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RESEARCH REPORT

The Government - Civil Society Initiative: Evaluation of the First Stage

Yehonatan Almog ✦ Jenya Gorbatsevich ✦ Lior Kadish

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Yehonatan Almog   Jenya Gorbatsevich   Lior Kadish

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Executive Summary

1.1 Background to the Initiative

The period since the mid-1990s has seen much social, economic and political change: the eruption of economic crises and broadening of social gaps; varying concepts of governance; privatization of services; and the empowerment of civil society. These changes have led to modifications in the relationships and traditional division of labor between the different sectors of society. Today, there is growing recognition that the combined efforts, resources and knowledge of all social sectors are necessary in order to contend with socio-economic challenges. In the light of this, many governments have been re-examining their relations with civil society and developing policies and tools to build inter-sectoral dialogue, coordination and cooperation (Limor and Avishai, 2013, 2014).

Given these trends, in 2008 the Policy Planning Department at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) issued a white paper on "Government of Israel, the Civil Society and the Business Community: Partnership, Empowerment and Transparency," and Decision 3190 was adopted on *strengthening relations among the government, civil society and the business sector to promote public goals*. The decision laid down broad policy guidelines. It recognized the important function of civil society and emphasized the importance of strengthening partnerships between the sectors. In fact, it charted a course to advance joint processes such as establishing the platform of a roundtable at the PMO, with the assistance of the Sheatufim organization.
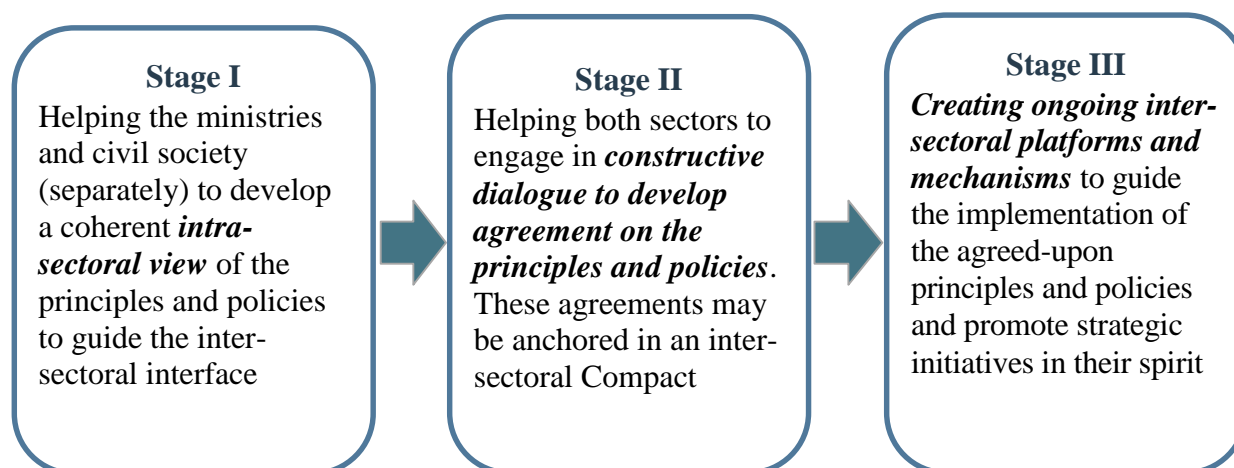
In 2012, as a further step, the Government-Civil Society Iinitiative was established as a partnership of seven ministries (three crosscutting ones: Justice, Finance, PMO and four thematic social ministries: Education, Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption, Social Services, and Health) and of Diaspora Jewry and the Institute for Leadership and Governance at JDC-Israel.

The overarching goal of the Initiative was to *"improve the interface of government and civil society in order to fortify the resilience of Israeli society."* The emphasis was on addressing the infrastructure that supports these relations rather than on any specific social issue.

The strategy to achieve the overarching goal of the initiative is to develop a set of principles and policies to guide the inter-sectoral interface and to create ongoing inter-sectoral platforms and mechanisms to implement them. In order to achieve these goals, the initiative specified as a preliminary step that each sector develop its own view of the principles and policies, as a basis for inter-sectoral discussion and agreement.

The process of implementing the strategy was divided into three stages as shown in Diagram 1.

Diagram 1: Three-Stage Strategy of the Initiative

Stage I Helping the ministries and civil society (separately) to develop a coherent *intra-sectoral view* of the principles and policies to guide the inter-sectoral interface	**Stage II** Helping both sectors to engage in *constructive dialogue to develop agreement on the principles and policies*. These agreements may be anchored in an inter-sectoral Compact	**Stage III** *Creating ongoing inter-sectoral platforms and mechanisms* to guide the implementation of the agreed-upon principles and policies and promote strategic initiatives in their spirit

In this report, we relate to the implementation of stage 1 of the strategy, as of March 2015[1].

The implementation of the strategy relates to three main circles of activity:

- Activities of government ministries, led by an inter-ministerial steering committee

- Activities of civil society, led by a sectoral steering committee

- Activities of the inter-sectoral interface, led by an inter-sectoral forum consisting of representatives from government and civil society (to be established in Stage II of the strategy).

Within each circle of activity, the goals were defined in more detail (these are elaborated further in the logic model of the initiative, see Appendix 1):

- *Government*
  - *Developing a coherent view of principles and policies of government ministries:* learning about the nature, challenges and opportunities for relations of each ministry with civil society, and developing policy guidelines for the inter-sectoral interface in each ministry.

  - *Encouraging inter-ministerial learning:* creating opportunities for mutual learning among the ministries about the interface with civil society, and particularly about the considerations guiding the development of policy guidelines.

  - *Developing a coherent inter-ministerial view of principles and policies:* formulating inter-ministerial policy guidelines on the interface with civil society.

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[1] Note that there are a number of other activities designed to strengthen civil society, which are implemented in the general framework of the initiative, that are not included in the evaluation, such as a program to strengthen boards of directors of civil-society organizations.

- *Civil Society*
  - **Encouraging intra-sectoral dialogue:** promoting dialogue among a wide range of civil-society organizations on the sector's identity and self-awareness as a basis for joint activity to advance sectoral goals

  - **Promoting mechanisms of representation:** broadening the ability of civil society to organize for joint action by means of networking, coalitions, umbrella organizations etc.

  - **Developing a coherent sectorial view of the principles and policies:** reaching broad agreement around the principles and policies to guide the interface with the government.

- *Inter-Sectoral Interface*
  - **Development of, and agreement on, common principles**: reaching broad inter-sectoral agreement on the nature and practice of inter-sectoral relations. These agreements may be anchored in an inter-sectoral Compact.

  - **Development of platforms and mechanisms for ongoing inter-sectoral dialogue:** creating infrastructures and processes to promote the implementation of the inter-sectoral agreements and strategic initiatives in their spirit

A shared goal in all circles is to strengthen the human infrastructure: encouraging receptiveness, creating agents of change, and developing capacities in each sector to advance the goals of the Initiative.

Note that the initiative shares a number of characteristics with similar initiatives in other countries (see Limor and Avishai, 2013):

- An ongoing process seeking to promote significant change with long-term implications, without a defined end date

- A multi-player complex process developing dynamically so that not all the goals are defined in advance

- A process that is deeply influenced by the social and political context, and sensitive to change of the kind that has taken place since the initiative was established: two election campaigns, military campaigns (Operation Pillar of Defense), personnel changes etc.

1.2 Evaluation of the Initiative

The Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute was asked to conduct an evaluation study to accompany Stage I of the initiative. The goals of the evaluation were defined as follows:

- To examine the extent of progress towards achieving the goals defined in Stage I of the initiative

- To identify successes and difficulties in the implementation process, and lessons for improvement

- To help design the next stages of the initiative.

The study examined both the initiative as a whole, as well as the main activities implemented within each sector and in the inter-sectoral interface. Data collection took place between July 2014 and March 2015.

It was decided that the evaluation of this stage would focus on the perspective of the direct participants in the process, and the examination of the impact on non-participants that are indirectly affected, would be deferred to the later stages.

The evaluation relied mainly on qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews (with 40+ people) and observations (20+) along with more quantitative methods such as questionnaires (completed by 70+ people). Note that as the initiative proceeded, changes were introduced into the planned study design to adapt it to developments in the actual implementation of the initiative.

Interim findings on the various activities were presented and discussed with stakeholders involved in the initiative upon the completion of each phase of data collection. The purpose was to provide feedback in real time as a basis of ongoing improvement. The full integrative findings are presented in this report.

1.3 An Integrative Look at the Findings

In section 1.3.1, we first relate in broad terms to the extent to which the overall strategy of the initiative was implemented and the degree to which the goals were achieved (as summarized in Table 1). In section 1.3.2, we suggest a conceptual framework for analyzing the activities that have been implemented (as summarized in Table 2) and that can serve as a basis for planning the next stages.

In assessing the findings, it is important to take into account the relatively brief period that has passed since the process began, especially as regards civil society (about two years for the government and a year for civil society). Creating sustainable infrastructures is a protracted process and the literature shows that time is needed for conditions to ripen in each sector, in order to allow an effective inter-sectoral process to emerge (Limor and Avishai, 2013).

1.3.1 Extent of Implementation of the Strategy and Achievement of the Goals

We summarize the findings for each of the three circles of activity.

The Government

◆ An inter-ministerial steering committee was established composed of senior representatives of each partner ministry. It has accompanied the initiative from the start and met regularly. A study tour was conducted in England to learn from the extensive experience there.

◆ The formulation of policy guidelines on the inter-sectoral interface was implemented in three of the four thematic social ministries. In all three, the goals of improving the inter-sectoral interface was placed on the ministry agenda, the motivation and relevant knowledge to address the goal was developed, and a common language was created. In two of the ministries, the formulation of policy guidelines was completed and in the third, the process was suspended and is slated to

resume. At the same time, significant processes of mutual learning did not develop among these ministries.

- In the Ministry of Health and the three crosscutting ministries, a ministry-level process was not implemented to develop policy guidelines. In fact, as the initiative progressed, questions arose concerning the suitability of this kind of a process in the crosscutting ministries. At the same time, there is broad agreement that the crosscutting ministries have a systemic impact on the ability of a thematic social ministry to design and advance its interfaces with civil society. Thus, they should play a significant role in promoting the goals of the initiative. Accordingly, it is important to redefine their role in the initiative and the strategy to realize it.

- The formulation of inter-ministerial policy guidelines has not yet begun. Among other things, this is due to the fact that in some ministries, as noted above, the process of formulating policy has not been completed. More fundamentally, the question arose, as expressed in the meetings of the inter-ministerial steering committee, whether to develop (as planned) new inter-ministerial policy guidelines or to focus more on adjusting or expanding existing government policy as stipulated in Government Resolution 3190 (which, so far, has not been widely implemented).

- Members of the inter-ministerial steering committee expressed their interest that the initiative proceed to the next stage, which centers on creating inter-sectoral dialogue between the government as a whole and a broad representation of civil society.

- In the course of the initiative, a decision was taken to develop an inter-ministerial program to train "agents of change" at the middle-management level – "the Merhav Program". Two cohorts have been implemented thus far, with the participation of some 50 representatives from all seven ministries and from local government. The program strengthened the motivation and expanded the knowledge of most of the participants with regard to improving the inter-sectoral interface and helped create a common language among them. The program also focused on more practical aspects of providing tools, reinforcing skills, and becoming familiar with new modes of collaboration. The contribution, as perceived by the participants, was somewhat smaller in these aspects.

In summary, the main achievements of this stage have been:

1. Creating a cadre of agents of change with the relevant knowledge and motivation to improve the inter-sectoral interface. In those ministries where an internal process took place, a broader cadre developed with significant experience.

2. The goal of creating ministerial policy guidelines was achieved in only two ministries.

3. Development of inter-ministerial policy guidelines has not yet begun. A question arose as to whether to develop as planned new policy guidelines or to focus more on adjusting or expanding existing government policy.

4. The representatives of all the ministries in the steering committee expressed interest in progressing to the next stage of promoting inter-sectoral dialogue between the government and a broad representation of civil society.

The Civil Society

◆ A steering committee was established for the process in civil society, with representatives from umbrella organizations, key infrastructure organizations (dealing with building the sector's capacity) and a representation of lay leadership.

◆ The inter-ministerial steering committee recognized the importance of respecting the independence of the internal process within civil society, and did not intervene.

◆ In Israel there has existed an umbrella organization for some time called "Civic Leadership" that engages in representation of nonprofit organizations. In the process of developing the dialogue within civil society the leaders of the initiative reached out to this organization and have been exploring the possible roles it could play as an umbrella organization for the sector.

◆ A process began – for the first time in Israel – to formulate a core document on the policies and principles to guide civil society in its efforts to define and shape the inter-sectoral interface. The process is implemented with the assistance of Civic Leadership. A number of steps were implemented:

- ▪ *A series of group and individual consultation meetings* were held with representatives of organizations, foundations, and lay leaders (about 120 people) and an online survey was conducted (148 respondents). As part of the process, there was dialogue on the identity and roles of the sector, the main issues concerning the sector were mapped, and a decision was taken to further four of them:
  - ‐ To improve the mechanisms of representations, communication and working relations of the organizations with the local and national governments
  - ‐ To identify and develop funding sources to help sustain the organizations
  - ‐ To improve the public image of the sector
  - ‐ To set up forums and regional/topical networks to exchange knowledge and promote cooperation

- ▪ *A conference* of Civic Leadership was held with the participation of some 20 organizations to discuss and recommend programmatic directions to advance the four issues.

- ▪ *The core document* is expected to be published at the end of 2015. The document will include a declarative section on the identity and roles of the sector and a practical section on the sector's common agenda (the sectoral issues). Along with the document, a work plan to advance the issues by Civic Leadership will be published as well.

◆ The purpose of the process in civil society, which was set by its steering committee, is to strengthen civil society, its place and impact. As the process progressed, there was increased understanding that ongoing intra-sectoral dialogue on the sector's identity, roles and common agenda is an important goal in and of itself.

- The steering committee of civil society decided not to *a priori* prioritize the goal of improving the interface with the government, but to discuss more openly with NGOs the goals that they wished to promote together. However, today, there is broad recognition among the leaders and participants of the process that the core document could not only serve as an important basis to strengthen civil society internally but also to advance the inter-sectoral interface. Indeed, some of the issues defined in the document deal with improving the interface with the government. At the same time the steering committee has not defined in detail how they want to pursue the dialogue with the government.

- Some of the sectoral issues decided on for advancement also deal with reinforcing and constructing mechanisms of representation. As part of the initiative, the acquaintance of the participating organizations was widened with Civic Leadership, which seeks to fortify its place as the umbrella organization of the civil society.

- The leaders of the process in civil society are interested in widening and diversifying the circle of participants in the process. The idea is to strengthen the visibility of the process, its basis of legitimacy, and the possibility of constructing representative mechanisms in the sector. Meanwhile, clearly all the partners to the initiative should coordinate their expectations of the desirable and feasible volume of participants at the various points in time.

- The first cohort of "Halon la-Mimshal" (Window to Government) has begun, where NGO directors will be exposed to and broaden their applied knowledge of government work in order to improve their own interface with it.

In summary, the main achievements of this stage have been:

1. The creation of the framework and the propulsion of the process of intra-sectoral dialogue in civil society to formulate a core document and a common agenda; The draft of the core document was formulated, and the final document is expected to be published at the end of 2015.

2. The process contributed to the structuring of mechanisms of representation.

3. At the same time, the leaders of the process are interested in widening and diversifying the circle of participation in the process in order to reinforce the visibility of the process, its basis of legitimacy, and the feasibility of building broad representation mechanisms.

The Inter-Sectoral Interface

The second stage of the initiative – establishing an inter-sectoral forum – was expected to begin during the period under review in this study (no more specific date was defined in the planning stage). However, a decision was taken to postpone its commencement due to the desire to permit the intra-sectoral processes to first develop further. A preliminary joint meeting did take place in July 2015, in which representatives of Civic Leadership presented the progress they had made in developing the civil-society process to the members of the inter-ministerial steering committee.

Nonetheless, inter-sectoral processes have already begun on two levels:

1. ***Inter-sectoral processes at the ministry level****:* The Ministry of Education decided to formalize a permanent inter-sectoral round table at the ministry level (facilitated by "Sheatufim"). This decision was taken after the policy guidelines of the ministry were formulated. This process is not part of the initiative. The Ministry of Aliyah and Immigrant Absorption decided to create an inter-sectoral forum at the ministry level and it is expected to issue a call inviting civil-society organizations to take part in this process.

2. ***Inter-sectoral projects as part of the Merhav program:*** The Merhav program include a stage of introduction and learning, and a stage of project development. In some of the projects, the emphasis was on joint development and/or implementation with civil-society organizations.

   ◆ Note that these inter-sectoral processes, which began with a government initiative, proceeded apart from parallel processes implemented by the initiative in civil society.

   ◆ Currently, another cohort of the Merhav program is planned to begin, with the participation of representatives of both sectors.

   ◆ There is both broad agreement in the government and in civil society as to the importance of including representatives of local government in the initiative, and recognition of their contribution to the processes in which they participated. To date, local government representatives participated in only a small portion of the activities.

In summary, both sectors today are interested in promoting inter-sectoral dialogue at the overall crosscutting level. Furthermore, inter-sectoral processes have begun in some of the ministries and in the Merhav projects. Thus far, local government representatives participated in only a small portion of the activities and there is agreement about the importance of widening their participation.

Table 1 gives a summary of the progress made to date in each of the circles of activity, according to the defined goals.

Table 1: Progress Made to Date in Implementing the Initiative, by Circle of Activity and Goal

Civil Society	Inter-Sectoral Interface	Government
Encouraging Intra-Sectoral Dialogue ▪ Process of consultation and the formulation of an intra-sectoral core document	**Developing Platforms and Mechanisms for Ongoing Inter-Sectoral Dialogue, and Developing Common Principles (a Compact)** ▪ Inter-sectoral processes at the overall crosscutting level did not ripen ▪ Both sectors today are interested in promoting inter-sectoral dialogue at the overall crosscutting level ▪ Formation of inter-sectoral processes at the ministry level in some ministries ▪ Lack of coordination between these processes and the intra-sectoral process in civil society ▪ Advancing several inter-sectoral projects at Merhav ▪ Preparing literature reviews and conducting studies on cases around the world and in Israel ▪ Limited involvement of local government in the initiative	**Developing Principles and Policies in Government Ministries** ▪ Processes to formulate policy in 3 thematic social ministries; 2 have already done so
Promoting Mechanisms of Representation ▪ Creation of steering committee and structuring of additional representation mechanisms ▪ Extent of participation corresponds with planning and is reasonable in the circumstances, although the sense is that it is insufficient; there is a need for increased visibility and legitimization		**Encouraging Inter-Ministerial Learning** ▪ As part of the Merhav Program ▪ In the steering committee and on the study tour to England ▪ Lack of sharing and learning to develop policy guidelines at the ministries
Developing Principles and Policies for the Sector ▪ Sectoral issues were mapped and it was decided to promote 4 of them ▪ The improvement of the interface with government was not defined in advance as a goal by the steering committee of civil society; but it is currently a high priority		**Developing Inter-Ministerial Principles and Policies** ▪ Inter-ministerial policy has not yet been formulated ▪ There is an understanding of the importance of autonomy and internal dialogue in civil society, although the start of a joint dialogue with a broad representation of civil society is already expected
Strengthening the Human Infrastructure ▪ The "Window to Government" Program began ▪ Process of consultation and formulation of the intra-sectoral core document	**Strengthening the Human Infrastructure** ▪ An inter-sectoral Merhav program is planned	**Strengthening the Human Infrastructure** ▪ The inter-ministerial Merhav program ▪ Processes to formulate policy in 3 thematic social ministries

1.3.2 A Conceptual Framework for Analyzing the Activities

To map the activities of the initiative that are at the focus of the study, we prepared a table presenting activities that did and/or do take place as part of the initiative in the past 2.5 years (see Table 2). The table maps activities along two main axes: the levels of activity and the type of products they are meant to promote.

The axis of the level of activity breaks down into three levels:

- The *overall level* relates to crosscutting activity.

- The *ministerial level* relates to activity of a specific ministry and civil-society organizations relevant to its work.

- The *regional/local level* relates to activity at the more local level (e.g., local authorities, regional representatives of various ministries and civil-society organizations active in the region/authority).

The activity at every level may be performed within each sector (government or civil society) and/or between sectors.

The axis of type of product relates to the distinction between three categories:

- *Policies and principles* – Stipulating principles to guide relations, developing the infrastructure of relations and the rules defining them, relevant to numerous topics

- *Applying the policies and principles in specific projects* – in practical projects that deal with a specific social issue

- *Developing human infrastructure of agents of change* – Processes reinforcing human infrastructure by way of providing knowledge, strengthening motivation, changing attitudes etc.

Note that for some of the activities, a number of products are expected and therefore they appear in more than one category.

As can be seen in Table 2, to date the initiative has not pursued activity at the regional/local level[2]. Other than that, it may be said that the initiative has operated to some extent on all the levels, but there are areas that have not been developed yet. Furthermore, it is worth noting that there has not been a significant attempt to take advantage of potential synergies among the activities. For example, graduates of the Merhav program were not integrated in a structured way into processes of formulating ministerial policy guidelines.

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[2] Note that the experience from around the world attests to the advantages and achievements of activity on this level, e.g., in England, Canada and Australia (Limor and Avishai, 2014).

Table 2: Activities of the Initiative, by Level of Activity and Product Type

Product Type / Level of Activity	Policies and principles	Applying the policies and principles in specific projects	Developing human Infrastructure of agents of change**
Overall			
Civil society (CS)	CS steering cmte. Consultation process and Conference		CS steering cmte. Consultation process and Conference Window to Gov't program
Government (Gov't)		Projects in Merhav	Inter-ministerial steering cmte. Merhav program
Inter-sectoral	Reviews of international experience	Projects in Merhav Projects at Inter-sectoral Merhav*	Inter-sectoral Merhav program*
Ministerial			
Civil society (CS)	Topical forums*		
Government	Ministerial processes	Projects in Merhav	Ministerial processes
Inter-sectoral	Inter-sectoral forum – Ministry of Aliyah*	Projects in Merhav	
Regional/local			
Civil society (CS)			
Government			
Inter-sectoral			

* Planned
** Most of the processes promote the human infrastructure of agents of change. The Merhav program and Window to Government are the focus of this product.

1.4 Planning the Next Stage: Updating and Prioritizing Goals

The overall goal of the initiative was to improve the interface of government and civil society. To pursue this, the goal of the first stage of the initiative was to develop an intra-sectoral view of the principles and policies to guide the inter-sectoral interface.

This goal has not yet been realized in full in either sector and, moreover, questions have arisen with respect to this goal, particularly in the government sector. At the same time, as noted, interest has been expressed in both sectors to begin the inter-sectoral dialogue that was defined as the second stage.

Thus, the Institute for Leadership and Governance has decided to use the two-year evaluation report as a basis for an in-depth planning process of the next steps of the initiative. This process will require:

1. Updating and prioritizing the goals

2. Accordingly, defining the strategies and activities that should be pursued.

There is also a need to decide how the two sectors should best be included in the planning process.

We suggest a two-step planning process:

1. Strategic prioritization

2. Addressing specific dilemmas that have arisen from the study.

The first step is an open discussion on the goals of the initiative, the desirable strategies, and the expected outcomes. To ensure effective dialogue, it is suggested that the discussion be based upon on a clearly defined conceptual framework and criteria for prioritization.

The second step addresses the specific dilemmas that surfaced from analyzing the development of the initiative to date and which are relevant to how the strategy should be implemented.

Of course, the two steps are reciprocal: prioritization affects the manner of resolution of the dilemmas and the dilemmas raise questions relevant to prioritization. Thus, this is an iterative process.

1. First Step - Strategic Prioritization

We suggest using the same framework employed in mapping the activities of the initiative thus far (Table 3), for purposes of thinking about and planning the next stage.

Table 3: Recommended Framework of Discussion and Planning the Next Stage of the Initiative

Product Type / Level of Activity	Policies and Principles	Applying the Policies and Principles in Specific Projects	Developing Human Infrastructure: Agents of Change
Overall			
Civil society			
Government			
Inter-sectoral			
Ministerial			
Civil society			
Government			
Inter-sectoral			
Regional/Local			
Civil society			
Government			
Inter-sectoral			

Based on this framework, the following dimensions of prioritization can be defined:

- Among three levels of activity: The first decision is – how much to invest in processes at the inter-ministerial level vs. processes at the ministry level. Furthermore, there is a need to decide whether to place more emphasis on the regional/local level.

- Between sectoral and inter-sectoral activities

- Among activities of developing policies/principles, developing projects or developing the human infrastructure; Note that specific activities might relate to more than one of these objectives.

Each activity can be defined along these three dimensions.

In the process of prioritizing activities, several criteria should be considered. For instance:

- The *importance* in the eyes of the partners
- The *added value* for the initiative and of the initiative
- The *feasibility*
- *Appropriate timing*

Whatever the mix of activities decided on, there is a need to address the links among them and the possible synergies. There is also a need to take into account activities performed outside of the framework of the initiative but relevant to it.

In the prioritization process, it is also important to take into account the need to learn from the experience of others in Israel and around the world. In the past two years, efforts have been made in this regard with the Van Leer Institute and the Center for the Study of Civil Society and Philanthropy at the Hebrew University. Now there are also new opportunities to develop relevant knowledge in light of the experience already accumulated in the work of the initiative itself.

2. Second Step – Addressing Specific Dilemmas that Emerged from the Study

In the integrative analysis of the initiative, a number of issues arose as elaborated in the report. Some of the main ones include:

Government:

1. To what extent is there still an interest in developing inter-ministerial policy or is there rather a preference for focusing only on ministerial policies? If there is an interest in an inter-ministerial policy:
   - Should a new policy be developed or should the focus be on expanding on the policy already stipulated in 2008 in Government Resolution 3190?
   - Should the formulation of ministerial policies be completed to underpin this process? If so, how should the link be defined?
2. What should be the role of the crosscutting ministries (PM's Office, Justice and Finance) in the initiative?

Civil Society:

1. How can participation be expanded and diversified in order to strengthen the visibility of the process, its legitimacy, and the possibility of generating recognized structures to represent the sector?
2. What is civil society's view of the appropriate nature and substance of the dialogue with the government?

Local Government:

1. In which activities is it particularly important to integrate representatives of local government, and how?

Synergies:

1. What are the most important synergies between the various activities of the initiative and how can they be realized? For example:

- In what way do the specific projects developed by Merhav participants serve the broader goals of the initiative and how best should Merhav graduates reinforce other activities of the initiative?

- How do the civil-society forums that have been established, which address specific inter-sectoral issues, interface with the inter-sectoral activity of the ministries?

As indicated, prioritization affects the manner of resolution of these dilemmas and the dilemmas raise questions relevant to prioritization.

Concluding Remarks

The initiative provides a good example of what the literature refers to as a "complex program" (Kania & Kramer, 2013; Westley et al., 2009). These programs pose considerable challenges for the implementers and for the evaluators. There is growing discussion in the literature of the special challenges involved in evaluating such programs (Preskill et al., 2014).

One important challenge posed by these programs is that they are subject to significant change of both goals and strategy during the process of implementation. Thus, they require that the evaluation be adapted accordingly. From the outset, we therefore emphasized the need for flexibility in the implementation of the research design and, indeed, introduced a number of changes as we went along. Complex programs also require much more ongoing feedback, which was provided on a regular basis in the course of the evaluation.

This report integrates the findings into an overall picture of the initiative. As can be seen in this report, the initiative generated a good deal of activity on different levels and in different sectors to promote an inter-sectoral interface. It shows what has been implemented as planned, what was not implemented, what was added and what was modified. It also brings to the fore many of the questions and issues that have arisen with respect to the next stage of the initiative. It is meant to contribute towards a shared view among all relevant stakeholders as a basis for planning the next stage.

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