards and possibly dropping others. This comparative analysis between a grant-seeking environment and a contracting-out environment further shows that the dynamics in NGO-donor relationships can complicate the application of project management practices in the work of these organizations.

This analysis should help scholars and practitioners understand if nonprofits can actually adopt standards and practices from the private sector. The analysis outlines the necessary conditions and possible limitations for its adoption. It is important for nonprofits to focus on keeping projects transformational, innovative, imaginative, and flexible rather than ensuring strict adherence to certain best practices. The next stage of this research is to empirically test the effectiveness of project management practices in the operations of nonprofit organizations. Future research could detect a measured difference in outcomes over time and show whether the expected benefits outweigh the limitations. However, it will be important to define these expected benefits, which can include increased financial resources, efficient delivery of services, or enhanced impact and effectiveness, all of which can sometimes be rivalries in nonprofits. This can be done either through a targeted survey or through pre-test/post-test experimental design, which require identifying the control group, i.e. nonprofit organizations that do not currently but intend to apply project management practices. Additionally, it is important to note that this research focused on interviews of senior level managers with experiences and perspectives unique to them. Frontline workers, who provide the routine and essential operations of the organization may provide a differed perspective on the merits or limitations of project management principles as they relate to the overall effectiveness of their organization.

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Table 1: Characteristics of the Four Organizations

Nonprofit1	Nonprofit2	NGO1	NGO2
Social services		Social services	
Same geographical area		Same geographical area	
Budget of $1,450,000 35 full-time staff & 90 volunteers	Budget of $1,700,000 50 full-time staff & 50 volunteers	Budget of $140,000 7 full/part-time staff & 15 volunteers	Budget of $150,000 5 full-time staff & 20 volunteers
	Substantial staff experience & training in private sector	A group of educated professionals	Young/new professionals with experience & education in project management
Representatives from local government & community	More board members from the private sector		

Table 2: Comparison of Terminology of Project Management Practices between Organizations

Nonprofit1/NGO1	Nonprofit2/NGO2
Community Need	Feasible and Viable Need
Concept Idea/Note	Project Charter
Project Team	Project Coordinator
Project Proposal/Plan	Project Management Plan
Logical Framework	Logical Framework
Outputs	Deliverables
Outcomes	Product/Result/Service
Impact	Benefit/Impact
Evaluating Outcomes/Impact	Controlling/Monitoring Scope/Time/Cost/Quality
Project Conclusion	Close-out

ADVANTAGES OF SYRIAN DIASPORA AID TO REFUGEES IN MIDDLE EASTERN STATES OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH.

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Based on interviews with leaders of diaspora organizations providing aid to forced migrants now residing in Lebanon, Turkey, as well as those internally displaced inside Syria, this article addresses several unique advantages that Syrian diaspora nonprofit organizations offer in their efforts to aid such migrants in various Middle Eastern host states of the Global South. Among these are a strong motivation based on deep personal ties that cause diaspora members to be more resilient and less risk averse when working in difficult contexts in host states in the Global South; a certain cultural competence and familiarity that make diaspora members adept at navigating complex legal and operational environments, particularly when diaspora members have experience living and working in the Global South; and an ability to make use of informal accountability mechanisms derived from their social network ties, which assist in identifying trustworthy partners and effective processes for providing aid. The article adds to research on diaspora philanthropy by empirically confirming its benefits in the extant literature and proposing future research comparing efforts of diaspora members based in the Global South and those in the Global North. It also contributes to the literature on third sector organizations and migration by examining Middle Eastern host states in the Global South at a time when the vast majority focuses on very few high-income host countries of the Global North (Garkisch et. Al, 2017).

Keywords: diaspora philanthropy; Syria; refugees; diaspora nonprofit organizations

Introduction

This article explores the advantages Syrian diaspora organizations have in providing aid to Syrian forced migrants now residing within Middle Eastern Muslim-majority countries of the Global South. The Syrian conflict has generated an unthinkable humanitarian crisis. An estimated 5.1 million registered refugees have fled Syria, 6.3 million people have been internally displaced, and 13.5 million people are considered to be in need of humanitarian assistance inside the country (UNHCR, n.d.-b). While much diaspora philanthropy takes place outside the presence of a formal nonprofit organization or NGO, foreign-based NGOs are one mechanism through which diaspora philanthropy occurs (Abdel-Samad & Flanigan, 2018; Newland et. al, 2010; Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2016; Flanigan, 2017).

This study is based on interviews with leaders of four diaspora groups that formed formal organizations in order better to facilitate the provision of aid to forced migrants in Lebanon, Turkey, and inside Syria. The article addresses several unique advantages that Syrian diaspora members can bring to the table when working to aid migrants when compared to larger, more traditional aid organizations. While these findings specifically relate to advantages exhibited in the efforts of the *leaders* of formal diaspora nonprofit organizations, it is reasonable to assume that, to varying degrees, similar advantages may well pertain to efforts by diaspora members more broadly, even though they may not formally lead or participate in the efforts of the NGOs at the focus of this study. Among these advantages are strong motivation based on deep personal ties, a noteworthy degree of cultural competence and familiarity with local contexts, and an ability to ensure accountability through social network ties. This work contributes to the scholarship on diaspora philanthropy by empirically confirming certain suppositions about the advantages pertaining to diaspora philanthropy espoused in the literature. The findings also suggest there are particular advantages that are evident when diaspora members themselves have experience living and working in the Global South, thus suggesting the value of future research on differences in behavior, perspectives, and impacts of efforts by diaspora members who have lived predominantly in the Global South versus those who have lived predominantly in the Global North. In addition, while the

current body of research on third sector organizations and migration is dominated by studies of migration to Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States (Garkisch et. Al, 2017), this article makes an important contribution by examining the role of organizations in Middle Eastern host states.

Methodology

This article is based on data collected through semi-structured interviews with individuals in leadership roles in four Syrian diaspora nonprofit organizations that provide humanitarian assistance to conflict-affected Syrians inside and outside the country. The organizations grew out of preexisting Syrian philanthropic networks with members who either are from Syria, or are of Syrian descent. After the onset of the Syrian crisis, these four relatively informal Syrian philanthropic networks created formally registered nonprofit organizations in order to better facilitate the provision of aid to forced migrants in Lebanon, Turkey, and inside Syria. All of the networks contain some members who are residents of the Global North and some who are residents of the Global South.[1] The formal organizations were typically registered in Europe or North America as nonprofit organizations/NGOs by network members residing in the Global North. The formation of formal organizations was driven largely by a desire to broaden and systematize fundraising and a desire to better formalize financial transfers to support rapidly burgeoning aid provision programs in the wake of the migrant crisis. The organizations included in the study are heavily involved in what Garkisch et al. (2017) would term "providing basic services" (i.e., providing for safety, humanitarian aid, health, well-being, and social welfare), with their largest focus being on humanitarian aid and social welfare (p. 1854). The organizations also have some minor involvement in "developing capacities," in that three operate schools for children (Garkisch et al., 2017, p. 1854).

The interview protocol, based in part on a survey by Riddle and Brinkerhoff (2011) and an interview protocol by Soss (2000), contains questions that explore personal motivations for becoming involved in philanthropic activity, mechanisms by which diaspora members engage with individuals inside Syria and within the region, mechanisms for sending money and resources to the region and expectations of accountability for funds, mechanisms for assessing the success of an

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[1] For the purpose of this article, the author defines Global North as high-income countries as defined by the World Bank. The author defines Global South as middle- and lower-income countries as defined by the World Bank.

intervention, and links between philanthropy and individuals' perceptions of the broad political goals of the Syrian diaspora. Interview participants were selected using a purposive sample based on individuals' leadership roles within Syrian philanthropic networks. Thirty-one diaspora Syrians who hold leadership roles in four Syrian diaspora nonprofit organizations were interviewed. Organization founders, board members, and staff members who directed core programs were considered leaders, even if these roles were unpaid. All of the interviewees, including staff members, were also members of the Syrian diaspora. Because organizational leaders were the focus of this phase of the project, saturation was reached with 31 participants, meaning that no additional new themes were found as additional data were collected, and similar themes repeated with high frequency as additional data were collected (Creswell, 1998; Given, 2016; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Saunders et al., 2017; Urquhart, 2013).

All thirty-one interview participants were Syrian nationals or individuals of Syrian descent with ongoing familial and friendship ties within Syria and the Middle East region; some individuals continue to live in the region but outside of Syria. Seventeen interview participants were Syrian nationals or individuals of Syrian descent who had spent their lives and currently reside in countries of the Global South, specifically Lebanon, Syria, and Turkey, and 14 were Syrian nationals or individuals of Syrian descent who had spent their lives and currently reside in countries of the Global North, including Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Many interview participants were involved in efforts by multiple diaspora networks and talked about their work with various initiatives in several countries. The individuals in the sample were engaged in volunteering, donating money or resources, and other philanthropic activity benefitting Syrians within Syria as well as those displaced to other countries, including Canada, Germany, Lebanon, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States. While the data speak to efforts in other countries, this article specifically draws on that related to efforts in the Global South, specifically in Lebanon, Syria, and Turkey.

Interviews were conducted between February 2015 and July 2017. Interviews were conducted in person in Germany, Lebanon, and the United States and by phone or Skype/Google hangouts with individuals based in Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Most interviews were conducted in English, but eight were conducted in Arabic by a native speaker. All individuals

interviewed were themselves Syrian or of Syrian decent, and involved in work with Syrian migrants in two or more countries. Interviewees' country of residence was not necessarily where they engaged in work that served forced migrants, as many interview participants traveled for their philanthropic efforts.

The qualitative interviews were transcribed verbatim. Arabic interviews were translated to English by a native speaker, and the accuracy of the translation was confirmed by a second native speaker. At that point, all interviews were coded using a structural approach (MacQueen et al., 2008; Saldaña, 2016) using MaxQDA software as an aid. All interviews were coded by at least two separate coders, and a high degree of intercoder reliability was achieved (Kappa coefficient of greater than .83). In addition to structural coding of the semi-structured interview data (MacQueen et al., 2008; Saldaña, 2016), coders also allowed room for other themes to emerge inductively from the qualitative data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

This study was not designed with the intention of engaging in the comparative analysis of country-level differences among the efforts of diaspora actors where service provision took place: Lebanon, Syria, and Turkey. Certainly important differences exist among the three countries and their operating environments. A future larger-scale study with a carefully designed comparative sampling frame would likely yield interesting and useful data on important differences among host country environments in the region. Likewise, this study was not designed with an explicit intention of comparing country-of-residence differences in the efforts of diaspora members, nor differences in efforts and experiences of diaspora members residing in the Global North and the Global South. However, the findings suggest possible differences in the cultural competency of diaspora members residing in the Global North versus the Global South. This pattern can only be substantiated through future research.

Background Data: Syrian Forced Migration and Third Sector Organizations in the Middle Eastern States of the Global South

As of August 2017, the United Nations High Commission on Refugees estimated that more than 5.1 million refugees had fled Syria, with more than 4.8 million displaced to countries in the Global South, including Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey (UNHCR, 2017). As of 2017, Syria is the country of origin of more refugees than any other (UNHCR, 2018). Media coverage in economically developed countries of the

Global North has given substantial attention to the experiences of Syrian refugees migrating to Europe and the impacts on European host societies as they absorb them. The same media outlets have given relatively less attention to the experience of Syrian refugees migrating to countries of the Global South and the ability of these countries to host migrants.

Differences between the needs of migrants arriving in hosts states of the Global North versus those of the Global South warrant attention. Syrian refugees who are able to migrate to northern hosts states, including European Union member states, are often comparatively better off than those remaining in the Global South. Though their suffering should not be underestimated, Syrian migrants arriving in the European Union often are somewhat more affluent, and less vulnerable, than the would-be migrants who remain behind in Middle Eastern countries of the Global South. Migrants to European Union member states are more likely to find themselves arriving in locations with comparatively well-developed welfare systems and with domestic state agencies and local systems of legal protection that facilitate their integration.

In contrast, internally displaced persons inside Syria, or refugees who migrate to geographically proximal countries such as Iraq, Lebanon, and Turkey, are often less affluent and more vulnerable and are welcomed by less-developed systems for integration. Syrian migrants to neighboring southern countries often lack the funds to travel to the European Union, or are mothers, young children, elderly, sick, or persons with a disability who are unable to make the long and dangerous journey north. These Syrian forced migrants settle in countries of the Global South that often have weak social welfare systems, limited human services infrastructure, and legal frameworks that actively prevent their incorporation.

Lebanon

Lebanon is one of the smallest countries in the Middle East region, and as of 2015, one in four residents of Lebanon was a Syrian refugee (Kelley, 2017). As of 2017 Lebanon hosts the third largest number of refugees in the world, at over one million (UNHCR, n.d.-a). It should be noted that in May 2015 the government of Lebanon requested that the United Nations suspend the registration of new Syrian arrivals (UNHCR 2017c), leaving open the high probability that the number of forced migrants in the country well exceeds this figure. The arrival of a large and vulnerable refugee population has created even greater pressure on existing service systems, which were already weak, and migrants often

live in overcrowded and substandard conditions (Kelley, 2017; UNHCR, 2014, 2017a).

Turkey

Turkey currently hosts more refugees than any other country in the world (UNHCR, n.d.-a). Though larger and wealthier than Lebanon, the Turkish context presents Syrian refugees with numerous challenges. The Turkish government's original "open-door" policy toward refugees was based on optimistic estimates of how quickly the Syrian crisis would be resolved. After the entry of 3.1 million Syrians (UNHCR, 2018), the influx has proven more difficult to manage. In Turkey, the language barrier faced by Syrian refugees hinders integration and success in local educational and economic systems, and recent political upheavals, such as an attempted coup in summer 2016, create instability that could further threaten their status in the country.[2] In both Lebanon and Turkey, local community relations are strained by growing grievances against Syrians, who are viewed as taking jobs from locals, increasing housing costs and creating housing shortages, and contributing to political instability (İçduygu, 2015).

Syria

Inside Syria, 6.3 million people have been internally displaced, and 13.5 million people are considered to be in need of humanitarian assistance (UNHCR, n.d.-b). Further complicating the aid environment, 4.9 million people live in what the United Nations deems hard-to-reach and besieged areas without regular access to humanitarian assistance (UNHCR, 2016). Both the violent conflict and large influxes of internally displaced individuals put tremendous pressure on often-destroyed infrastructure, as well as on service delivery organizations. Attacks on civilian infrastructure, such as schools, hospitals, parks, water networks, places of worship, and economic assets (UNICEF, 2015), have increased the need for services, but also increase the risk to international organizations that attempt to deliver them.

In the Middle Eastern context, a complex constellation of actors is engaged in assisting newly arrived Syrian migrants and internally displaced persons in countries like Lebanon, Turkey, and Syria. These include various United Nations agencies and the World Bank; host country national government ministries, such as those dealing with

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[2]   See for example Kingsley (2016).

education, health, and social affairs; local government agencies such as public school systems; private actors, such as private health care providers; a broad array of local and national NGOs; and smaller-scale informal community efforts (Kelley, 2017). Third sector organizations have long played a critical function in addressing challenges of international migration, including NGOs, nonprofit organizations, and formal and informal voluntary associations (Barry-Murphy & Stephenson, 2018; Garkisch et al., 2017). Third sector organizations are often more nimble than government agencies as they grapple with the complex environment of migrant influx and play a crucial role in providing services such as humanitarian aid, basic health care, and social welfare both in host and sending countries, especially in the early stages of a migration crisis ((Garkisch et al., 2017; Morgan, 2015).

Among the third sector organizations working to serve displaced individuals inside the country and refugees abroad are Syrian diaspora nonprofit organizations funded and operated by individuals of Syrian ancestry in Europe, the Middle East, North America, and elsewhere. These organizations fall into a broader category of "migrant organizations" that are made up of individuals from similar ancestral backgrounds with a mission of serving their fellow migrants (Garkisch et al., 2017; Gleeson & Bloemraad, 2012). Though accurate data is difficult to attain, diaspora organizations currently appear to be small in number and resources compared to the constellation of actors providing aid in the Syrian crisis. However, research suggests diaspora organizations have certain advantages in complex operating environments that may make them particularly adept and are thus potentially useful partners for other aid organizations.

Literature on Diaspora Philanthropy

Diasporas are de-territorialized communities that view themselves as sharing a destiny notwithstanding their geographic dispersion (Werbner, 2002). Contributing goods across national borders becomes an expression of diaspora membership, and a means of proving one's link to a global diaspora community (Brinkerhoff, 2011; Nielsen & Riddle, 2009; Werbner, 2002). For this study, diaspora philanthropy is defined as *money, goods, volunteer labor, knowledge, skills, and other assets donated for the benefit of a community broader than ones' family members, in a country or region where there is a population with whom the donor(s) identify as having ancestral ties*.

Members of diaspora groups may feel drawn to engage in philanthropy toward those with whom they share ancestral ties for a

variety of reasons. Emotional ties to a shared homeland, language, and culture result in concern for the predicament of other diaspora members at home or abroad (Abdel-Samad & Flanigan, 2018; Best et al., 2013; Brinkerhoff, 2008, 2011; Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2016). Diaspora members also may feel an obligation to give due to their comparatively higher wealth or quality of life in their new country, or may give as a function of cultural obligations (Abdel-Samad & Flanigan, 2018; Brinkerhoff, 2008, 2011; Tchouassi & Sikod, 2010). International aid professionals remain interested in diaspora groups' potential to contribute to advancement and humanitarian aid in their countries of origin (Rahman, 2011). Empirical research on the topic is growing, but remains sparse enough that Brinkerhoff (2014) describes the field as in its infancy, and Johnson (2007) describes it as one of the least understood subfields of philanthropic practice.

Mechanisms of Diaspora Philanthropy

Scholars have an emerging sense of some of the mechanisms that facilitate diaspora philanthropy. Philanthropic contributions are a vital component of remittances (Özden & Schiff, 2005; Page & Plaza, 2006; Sidel, 2008; Sikod & Tchouassi, 2007; Tchouassi & Sikod, 2010), but are challenging to parse out. Family channels and clan associations are important mechanisms for transmitting funds (Sidel, 2008; Tchouassi & Sikod, 2010). Philanthropic intermediaries typically help middle- and lower-income diaspora members target assistance to causes in the country of origin, since a lack of time, resources, and relevant skills make it challenging to develop projects individually (Newland et al., 2010; Sidel, 2008). Diaspora philanthropy occurs through a broad spectrum of intermediaries that includes ethnic and professional groups, neighborhood and regional groups, hometown associations, online giving platforms, faith-based organizations, diaspora foundations, and foreign-based ethnic NGOs, among others (Newland et al., 2010; Sidel, 2008).

Advantages of Diaspora Philanthropy

Scholars propose that diaspora philanthropy may have some advantages when compared to other sources of aid. An emotional and social commitment to their fellow diaspora members may make diaspora actors more willing to direct philanthropy toward locations that are not often targeted by other aid organizations, or more willing to endure complications and obstacles in the operating environment (Abdel-Samad

& Flanigan, 2018; Brinkerhoff, 2014; Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2016). Challenging conditions may actually provide additional commitment from some donors due to an awareness that communities in the country of origin may depend on diaspora assistance more during a period of instability (Brinkerhoff, 2004, 2008; Lubkemann, 2008). Diaspora members also are believed to have an enhanced understanding of local needs and effectives strategies when compared with non-diaspora actors (Johnson, 2007; Newland & Patrick, 2004). Because diaspora members may be more acquainted with local organizations, in particular faith-based organizations, diaspora philanthropy is thought to have the potential to reach underserved locations or assist with crises that the international community may be challenged to address (Brinkerhoff, 2008, 2011). Diaspora members may be especially adroit at evaluating potential partners, may be perceived as more trustworthy by local partners, and may have tools to implement agreements even in places where legal systems are fragile (Abdel-Samad & Flanigan, 2018; Brinkerhoff, 2011; Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2016; Newland & Patrick, 2004). Diasporans' direct experience and greater cultural competency may lead to better and more nuanced understanding of the local context, which in turn generates better decisions (Abdel-Samad & Flanigan, 2018; Brinkerhoff, 2011).

Drawbacks and Challenges of Diaspora Philanthropy

Despite its promise, diaspora philanthropy is not without drawbacks and should not be thought of as a panacea in efforts to assist forced migrants (Bains, 2014; Brinkerhoff, 2008, 2011; Newland et al., 2010; Newland & Patrick, 2004; Orjuela, 2008; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2006; Shain, 2002; Shain & Barth, 2003; Van Hear et al., 2010; Vertovec, 2004; Wayland, 2004). Despite the fact that diaspora members may be comparatively wealthier than those in their country of origin, the former are often struggling to adapt to new, more expensive societies and cannot alone bear the financial costs of larger-scale aid efforts (Brinkerhoff, 2011, 2014). Scholars warn that country-of-origin governments may be tempted to renounce their obligation to address humanitarian crises and instead rely on diaspora philanthropy and remittances, even though diaspora investments alone cannot solve major social ills (Brinkerhoff, 2011; Vertovec, 2004).

Also, the tolerance of country of origin governments for diaspora efforts appear to vary widely. Views of diaspora communities can diverge based on their motives for migration. For example, economic migrants may be regarded as less threatening than political or conflict-

driven refugees (Shain, 2002). Country of origin governments may perceive diaspora activities as partisan or as a competition for legitimacy (Brinkerhoff, 2011), and they may be especially apprehensive about diaspora groups that act on behalf of minority interests (Shain & Barth, 2003). Smaller-scale, volunteer-based efforts by diaspora communities often are accepted (Brinkerhoff, 2011), but as diasporas create formal organizations and professionalize, country of origin governments may see diaspora groups as political threats or as rivals for donor funds. Brinkerhoff (2011) suggests a continuum, where small, amateur diaspora projects are accepted, but as they become larger, more professionalized, and probably more effective, they become more likely to be perceived as threatening.

Social equity concerns can arise in diaspora philanthropy due to challenges in connecting with appropriate target populations. The most vulnerable populations are often least likely to have connections to the diaspora; because the practice of diaspora philanthropy often relies on friend and family networks, there is no guarantee that funds will reach those most in need (Abdel-Samad & Flanigan, 2018; Bains, 2014; Brinkerhoff, 2008). Efforts often are characterized by philanthropic particularism, a desire to help the donor's own ethnic, religious, or geographic group, which may lead to a lack of services and resources in some communities and duplication in others (Salamon, 1995). Since diaspora communities are especially prone to show interest solely or primarily in their own group or region, socioeconomic inequality among the local population can be further exacerbated (Van Hear et al., 2010). Finally, there is plentiful evidence that in some instances, diaspora members from conflict zones actively contribute to violent conflict in their countries of origin in the form of weapons, personnel, skills, and money in nearly all world regions (Newland & Patrick, 2004; Orjuela, 2008; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2006; Shain, 2002; Van Hear et al., 2010; Wayland, 2004). Newland and Patrick (2004) submit that because diaspora members are sheltered from the everyday impacts of violence, they may be even less disposed to conciliation when compared to those remaining in the homeland.

Findings

Advantages of Diaspora Motivations

All interviewees in the sample (31) discussed their Syrian identity and their emotional ties to Syria as strong motivations to engage in providing

aid to Syrian forced migrants. This is similar to other findings from existing literature on diaspora philanthropy (Abdel-Samad & Flanigan, 2018; Best et al., 2013; Brinkerhoff, 2008, 2011; Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2016; Nielsen & Riddle, 2009; Tchouassi & Sikod, 2010; Werbner, 2002). Even for the many interview participants who had never lived in Syria, a powerful emotional connection was evident. In fact, many such participants prefaced their statements with comments such as "Because I'm from Syria…," "Because I'm from Damascus…," or "Because I'm from Aleppo…," showing a deep sense of belonging even among second generation migrants. As one diaspora leader explained:

> *So at that point [when I became involved in aiding Syrian forced migrants], things had started to get bad and so I felt like I had so much that I owed to Syria, in terms of my cultural upbringing and going back there every summer. It was kind of a home away from home for me, and obviously for me, where my parents were born and my family was. So I felt like given the magnitude of what was going on there, it was really an obligation of mine to try and give back in some way, shape or form, and [this diaspora organization] felt like a great way to do that. (anonymous research interview, April 12, 2015)*

Or, as a local Syrian diaspora employee of a diaspora organization notes:

> *Because [the Syrian diaspora founders from the Global North] were brought up abroad they have this mentality of sharing what they have, and improving conditions for the Syrians. The founders never cut that cord between themselves and Syria; it is still there. (anonymous research interview, July 18, 2016)*

Throughout the data it is evident that these ancestral ties mean that the interview participants felt they were compelled to engage in work with migrants leaving Syria, regardless of obstacles (24 or 77%). As one diaspora staff member notes:

> *A lot of NGOs, Syrian or Lebanese or Turkish local NGOs, they are funded by a big funder like the UN and if they stop the funding, the NGO stops the project. But we have so many Syrian donors abroad, if one donor leaves or suspends funds, we can look for other donors and continue the project. Our donors are willing to stick with us even when things get hard, or there is*

donor fatigue with this migrant crisis. (anonymous research interview, May 27, 2015)

With all interview participants (31), it was clear that an awareness that one's fellow Syrians are reliant on diaspora assistance generated a sense of obligation to continue aid during challenging times (Abdel-Samad & Flanigan, 2018; Brinkerhoff, 2004, 2008, 2014; Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2016; Lubkemann, 2008).

The Role of Cultural Competence and Familiarity

As is suggested in the literature (Abdel-Samad & Flanigan, 2018; Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2016; Johnson, 2007; Newland & Patrick, 2004), many diaspora members in this sample reported additional cultural competency and local knowledge that supports them in their efforts to assist Syrian forced migrants (28 or 90% of respondents). Examples of cultural competence mentioned in the interview data includes language skills, familiarity with religious practices, and social skills related to appropriate ways to approach and address individuals based on age, gender, and social status. Local knowledge discussed in the interviews includes knowing amenities that exist in the geographic region and individuals or businesses based in different areas. For example, local knowledge of which village might have decent Internet access or had a concrete business that might help rebuild a school was very helpful for logistical purposes. The value of cultural competence and local knowledge was illustrated not only in interview data from diaspora members from the Global North, but also in interviews with local Syrian diaspora staff, who were Syrian nationals or members of the diaspora from the Global South. As a local Syrian staff member noted:

> *Having a board of Syrian expatriates does make a difference, I think mostly for the positive. All of the members on the board now used to visit Syria at least every other year for the summer, so they still have relatives in Syria, they know Syria, they are familiar with the culture. It's not like they left and never went back. And this is very important because they can relate the work to their lives, they can relate to the Syrians there, and they want to work to help their fellow Syrians move ahead. They are passionate about it. (anonymous research interview, April 28, 2015)*

Another Syrian diaspora staff member from the Global South noted:

> *Being a Syrian [diaspora] NGO, the founders insisted on hiring Syrians, which I think was a very good idea because then the workers can relate to the crisis the children are going through, or have went through previously before coming to Lebanon. One of the challenges we found with the Syrian children and the parents is that the Lebanese teachers, they can't relate to them. They can't understand some of the cultural differences, and the trauma they are coming from, but when the Syrians taught them, the children were psychologically and emotionally more at ease. (anonymous research interview, July 2, 2016)*

All Syrian diaspora interviewees from the Global South (17) indicated that those from the Global North were better prepared culturally to work in the operating environment than volunteers or staff of other organizations they met who were also from the Global North, but not of Syrian ancestry. There are, however, limitations to the degree of cultural competency that came with simply being of Syrian descent. The interview data makes it clear that Syrian nationals living in southern countries receiving refugees, such as Lebanon and Turkey—or those who had more recently lived in the Global South—had a better sense of the local context than those who had been raised in the Global North and had less extensive experience inside Syria or the Middle East region. Examples present in the interview data mostly relate to misunderstandings about the availability of technology in refugee camps (mentioned by 10 or 59% of Global South interviewees), the technological adeptness of the refugees (mentioned by 10 or 59% of Global South interviewees), or the preparedness for and interest in education among refugee parents (mentioned by 12 or 70% of Global South interviewees). Local Syrian diaspora staff describe needing to explain to some members that many refugee camps do not have Wi-Fi, or that a number of Syrian parents who did not send their children to school in Syria before the war still expect them to work in their new host country rather than attend school. One Syrian diaspora staff member explained:

> *Definitely because [the Syrian diaspora donors from the Global North] are not living in Syria now and because they never lived in Syria as citizens, but as expatriates, sometimes they see things from the eyes of a person who has a top-notch education, who has traveled the world, who has experience, and they have expectations that are not realistic. For example, they might*

> *expect that the refugees are going to learn English in like four
> months, which is impossible, or expect them to know how to use
> a laptop. So they had to learn about the children. They also
> expected the teachers to know more modern or more interactive
> styles of teaching, more children-centered styles, and of course
> they don't know that. So these are all things they have to learn
> about the local environment when they come visit the schools.
> (anonymous research interview, June 26, 2016)*

Interview participants also described interventions that were based on
conditions typically found in the Global North, but that were not
common in southern countries and especially uncommon in refugee tent
encampments. One staff member mentioned:

> *We had a [Syrian diaspora donor from the Global North] who
> wanted to give us fifty tablets for a more interactive classroom,
> but we said, "Hang on, let's see if we can find Arabic apps
> first," because most apps are very hard for us to use with our
> students, for example with reading or science, because the
> students can't read English. So we had to let [the Syrian
> diaspora donor from the Global North] know they should let us
> do this research first before they go buy tablets. Plus in our tent
> school, there is sometimes electricity but there is no Internet, so
> [the Syrian diaspora donor from the Global North] forgot that
> our schools and our students are different. (anonymous
> research interview, February 25, 2015)*

Syrian nationals and diaspora members living in the Global South
described efforts to educate diaspora Syrians from the Global North on
the local context when working with northern diaspora-funded projects
in the region. One explained:

> *Initially they [the diasporan Syrians from the Global North]
> didn't have a very accurate idea of what it is like to work here
> and what we need to do, but now they do, because now they
> come visit us twice a year. Some of them haven't been here so
> they still don't understand what goes on here, and all the
> aspects of helping out. (anonymous research interview, May 2,
> 2016)*

Another stated:

> *They [the Syrian diaspora donors from the Global North] used to have very high expectations but now they have learned that it takes time. We have taught them, "Calm down, slow down, it takes extra time here," and now they understand that they have to wait longer for things to get accomplished. (anonymous research interview, June 18, 2016)*

These data indicate that while diaspora members may bring a certain level of cultural competency to efforts to aid forced migrants (Abdel-Samad & Flanigan, 2018; Johnson, 2007; Newland & Patrick, 2004), it may vary greatly based on the country of residence of the diaspora member and the extent of their experience living and working in the Global South.

Advantages of Informal Networks and Accountability

The literature on diaspora philanthropy suggests that diaspora members may be particularly capable of evaluating potential partners and may be able to enforce agreements even in places where legal systems are absent or weak (Abdel-Samad & Flanigan, 2018; Brinkerhoff, 2011; Newland & Patrick, 2004). Data from these interview participants indicate that Syrian diaspora members have an enhanced ability to identify trustworthy partners and circumvent challenges in the operating environment, such as non-functioning financial systems, by making use of information gathered through their social network ties in the diaspora. The Syrian diaspora's social network not only allows for the collection of information about potential partners, but makes use of the powerful role that reputation plays in Arab social contexts. Interview participants describe contacting friends, family members, friends' family members, and family members' friends by phone, Facebook, or Skype as first attempts to seek potential partners and assess their reputation and trustworthiness. They describe their confidence in identifying trustworthy partners with whom to collaborate in a service provision because of the potentially devastating consequences of lost reputation and associated shame if someone were to recommend a poor partner.

Trust is critical to successful collaboration (Brown et al., 2007; Emerson et al., 2012; Romzek et al., 2012) and can offer numerous benefits (Klijn et al., 2010; Romzek et al., 2014.) In many collaborative public service networks, trusted individuals share knowledge of local needs in order to better serve people (Arino & de la Torre, 1998; Bryson et al., 2006; Merrill-Sands & Sheridan, 1996). Syrian diaspora organizations make use of their social networks when selecting potential

partners (Abdel-Samad & Flanigan, 2018). Syrian social networks are dense (Cunningham & Sarayrah, 1993; Leenders & Heydemann, 2012; Stevens, 2016), assisting members both materially and socially (El-Said & Harrington, 2009).

The capacity to pinpoint trustworthy partners through diaspora social networks gives Syrian diaspora members "eyes on the ground" in places where it is difficult for aid organizations to operate due to lack of knowledge of a locality, logistical challenges, and even dangerous conditions. Trusted individuals can provide an assessment of local needs and offer channels to transit money, goods, and expertise into communities that might otherwise be problematic to reach (Abdel-Samad & Flanigan, 2018; Sidel, 2008; Tchouassi & Sikod, 2010.) Syrian diaspora organizations use the trust embedded in their social networks to assess people and organizations with whom they can cooperate. Interview participants reported an ability to tap into their social networks both in the region and inside Syria to determine appropriate partners and identify "good names" (Abdel-Samad & Flanigan, 2018). Interview participants also reported feeling less comfortable partnering with organizations if there was no one involved they knew or recognized. As one interview participant explained:

> *In our small Syrian community, everyone knows everyone. If you name someone's name, or their village, we or someone in our family will know them, or someone they know, a friend or neighbor or cousin. And then we start working our network. We start collecting information to know who might help us in [a specific border community], who would have information if the roads or electricity are working in [a Syrian town], and of course we ask who we can trust, who works well and who has honor, and of course, sometimes, who to avoid. (anonymous research interview, June 12, 2016)*

Diaspora organizations also overcome financial and security barriers in Lebanon, Turkey, and Syria through the connections that derive from their friend and family networks. These social networks allow Syrian diaspora organizations to access resources that make them more productive. For example, a trusted Syrian individual regularly withdraws cash from a diaspora organization's United States bank account at an ATM in Lebanon in order to operate refugee schools and pay teachers. Since Syrian organizations are viewed with suspicion in Lebanon and typically are not permitted to open bank accounts, and US banking regulations make it remarkably challenging to transfer money to the

region, this informal arrangement with a trusted partner is the only means by which to fund operations. Interview participants also described using Syrian diaspora social networks to identify trustworthy partners who can move money, supplies, and other aid across the border into Syria.

Accountability is relational in nature (Abouassi & Trent, 2016; Ebrahim, 2003), and trusted individuals and organizations are identified through diaspora social networks and can be held accountable for any malfeasance through them. To ensure the success of the screening process and the successful delivery of services, Syrian diaspora organizations rely on a crucial tool of informal accountability— reputation (Romzek et al., 2012; Tsai, 2007; Hossain, 2010). Reputation can be used to sanction or reward partners professionally and socially. If individuals or organizations lose their reputation within the Syrian diaspora network, then the potential for any future collaboration decreases, and their social reputation is automatically affected. In the case of Lebanon, Syria, and Turkey, Syrian diaspora organizations are concerned about their own reputation and also rely on the reputations of others to ensure that partners provide services effectively.

Of course, social networks and reputation also are important in the broader, non-diaspora aid community. However, Syrian diaspora members benefit from a different form of social network that is comprehensive, geographically dispersed, and made up of individuals with highly varied skill sets and connections (Abdel-Samad & Flanigan, 2018). For example, a diaspora member with an engineering degree reported knowing engineers, architects, and others working in the contracting business who are able to provide trusted contacts for reconstruction projects. In addition, a diaspora member with an accounting background, who has contacts in the banking industry, is better able to identify viable mechanisms for moving money to fund projects and someone with contacts in the transportation industry is better able to find trucks to transport aid and identify safe trucking routes via his contacts. These varied networks allow Syrian diasporans to reach difficult to access areas and circumvent problematic systems that are challenging during war time. As one individual explained:

> *When we were trying to rebuild the school of course we needed concrete. And how can we know who has concrete? Or whose truck is working, or who even has fuel for the truck? And which roads from which villages are open for this truck? Well, we know [one individual] has a brother who does construction. And the brother, he has other contacts. And we know other people in another nearby village who can help. And in this way,*

> *we can come up with a solution. (anonymous research interview, July 5, 2016)*

Reputation is a more powerful tool of accountability in the Syrian diaspora community because membership raises the stakes that come with a loss of reputation. Partners fear losing their reputation not just professionally, but within larger family and friendship networks in the Syrian diaspora (Abdel-Samad & Flanigan, 2018). Diaspora interview participants report that losing their reputation due to poor performance in providing aid or an unreliable recommendation could result in lost friendships, anger from entire families, or one's own parents feeling shame. These concerns motivate the person making the recommendation to only suggest partners in whom he or she is truly confident and to motivate the individual to perform honestly and effectively. One interview participant explained it as follows:

> *Do you know any Syrian mothers? Well, let me tell you about my mother. If I am shamed it would really be like death to her. If I gave a bad advice to [our partners] in these difficult times and it caused big problems for people, of course my mother would know, my whole family would know. Across borders, across the oceans, it does not matter, they would know. They hear things, they find out. And that shame, it makes me think very carefully about any name I give. (Anonymous research interview, May 27, 2016)*

Conclusion

As mentioned above in the literature review, diaspora philanthropy should not be thought of as a magic bullet that can solve the problems of humanitarian aid to forced migrants in southern host countries. Some interview participants note that the social network ties that serve as an asset in providing aid also mean that aid often is limited to communities where diaspora members have friendship and family ties. Rather than being identified through a needs assessment, sites of aid are identified through an assessment of one's social network, with preference often given to locations where such networks will make humanitarian projects most feasible (Abdel-Samad & Flanigan, 2018).

Even so, there seem to be clear benefits that come with Syrian diaspora members providing aid to forced migrants moving to and within countries of the Global South. Many Syrian diaspora members, being from the Global South themselves, have past experience that allows them

to develop effective strategies for circumnavigating institutions that may be ineffective, corrupt, or may not function in the ways that individuals from more economically developed countries expect. Southern-based diaspora members may have more knowledge about local conditions and needs, even when compared to diaspora members who have ancestral roots in the Global South but have lived the majority of their lives in the Global North. Syrian diaspora members have an advantage identifying trustworthy partners in southern host countries through friend and family networks, using social reputation as an accountability mechanism. Finally, diaspora members have strong emotional ties to their fellow Syrians, leading them to persevere in their provision of aid in southern contexts that are challenging and at times dangerous.

Diaspora philanthropy can be only one component of strategies to provide humanitarian aid to migrants. Nonetheless, in contexts where experts such as Kelley (2017) call for greater reliance on national NGOs, diaspora nonprofit organizations can be an important part of the constellation of actors providing humanitarian assistance. This work and future research can contribute to better understanding the potential of these third sector actors in the migration context. This article adds to the extant literature on diaspora philanthropy by confirming with empirical qualitative data certain benefits suggested in current scholarship. In addition, this research adds an important perspective from southern host states in a body of scholarship in which northern perspectives are overly represented (Garkisch et. Al, 2017). This article makes an important contribution by examining the role of organizations in Middle Eastern host states.

The findings of this study suggest there are particular benefits to be gained when diaspora members themselves have experience living and working in the Global South, advocating for the value of future research on differences in behavior, perspectives, and impacts of efforts by those based in the Global South versus the Global North. Future research that seeks to better understand the scope of diaspora organizations operating in contexts of migration and to carefully compare difference between the attitudes, behaviors, and strategies of diaspora members from the Global South and the Global North, can contribute substantially to scholarship and practice in migration crises.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Where were you born (Syria, another country in the Middle East, or elsewhere)?

If in Syria: How long have you lived outside Syria?
                What is your current country of residence?
                How long have you lived in your current country?

If outside Syria: Do you consider yourself Syrian (or Syrian American, or a similar identity)? Arab (or Arab American, or a similar identity)?

1. *For nonprofit volunteers or employees:* Can you tell me a little bit about your position in the community?

2. Can you tell me a bit about your current activities helping other people (including Syrians) and how you became involved? What motivated you to become involved in these activities that serve others?

3. Do you/your organization try to help people in other countries? If so, where?

4. How did you become connected to the people or projects you help in other countries?

5. Some people/organizations are able to send money to help people in other countries, and some are able to be directly involved in projects in other countries. Do you do either of these? Are these efforts mostly in your country of origin (Syria) or also in other countries? (if so, which other countries)?

6. This card/weblink shows different kinds of activities people sometimes support. (*Give participant "CAUSES" card, or provide weblink in advance.*)

7. Thinking about your efforts OUTSIDE the United States, can you please mark which activities are important to you and how your direct your time, money, or other assistance?

a. can you tell me a little about the two or three items you marked that are most important to you?

8. How do you select the people or projects you offer assistance to in other countries?

9. When you help people or organizations in other countries, do you work with an intermediary organization (an organization that helps you get money or other assistance to those in need)? If so, what kind of organization(s) do you work with? (Examples might be a church/mosque, government agency, an individual, or a local NGO.)

10. Which of the following best describes your expectations of intermediary organizations you contribute money to?

    a. I do not want to know the results of my donations (I give for the sake of giving).
    b. It is not necessary for them to inform me of the results of my donations.
    c. I would like to know the results of my donations.
    d. My support depends on knowing the results of my donations.

11. Do you think it is easy for people like you to have a good sense of how the money or resources you send overseas are used? Why or why not?

12. What would you say are the major goals of your activities in other countries?

13. How do you know if the people or projects you help in other countries are successful?

14. If a group of immigrants, refugees, and their families from your country of origin got together and formed a collective movement, do you think it could influence the kinds of policies that are made in your country of origin? Why?

15. Would you say you and other immigrants or refugees share anything in common in terms of what you might want

government in your country of origin to do? Do you share any political interests as a group?

16. If a group of immigrants and refugees created an activist organization to press for changes in government policies in your country of origin, would you want to join it?

17. Do you think people like you can help increase peace and decrease conflict in your country of origin? Why or why not? If yes, how?

18. Do you think people like you can help government institutions serve people better and be more democratic in your country of origin? Why or why not? If yes, how?

19. Is there anything else you think it is important to tell me about your efforts? Is there something I should have asked, but didn't?

Causes Card

Type of cause	I have a special interest in this area	I work actively in this area (through job or volunteer work)	I give money or goods to help address issues in this area	I am a member of an organization that works actively in this area
Animals				
Arts and Culture				
Business and Professional Associations, Unions				
Children				
Climate Change				
Democracy and Governance				
Disaster Recovery/Other Emergencies				
Economic Development				
Other Development Aid				
Education				
Environment				
HIV-AIDS				
Health				
Housing				

Human Rights				
Humanitarian Assistance				
Hunger				
Illness Research or Care (e.g., cancer)				
Law, advocacy, and politics				
Malaria				
Microfinance				
Peace and Security				
Research				
Religion				
Social Services				
Sport and Recreation				
Technology				
Volunteerism Promotion/ Philanthropic Intermediaries				
Women and Girls				

BOOK REVIEW

THE EXTREME GONE MAINSTREAM: COMMERCIALIZATION AND FAR RIGHT YOUTH CULTURE IN GERMANY

Reviewed by Nadeen Makhlouf
Indiana University

Important events have caused many interested observers to reflect on the state of the world and their impact on our socio-political environment. These events include major global economic shocks, political and populist movements, political uprising, etc. In this timely book, *The Extreme Gone Mainstream: Commercialization and Far Right Youth Culture in Germany*, Cynthia Miller-Idriss alerts readers to some of the avenues that far right groups use to spread their extreme ideas and ideologies, and the impact of the large-scale commercialization of their symbols, codes, myths, fantasies, and divisive messages on the radicalization of vulnerable youth and other unwitting members of society. Miller-Idriss views radicalization as a process that results in the indoctrination of troubled and angry youth, and the redirection of their anger toward selected societal institutions and social groups. She explains that this process capitalizes on specific emotional urges that appeal to marginalized men, specifically the desire for belonging as well as overall frustration at mainstream society (Miller-Idriss, 2017a; 2017b).

Although Miller-Idriss focused her research primarily on the far right groups and subcultures in Germany, her findings and conclusions are relevant in other settings; hence, her repeated reference throughout the book to far right and extreme groups in different societies such as the Ku Klux Klan, the Skinheads, islamophobes, neo-Nazis, neo-fascists, white supremacists, anti-Semites, nativists/ultra-nationalists (anti-immigrants), Aryan nationalists, as well as their codes, symbols, and images. To some of the disgruntled, the appeal of the far right "emanates from (its) expressions of extreme rhetoric" (Miller-Idriss, 2017a, p. 182). Such rhetoric may not be "rational or even politically motivated" (Miller-Idriss, 2017a, p. 182), but may have a strong emotional impact, Miller-Idriss argues. A core concept that the author skillfully conveys is that in today's highly mobile and connected societies, far right symbols, codes, heroic images, and historic myths travel widely, whether they are or are not, fully understood by the average person, through the broad commercialization of such things as T- Shirts and other items of clothing. Even wearing tattoos sometimes conveys coded messages. Extreme far right symbols and codes, as the author articulates, "help facilitate the construction of far-right identity by forging a connection and sense of belonging to other insiders within the scene, and by acting as a mechanism to express rage… against mainstream society" (Miller-Idriss, 2017a, p. 323).

Thus, through the large-scale commercialization of coded objects and extremist messages, the end result, at least to some degree, is "mainstreaming the extreme." The author also notes that banning some of the extremist codes by some authorities has not helped much since forbidden codes are often modified slightly to evade the ban and any penalties associated with it. A particularly receptive group to this subculture is likely to be the disenfranchised, marginalized, and rebellious youths who feel that they have been left out and are eager to gain acceptance by affiliating with some sub-cultural group outside the mainstream. Vulnerable individuals and groups, as the writer explains, often feel that they have been unsuccessful by traditional societal standards. Therefore, they look for new identities by becoming insiders in some fringe groups and subcultures.

This book tells the reader a great deal about the extreme far right sub-cultures and youth radicalization. An additional value added from this work is that it provides insight into the context and environment within which organizations operate and must adapt. Future work may consider elaborating on such points and emphasize the importance that context plays in civil society institutions. Among the key assumptions of the ecology of organizations is that they "are best understood as

embedded within communities, political systems, industries, or coordinative fields of organizations" (Feeney, 1997, p. 490). This underscores a key fact that civil society and other organizations that are increasingly called upon to serve the interests of the public are affected and influenced by the external environment (Eikenberry and Kluver, 2004). Such analyses emphasize the role of the cultural space in which representations and opinions of society are formed and evolved to and construct the basis upon which politics and policies operate (Castells, 2008; Giddens, 1979). Additionally, an understanding of the times and context within which organizations are situated can help managers see and appreciate their ability to influence institutions as well as allow volunteers or funders to see the context within which they make investments whether the investments be in time, money, or political capital (Sandfort and Stone, 2008).

This suggestion, however, does not detract from the contributions of this work to our understanding of how commercialization of some symbols and codes can lead to the extreme becoming mainstream. "The Extreme Gone Mainstream" is a must read for scholars, social scientists, and political observers at this time, in which we witness a rise of populists, nationalists, racial supremacists and anti-globalists in several countries. The rise of such groups can reverse the post WWII trend toward globalization, ethnic tolerance, social harmony, and respect for diversity.

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BOOK REVIEW

THE PRACTICE OF ISLAM IN AMERICA AN INTRODUCTION.

Andy Williams
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This title is an edited volume by 12 experts on various aspects of Islam in the US with the goal "to provide clear answers to essential, but basic questions about how observant Muslim Americans practice Islam" (Curtis, 2017, p. 2). An emphasis throughout is the tremendous variegation of American Islam both religiously and ethnically: Muslim Americans are the most racially diverse faith group in America. The book is composed of three sections: (1) prayer and pilgrimage; (2) holidays; and (3) life cycle rituals; and is replete with testimony from American Muslims about the various topics.

The first section begins with a chapter on the most frequently performed Islamic ritual, *salah* – the five daily prayers. An important preparation for salah is *wudu* (ritual ablutions) to "wash away the impurities of daily life" (p. 17). Ablutions can be difficult to perform outside of one's home and innovations such as Wudu Gear brand's socks enable Muslims to avoid washing their feet in sinks. Deeper concerns about public prayer, namely safety and discrimination, lead some Muslims to make-up salah at home if they are not able to find a secluded space in public. These concerns dovetail with issues of religious liberty and the first amendment. Also, Muslim Americans have developed "third spaces," neither Mosques nor secular spaces, which are used for gatherings and prayer. The creation of new locations and manners of association is an excellent example of the generative capacity of

philanthropy and civil society. At its best, philanthropy is an innovative and constructive force in the face of social change or marginalization.

Chapter two focuses on *dhikr* (remembering the divine) conducted primarily by Sufi Muslims; and it does so by comparing three different versions of collective dhikr. This first, in Spring Valley, NY, is the most traditional of those profiled and is composed primarily of Turkish immigrants. The second, in Manhattan's financial district, is led by an American woman and has a more open tone (it is not unusual for Jews or Christians to attend). The last, also in Manhattan, is catered to appeal to second-generation Muslim-Americans. Unlike the former two, this group's dhikrs have no music, dance or invocation and have little in the way of religious relics. Their understated gatherings reflect both the difference in generations and post-911 fears. Though each has its own unique character, through dhikr, they share the goal of taking "steps to become a more Godly human being, and to eventually enter the state of constant dhikr, continually mindful of God's closeness" (p. 37).

The third chapter describes the meaning and practice of Hajj in American Islam. The chapter helpfully walks through decisions to go (including immigration issues), preparation (both spiritual and physical), activities of the Hajj itself, and return home. It also includes insights from a dozen American Muslims in order to explain what the Hajj means in the context of American Islam.

The second section of the book, focusing on Islamic holidays, begins with a discussion of the two most important holidays of the Islamic calendar: Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. The chapter discusses practical matters like determining the month of Ramadan (per lunar calendar), decorations, and hydration, while also discussing its spiritual and cultural meaning. Eid al-Fitr is likened by some to Christmas.

Chapter 5 discusses Ashura, which commemorates Imam Husayn, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, who died on the battlefield of Karbala in 680 C.E. While everyone observes it in their own way, the retelling of the Karbala story is an important component. Husayn, who died at the hands of fellow Muslims, is remembered as a martyr standing against unjust power—particularly by Shi'a Muslims. The Ashura narrative functions in part as a "liberation mythology" used by the likes of Gandhi and Malcolm X in the fight against injustice (p. 113-114).

The final chapter on Islamic holidays discusses *milad*, celebrations of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday. Celebrations are particularly common in Sufi communities and at times have an inter-Muslim or even interfaith character. Significant variety exists both in the ceremony itself and in the way in which the Prophet is viewed. For some,

Muhammad is simply a prophet through whom the divine word of God was revealed; but for more mystical Muslims, he is "coeternal with creation itself" (p. 125-126). This latter position is condemned by some Muslims as shirk, or "attributing to any person or object, powers or reverence that should rightly only be the purview of God" (p. 126).

The seventh chapter, which explores birth customs, commences the penultimate section of the book focusing on life-cycle rituals. Preparation for pregnancy, managing the birth, reciting the *adhan* and *iqamah* (call to prayer), charitable giving, male circumcision, naming, and breast-feeding are some of the central issues described. A theme throughout is that American Muslims seek a wide variety of input, both Islamic and not (e.g. Dr. Spock's *What to Expect When You're Expecting*), through birth and early infant care—one mother referenced the Prophet's saying, "seek knowledge even in China" (p. 155).

Chapter eight covers the *nikah* or marriage ceremony via recounting three actual Muslim-American weddings in which the same two Qur'anic verses were read—both verses reference mates as the creation of God, the latter speaking of the love and mercy that God puts between spouses (4:1 and 30:21). Like many Islamic customs in the US, wedding ceremonies differ greatly, but consensus exists on the need for consent, a bridal gift, and witnesses. In addition, the chapter discusses Islamic law related to weddings and the norms regarding sexual access and gender, as well as the interplay between the "Muslimness" and "Americanness" of American Muslims.

The concluding chapter in the section focuses on death and funerals. In addition to detailing items such as bodily resurrection and funeral prayer, chapter nine discusses efforts to comply with both Islamic ritual requirements and US law. For example, Islamic customs stipulate that burials take place within 24 hours of death and without a coffin, which proves to be challenging in many US contexts.

The fourth and final section covers Islamic ethics and religious culture. It begins with a chapter on philanthropy and "social giving." *Zakat*, one of the five pillars of Islam, and *sadaqa* are important elements of Muslim philanthropy. Zakat is often referred to as a "'payment' rather than a gift," and evokes duty and love blurring together (p. 210-211). This emphasis on duty is important. In discussions about the philanthropic sector, the notion of giving based solely on donor good-will is insufficient. First, it underemphasizes social bonds and solidarity—a particularly potent challenge in individualistic societies such as the US. Second, a focus on good-will alone occludes the structural elements of poverty and marginalization. A recognition that societal order helps create poverty and marginalization, as well as wealth

and power, goes hand-in-hand with a view of philanthropy as obligatory—seeking justice or ensuring the rights of all members of society. Additionally, Islamic-American philanthropy includes the desire "'to offset stigmatizing effects' of popular discourse" in post 9/11 America, while simultaneously meeting contemporary expectations of accountability and transparency (p. 212).

Food practices constitute the penultimate chapter. In a non-Muslim majority country such as the US, determining what is and is not *halal* can be complicated. General consensus exists over what is *haram* (e.g. alcohol and pork). Yet, significant variation exists on other issues, such as whether permissible meats need to also be *zabiha*. Some hold that only animals butchered by Muslims are permitted, while others believe that the meat of animals slaughtered by People of the Book (Jews and Christians) are as well. The chapter also discusses livestock more broadly. Factory-style farming comes under religious scrutiny by some Muslims, particularly on the issue of whether or not the meat of animals raised in such conditions can even be considered halal, regardless of their manner of slaughter.

The book ends with an essay on the *Qur'an*. In a post-9/11 America, significant attention is given to questions (from skeptics and young Muslims) on its content. Reference is also made to early historical (e.g. Jansen Van Salee), contemporary (e.g. Keith Ellison swearing on Thomas Jefferson's Qur'an) and artistic uses of the Qur'an in America. These American uses of Islam's most sacred text are a reminder of the freedom, pluralism and diversity at the heart of the American aspiration (in its best expressions). US philanthropy and civil society has a key role and a self-interested stake in recognizing and protecting that heritage.

This volume would be good for scholars and students with an interest in Islam in America, and who are relatively new to the subject. It would also be valuable to scholars in other disciplines impacted by religious practice. For example, researchers in political science or philanthropic studies could use this book to better understand a sub-segment of American society in regard to public policy and non-profit praxis.

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COMMENTARY

2018 SYMPOSIUM ON MUSLIM PHILANTHROPY AND CIVIL SOCIETY.

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On October 2 and 3, 2018, the Muslim Philanthropy Initiative (MPI) at the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, in partnership with Lake Institute on Faith & Giving, International Institute of Islamic Thought, and the Center on Muslim Philanthropy, hosted its second Symposium on Muslim Philanthropy and Civil Society. Over 35 scholars from across disciplines and the globe—including Canada, the United Kingdom, Nigeria, Egypt, Ghana, South Africa, India, Indonesia, and Australia—presented their research at the two-day multidisciplinary symposium held in Indianapolis.

When we launched our first issue of the *Journal of Muslim Philanthropy & Civil Society* (*JMPCS*) back in November 2017, we were intentional in outlining the necessity of a multidisciplinary approach to Muslim philanthropy, in order to fully examine and understand what is so "Muslim" and "philanthropic" about it. While we hope to publish several if not most of the papers presented at the symposium in future issues of *JMPCS* (Khaldoun AbouAssi and Nadeen Makhlouf's paper is published in this issue), as Managing Editor, I would like to share some insights from the research presented that day as we at the journal look forward to facilitate further conversations and scholarship in this emerging field. Simply due to time and space, I will limit my discussion to a few papers that resonated with me most in articulating the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead in the field of Muslim Philanthropy and Civil Society.

First I will take a look at the United States. Edward Curtis opened up the symposium by making the claim that the future of American democracy will depend on how successfully Muslim Americans are integrated into policy-making decisions, not simply as informants in

anti-terrorism schemes, but as full members of the US polity. The well-known and often-maligned Palestinian-American activist Linda Sarsour can be seen as a test example. Sarsour has been criticized by both conservatives and liberals alike. And key to understanding this criticism, according to Curtis, are the implicitly racist and empire-building schema that undergird much of US policy both at home and abroad. Political dissent by Muslim Americans, and the extent to which it is accepted as patriotic, can only help to make America the country it has long purported to be: a land of liberty and opportunity for all. Apart from the importance of Muslim-American voices in determining the fate of civil society, I would argue that even critical political activism is philanthropic. While not philanthropic in the usual sense the word is employed, the activism of Muslim Americans such as Sarsour seek to dismantle structural racism and war-profiteering that affect the lives of many.

I am referring here to the "public good" aspect of philanthropy. It may not be dollars and cents, which we have already established is not the only way to be philanthropic, but it gets to the root cause. Philanthropy should not pat itself on the back for being a mere bandage to the ills that plague society. If we can change the fundamental structure of suffering, I would argue these are more worthy of our efforts. But I am immediately taken to the following question: who is considered a part of this public and who determines what is good? How far are we as a society willing to go to construe our notions of "public?" Does "public" include the millions of Black Americans at home who are subject to police brutality or the millions of Muslim lives destroyed by the "war on terror" both at home and abroad? What might be seen as philanthropic by some may be considered as illiberal and threatening by others, the latter of which is used to label Sarsour by her critics. This may be an attempt to extend the purview of philanthropic studies, but Curtis's paper underscores the importance of definitions when studying philanthropy. Just as we have previously established that Muslim Philanthropy goes beyond "voluntary action" and "public good," Muslim actors force us also to reconsider what we mean when we say "public good."

Having just come back home from performing Hajj a month earlier, I took a special interest in the papers looking at giving in the Gulf States. I will limit my discussion to just one such paper for the moment. In "Charity as Politics 'Writ Small' in GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) States," Miriam Lowi looks at the charitable giving in four Gulf monarchies—Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. Her key findings can be summarized as such: 1) the most powerful charitable foundations are controlled by ruling families or the societal elite, 2) despite the

abundant wealth and encouragement of giving in Islam, poverty still remains rampant, and 3) private giving prioritizes family, tribe, and one's ethnic community. To the first point, the elite dictate where giving goes, and organizations that are considered private are not actually so. These loyalist charities, as Lowi calls them, not only endorse state policies, but also provide an additional avenue for the state to infiltrate society, as she claims. The royals take what are public resources and invest them into what are supposed to be private foundations. Doing this, they create an image of themselves as benevolent philanthropists, all the while ensuring their political hegemony. Though I am loathe to refute this claim, what is missing is a look into how effective this royal attempt to infiltrate society is. While I am not arguing against this intentional obfuscation of the public and private as an attempt to exert social control, what is missing are the voices of the intended targets.

My own experience traveling to Saudi Arabia earlier this year forced me to reevaluate whether the everyday Saudi citizen feels he or she is being faithfully represented by the elite. While there may be ostensible control of the lives of everyday citizens, I am more interested in the private acts of resistance, which of course may be impossible to quantify. Lowi's research and arguments start and end with the ruling elites. Furthermore, as Lowi writes, in all four countries very little aid goes to poor migrants and foreign laborers who do not hold local citizenship. This has much to do with the definition of community. The oft-quoted "charity begins at home" is justified as the reason, and, according to Lowi, home is also where charity ends. This negotiation of how to define "home" is something Muslim Americans also struggle with, as my research into the giving patterns of Muslim-Americans testifies. I am interested to know how other Muslims might define home. In the case of the Gulf monarchies, how then to explain the support that is given abroad? It is a question of privilege and perhaps image. Giving to Syrian refugees or victims of tsunamis in Southeast Asia are closely watched by the global community. But the "untouchables" living inside these countries are essentially invisible, so ignoring them can be done with impunity. I wonder to what extent this fact is uniquely situated in the Gulf. My guess is that this phenomenon will be found in virtually every community, whether Muslim or not.

Considering my recent collaboration with the Women's Philanthropy Institute, also housed within the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, I am particularly interested in the giving patterns of women. Informal philanthropy is thus something I have begun to look into more deeply. Two papers that stood out to me on the importance of

highlighting informal philanthropy were David Campbell's paper on Informal Giving in Turkey and Abbas Barzegar's on Hawala.

Campbell argued that even though scholarly research about philanthropy deemphasizes informal giving to friends, neighbors, and others in need, informal giving is a critical element of philanthropy, particularly in settings with less well-developed civil society institutions. As the case in Turkey shows, informal giving is dominant, even though it is lower than other countries. Even religious giving such as zakat is done informally. It would be my guess that this would be the case for many Muslim-majority developing nations. In Turkey, an overwhelming majority of survey respondents indicated that they preferred giving directly to individuals (88%) as opposed to organizations (10%). An earlier study in Pakistan showed a similar preference. In comparing the Turkish example with others globally (e.g., Denmark, Israel, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and South Africa), there seems to be some commonality with the one Muslim-majority country studied. Why is that people in Turkey and Pakistan are less reluctant to make formal donations than those in other countries? Does this have something to do with religion or its institutionalization, as Campbell poses? This is a question that is left unanswered. A closer look into how religion shapes donor behavior in Turkey, Pakistan, and other Muslim communities might be a next step. I was however surprised to learn that gender plays a minimal role in terms of informal giving in Turkey. I wonder if we would find similar results in other comparable Muslim-majority countries or if this is a phenomenon that is unique to Turkey. Framing informal giving entirely under a gendered lens, as the case in Turkey shows, overlooks many different reasons why and how people give. What is true in one country (i.e., the US) cannot be taken as a given. Context matters.

In "An Islamic Bitcoin or Terrorist Financier? Hawala on Muslim Humanitarian Frontier" Abbas Barzegar explained the concept of hawala, an informal money transfer system that is used across the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia to finance aid in remote places and in conflict zones. While all of Muslim giving, and hawala in particular, have come under scrutiny after 9/11, Counter-Terrorism Finance (CTF) regulations have had a far-reaching, adverse effect on the entire global financial system, thus underscoring the importance of these informal networks. CTF regulations in the aggregate have made it difficult for even institutionalized organizations to deliver aid in these areas. Hawala serves people that would otherwise not have access to aid, people that Barzegar refers to as "unbanked," as hawala is known for its speed in delivery, trustworthiness, anonymity, and ability to circumvent

traditional banking systems. For Muslims, where interest is considered forbidden and anonymous giving is encouraged, it is not difficult to see why or how these informal networks have become so popular. Barzegar also hits on a point made by Campbell, the importance of trust. From what I have read and researched on the topic, many individuals from Muslim-majority nations do not trust NGOs. Hawala is one way by which these individuals are able to give in a manner they are comfortable with. This also goes to show how important social networks are in giving. Barzegar ends by saying that hawala can provide a mechanism by which short-term aid is turned into long-term development and recovery. How this will happen, given the scrutiny and crackdowns, remains to be seen.

In the last session of the symposium, Hilman Latief talked about the different approaches to fatwa production, as he called it, pertaining to zakat in Indonesia. He focused on three civil society organizations in particular: Muhammadiyah, Persatuan Islam, and Nahdlatul Ulama. Taken together, these organizations have produced thousands of fatwas, not limited to zakat only. But, and for our purposes more importantly, their conclusions have been vastly different. How could this be? As any new student of Islamic Studies will soon discover, Islamic law is more than just derivations based on the Qur'an and Sunnah. According to Latief, what results in the different approaches as to what is considered zakatable depends on the use of ijtihad, qiyas (analogical reasoning) in particular. The more "modernist" Muhammadiyah and Persatuan Islam have relied more heavily on the direct text of the Qur'an and hadith in their answers, whereas the more "traditionalist" NU rarely cited the same sources and were more deferential to the ulema and fiqh. But what is interesting to note is that the use of qiyas was not always so predictable between these different groups. As Hilman showed, the use of qiyas in a number of different examples has produced a plurality of fatwas—whether the item in question is diamonds, income, agricultural products, or fish—which allows for different communities in Indonesia to select those fatwas that seem to them the most desirable. While the particularities are unique to Indonesia, the concerns undergirding these types of questions are applicable to all zakat-paying Muslims wanting to make sure they are paying what they actually owe. It is difficult to rely purely on the Qur'an and hadith in the 21st century, and as Latief's paper demonstrates, even our learned scholars do not agree with one another. What then is the average Muslim to do? Hilman's presentation represented the modern struggle of zakat quite well, namely, what in fact is zakatable depends on context. Again, we see that context matters.

What these papers and many others presented at the symposium either directly referred or alluded to is that we cannot study philanthropy without taking into consideration both the political and cultural milieu in which these activities occur. As I have mentioned before, context matters. I would be inclined to say that rather than just referring to this enterprise as Muslim philanthropy, it might be more apt to refer to it as Muslim *philanthropies*. I am not suggesting as others have that there are different Islams, but rather how Islam is interpreted by self-identifying Muslims will change not only in time, but also across different locales. This, I believe, can no doubt inform the broader field of religious philanthropy and philanthropy itself. While not a subject of any particular paper, what came out during the discussions and Q&A is how much we may be unintentionally reifying a certain type of Muslim when we discuss Muslim philanthropic acts within the US Muslim context at least. Race is oftentimes the elephant in the room. While we at JMPCS feel we lay bare some of the cultural blind spots that often remain unexamined and taken for granted in the larger field of Philanthropic Studies, we have to make sure that we do not gloss over our own internal blind spots within "Muslim philanthropy."

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