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FAITH BASED ORGANIZATIONS IN LEBANON: OBJECTIVES AND PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT

The Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990) witnessed the prominence of the voluntary sector through the active involvement of existing non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the emergence of new ones as service providers in response to the social, educational and other community needs left unattended to by the public sector.

This thesis takes a comparative look at the objectives and practices of faith-based NGOs, or FBOs, currently active in Lebanon, both local and international. It considers the role of the sectarian context, and the influence – if any - of religious identity and values on the founding and mission of an FBO, and the identity of the communities where it chose to operate. It also seeks to explore the relationship between an FBO's religious identity, the community(ies) it serves, and the expression of its faith in that particular community.

The research involved qualitative interviews of a cross-section of FBOs in Lebanon representing different faiths, together with a textual analysis of the communication used by these organizations in addressing their stakeholders.

The research shed light on the motivations and the historical events that led to the founding of the sample population. Also, the variance between the mandates of the different faith-based organizations, each according to its religious values, and how that is reflected in determining their programme direction, and hence, the mode of operation in the community. In the process, the interviews highlighted other factors that can equally impact the image of an organization in any particular community; as well as the position of the same-faith communities vis-à-vis the mandate of their same-faith FBO.

The textual analysis of the sample population's communication tools was equally insightful as it drew attention to factors that affect the discourse used in presenting who they are, as well as their vision and mission.

Other insights gleaned from this research include the organizations' view point and/or position with respect to the sectarian context that empowers them as religiously based organizations; an aspect that gives some thought as to the potential role for FBOs as agents of change in such a complex context.

The source of the knowledge arrived at through this research is based on input received from the organizations themselves, either through the interviews with their leaders, or through their communication tools. It would be equally insightful, in another research, to consider the view point of the community, also that of secular and other faith-based organizations, of the role of religiously-based development organizations in the community as they compare with their desired role.

Keywords: Lebanon – FBOs – Discourse – Faith-Based – Religious Identity

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This research is based in Lebanon, a small country in the Middle East that is characterized by confessionalism. A country where people's religious affiliation can be stronger than their affiliation to the nation; and where faith-based organizations, focus of this research, play an active role in addressing the community needs. As such, the research necessitates an introductory overview of relevant circumstances and/or phases in history that may have contributed towards the formation of Lebanon in its current sectarian form, and paved the way for faith-based organizations to have their current role.

1.1 The Ottoman Empire and the formation of the Mount Lebanon province (1516-1918)

The current geographic territory of Lebanon came under the Ottoman Empire in 1516, i.e. before the country came to exist as an independent nation. As the empire expanded, it came to encompass non-Muslim religious denominations, mainly Christian. This led the Turks to create the *millet* system that gave minority groups autonomy, under Ottoman authority, such that each religious denomination was able to organize its own laws under the leadership of an elected member of their own denomination or religious community.

The *millet* system is likened by some to a civil society that mediated with the Ottoman authority. Denominations were allowed to establish and run their own schools that teach their own religious traditions and culture (Arzuni, 2002, pp. 127-128). While Arzuni emphasizes the Ottoman Empire's positive treatment of Christians, other historians report that, under Ottoman rule, Christians were not treated as equal citizens or given equal privileges as Muslims. Yazbeck, for instance, was keen to note that at the time the testimony of Christians was not accepted in courts; and that they were restricted from building churches before being granted approval from the Sultan (Yazbeck, 2014). Perhaps such contradictory positions are a reflection of how people's own experiences and understanding of issues can impact the lens through which they view circumstances and situation around them.

The *millet* system is perceived to have created an opportunity for Europeans to get involved in the Ottoman states. Western privileges on Ottoman territories started in 1535, and expanded in 1740 to include the protection of European pilgrims to the Holy Land, as well as Christian denominations – mainly Catholic and Maronite. But not only Christians. The Druze were favored by the British too.

During the period 1840 to 1860, the territories that later on became the state of Lebanon were characterized by conflict and trouble mainly between Christians and Druze. The Turks and Europeans had in 1842 divided Mount Lebanon into two provinces – one for the Maronites, and one for the Druze. This further complicated matters particularly since the adherents of both religious groups were integrated in both areas.

The Maronites and the Druze repeatedly found themselves fighting on opposing sides, with the Druze defending the Turks, and the Maronites aligning themselves with the French and their allies. According to Arzuni, the French and the British interventions fed the spirit of sectarianism that created further separation and animosity. “It is not religion and religious beliefs that started sectarianism, but rather politics and internal and external incidents during the 19th century that brought about armed conflicts between Maronites and Druze” (Arzuni, 2012, p. 183).

In 1860, a civil war broke out between Maronites and Druze and led to the intervention of the French military forces in support of the Maronites. The conflict that first started as an uprising of Maronite peasants against their same-faith feudal lords, spread to the areas inhabited by the Druze who had attempted to use force to prevent the Maronite peasants from revolting against them. The outcome was a massacre between the Druze and the Maronites. This led the church to come forward and take an active role in standing by the Maronite peasants against their feudal lords.

Pressured by the Europeans, the Turks created in 1861, and under their Ottoman authority, the Mount Lebanon province, or *Mutasarifieh Jabal Lubnan,* that was majority Christian but offered political power-sharing to minority groups to ensure stability. “This was the initial formation of a confessional system that gave privileges to a particular denomination” (Arzuni, 2002, p. 132). For the Maronites, the new “confessional” system in the Mount Lebanon province was an improvement to the theocracy under Ottoman rule, with Islam, specifically Sunni, as the religion. According to Yazbek, the governance system in Mount Lebanon “offered a democratic breathing space for all the non-Sunni denominations living in Lebanon” (Yazbeck, 1993, pp. 181-182).

The constitution of the *Mutasarifieh* cancelled the privileges of the feudal lords, and gave people equal rights. The Turks appointed their representative who was assisted “by a 12-member administrative board that represents the different religious denominations. Lebanon was divided into seven cazas each headed by a governor appointed by the majority denomination in the area. Accordingly, there were three Maronite governors, one Druze, one Sunni, one Roman Orthodox, and one Roman Catholic” (Khalaf, 2014, p. 154).

This period was characterized by “a cultural and scientific boom in Lebanon as schools and colleges were established, along with cultural, social and national organizations,” not to mention a competition between the Protestant and Jesuit missions at different levels including education and higher education, the publishing of religious books including the translation of the Bible into Arabic language. On the humanitarian level too as “the Catholics, Orthodox, and Protestants opened many schools, hospitals, health-care centers, orphanages, vocational and rehabilitation centers in Balamand, Souk el Gharb, Broumana, Zahle’, Bikfaya, Jezzine, Beirut, Tyre, Sidon, Hammana, Tripoli, Ain Zhalta, Shemlan, and Hasbia.” A

competition that bore good fruits and led to "national and political awareness that called for freedom and independence" (Khalaf, 2014, pp. 157-159).

Arzuni notes that several factors can have led to the rise of sectarianism. These include the *millet* system and the establishment of faith-based schools; moving schools from the churches and mosques to separate buildings where the respective denominations offered a modern curriculum along with religious education. Also, the rise of mission schools created an allegiance to the denomination; the import of foreign goods led to the deterioration of the economy as a result of which the Druze feudal lords suffered considerably, while a new group of traders – mostly Christian – benefited because of their interaction with the west; the Maronite Church's open support to its French allies against the Turks whom the Druze felt allegiance towards; and also the division of Mount Lebanon in 1842 into two *qaimakamieh* or districts – one for the Druze, and one for Christians (Arzuni, 2012, pp. 184-190).

1.2 The French Mandate and the formation of Greater Lebanon

The Mount Lebanon province was the Maronites' first step towards realizing their dream of a Greater Lebanon which came true in 1920. The period in between witnessed the rise of Maronite Patriarchs as the leaders of their people not only in spiritual matters, but in temporal ones too (Yazbeck, 2014).

In 1920, and following the end of World War I and the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, the League of Nations divided the Arab World between France and Britain, rendering Lebanon and Syria under the French mandate. The Sykes-Picot agreement that Mark Sykes, on behalf of the British government, and Francois Georges-Picot for the French government drew in 1916 did not take into consideration the ethnic and religious realities of the population groups that existed within the then recently formed borders of the newly defined Turkey, Iraq, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon resulting in identity crises that lingers to-date (Arzuni, 2012, p. 104). According to Salibi, the outcome was "artificially" created countries, Lebanon included, with a striking lack of a sense of nationalism (Salibi, 1990):

> Since the turn of the century, however, the Maronites had pressed for the extension of this small Lebanese territory to what they argued were its natural and historical boundaries: it would then include the coastal towns of Tripoli, Beirut, Sidon and Tyre and their respective hinterlands, which belonged to the Vilayet of Beirut; and the fertile valley of the Bekaa (the four Kazas, or administrtative districts, of Baalbek, the Bekaa, Rashayya and Hasbayya), which belonged to the Vilayet of Damascus. According to the Maronite argument, this 'Greater Lebanon' had always had a special social and historical character, different from that of its surroundings, which made it necessary and indeed imperative for France to help establish it as an independent state (Salibi, 1990, p. 25).

While some Maronites were keen that Mount Lebanon remain a haven for Christians, others wanted to see "the formation of Greater Lebanon, a democratic nation where people of all denominations can live in

harmony, and which maintains strong Syrian-Lebanese relations built on mutual respect, as well as the sovereignty and independence of each" (Khalaf, 2014, p. 166).

The Greater Lebanon as announced by French General Gouraud extended from "the Big River in the North to Palestine in the South, and from Akkar to Amel Mountain; also from the west, it included the mountain, the coastal cities from Tripoli to Tyre; and from the east, the Bekaa valley, Rashaya, Hasbaya, Marjeyoun, and until the tips of the Eastern Mountain range" (Khalaf, 2014, p. 168).

The size of the recently established state more than doubled the size of the Mount Lebanon province. "The trouble with this arrangement was that the new territories, thus arbitrarily acquired, were actually Syrian, and, though they included scattered Maronite communities, their great majority, mainly Muslim, considered themselves Syrian too; they mostly identified with the pan-Arab nationalism of which Syria was the heart" (Hirst, 2010, p. 11).

The announcement of the Greater Lebanon triggered different reactions. Maronites and some other Christians were satisfied that through the support of France they now have a state where they do not form a minority. An accomplishment that they were keen on preserving. Muslims, both Sunni and Shiite, were not happy to see their areas extracted from Syria. Sunnis, for instance, were concerned that while they form a majority in Syria, they are a minority in Greater Lebanon. As a result they revolted against the French. In the South, Shiite Muslims attacked 30 Christian villages (1920-1921). Though the French authorities put down the revolt in south Lebanon, the events negatively affected the relationship between the two denominations.

In 1923, France and Britain defined the borders of Lebanon. And the Republic of Greater Lebanon was announced on May 23rd, 1926, with a president either appointed or elected alongside the designated representative of the French Government in Lebanon (Khalaf, 2014, p. 168).

An official census for the inhabitants of Greater Lebanon was conducted in 1932 and revealed a total population of 793,396 composed of 178,100 Sunnis; 155,350 Shiites; 53,334 Druze; 227,800 Maronites; 46,709 Roman Catholics; 77,312 Roman Orthodox; 6,869 Protestants; 26,102 Armenian Orthodox; 5,890 Armenian Catholic; 5,526 Syrian, 3,588 Israelis; 738 Catholic and Orthodox Chaldeans; and 6,393 from other religious groups and denominations. The outcome of the census raised the concern of the Maronites since they no longer formed a majority. In parallel, Muslims were encouraged and "their sense of belonging started to grow" (Khalaf, 2014, p. 171).

It is worth noting here that no other nation-wide census has been conducted in Lebanon since then for fear that the outcome will disrupt confessional representation in parliament and government particularly following the demographic changes that the country has and continues to witness.

1.3 The National Pact and the independence of the Republic of Lebanon

Anger and frustration with the injustices caused by the French Mandate, accompanied by a growing mutual trust between the different local parties, gave rise to a unified call for an independent Greater Lebanon. Parliamentary elections in 1943 led to the election of Bishara el Khoury, a Maronite Christian, as President of the Republic of Lebanon, and Riad el Solh, a Muslim Sunni, as Prime Minister. The cabinet of ministers included representatives from the six main denominations, namely Maronites, Sunnis, Shiites, Roman Orthodox, Roman Catholics, and Druze. "The two men were the authors of the National Pact, an unwritten formula for Muslim-Christian entente. In essence, the Muslims give up their desire to be part of Greater Syria, and the Christians, aware that the French would not always be around to protect them, accepted that Lebanon was an Arab country" (Hardy, 2016, p. 62).

When negations to end the French mandate failed, the Lebanese Parliament approved a constitutional amendment proposed by the Lebanese government that removed any connection with the French Mandate. This led the French High Commissioner on November 11th, 1943 to arrest the Lebanese President, Prime Minister and key leaders from different religious backgrounds. In response, Lebanese political parties – Christian and Muslim - came together and called for a general country-wide strike, forming a resistance against French authority. Eventually, on November 22nd, 1943, and under pressure from Britain and USA, France gave in and released President Bishara el Khoury, Prime Minister Riad El Solh, and the other ministers. Lebanon then officially became an independent republic.

1.4 The establishment of the state of Israel and the influx of Palestinian refugees

The establishment of a racist Israeli state south of Lebanon negatively affected the region as Palestinians had to flee their hometowns and villages in 1949 in search of safety and shelter mostly in Lebanon, Jordan and Syria. In 1967, Lebanon found itself involved in a war between Israel and the Arab countries with ongoing conflict and tension between the Palestinians and Israelis in South Lebanon. In 1969 fighting broke out between the Lebanese Army and Palestinians, who were majority Muslim Sunnis. The presence of armed Palestinian forces was taken advantage of by the Sunnis to call for more privileges; and by the Druze who shared with the Palestinians their leftist ideology which once again placed the country in sectarian havoc (Khalaf, 2014, pp. 180-181).

Different incidents, including the assassination of Palestinian leaders in Lebanon at the hands of Israelis, led to the polarization of the country with the Christians siding with the Lebanese Army who was accused of not reacting to the assassinations, while the Sunnis and the Druze sided with the Palestinians. Christians blamed Sunnis and Druze for siding up with foreigners, i.e. the Palestinians; while Druze and Sunnis blamed Christians for adopting an exclusive governance model that did not involve other religious groups (Khalaf, 2014, p. 182).

1.5 Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990)

April 13, 1975 marked the start of the Lebanese Civil War although it was preceded by sporadic incidents here and there. Once again, the diversity of the players in the war meant that history is recorded differently by different people, each from their own lens, often times giving rise to conflicting information that can be confusing. For instance, here are two accounts of the attack on the bus full of Palestinians on April 13th: "Phalangist gunmen ambushed the bus in which they were travelling and shot dead twenty-seven unarmed passengers, including women and children" (Hirst, 2010, p. 99). In parallel, another scenario describes the victims of the shooting as "30 heavily armed Palestinians" (Khalaf, 2014, p. 183).

Truth is said to be the first casualty in any war. There is a "need for a unifying post-war Lebanese historical narrative, or rather one that transcends narrow communalism and exclusive ideologies" (Larkin, 2012, p. 51).

It was a civil war in that it "pitted Lebanese against Lebanese" around "those questions of identity and belonging that had perplexed them ever since their country came into being" (Hirst, 2010, p. 109). Right wing Maronite Christian factions and Muslim/Leftist factions also known as the National Movement fought against each other. While the latter called for "reforms through arms" and "the abolition of political sectarianism", Maronites were concerned about demographic changes and the future existence of Christians, and so prioritized security over reforms.

As the war went on year after year, more factions were involved. One characteristic of the Lebanese Civil War was the constant shift in alliances. At different phases of the war, different groups who were once allies fought against each other. For instance, there were phases during which Muslim and Druze militias fought against each other. Shiite and Sunni militias fought against each other. Christian militias fought against each other. Shiite against Shiites. Beirut became divided into East Beirut that is predominantly Christian, and West Beirut that is predominantly Muslim/Leftist. There was much bloodshed, and loss in lives and properties. Innocent people were kidnapped based on their religious affiliation. Massacres took place in different parts of the country, and at the hands of different players. Wave after wave of internal displacement started throughout Lebanon, some forced while others as a precautionary measure as the adherents of each religious community sought shelter in areas where they formed a majority. Some families were displaced several times in their search for safety and security.

It was a civil war, but a regional one too! For "Lebanon had always been other people's political or diplomatic battleground." It was often linked to the Israeli-Arab conflict. It was "not just about the future of Lebanon, but of the whole Middle East, and above all, about the place which Israel sought within it" (Hirst, 2010, p. 103).

Maronites fought Palestinians in Lebanon. As the Palestinian and Muslim/leftist militias advanced into the Christian Maronite areas, the unanticipated happened: Lebanon's neighboring country, Syria, intervened on behalf of the Christians in 1976, and against its leftist allies.

Israel invaded Lebanon in 1978 pushing the Palestinian Liberation Organization away from the Lebanese border. This led to Security Council Resolutions 425 that called on Israel to withdraw fully and unconditionally from Lebanese territories. At the time, both Maronites and Shiites were becoming concerned that Lebanon will become the alternative homeland for the Palestinians, who are mostly Sunnis, and which would create a confessional in-balance. In 1980, fighting started between the Shiites and the Palestinian/leftist groups. That same year, Maronites started feeling concerned about the extended power of Syrians in Lebanon. In 1982, Israel's severe bombardment of Beirut led to the evacuation of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) from Lebanon to Tunisia. That same year, and following the assassination of Lebanese President Elect Bachir Gemayel, Israel invaded Beirut and facilitated the massacre of Sabra and Shatilla Palestinian camps at the hands of the Phalangist militiamen.

Also, that same year, and when a new Lebanese president failed to sign a peace agreement with Israel, the latter withdrew from areas of Lebanon leaving Christians vulnerable for attacks from the Socialist party, leading to massacres against Christians in 1983.

Soon after, different militias had control over different parts of the country. And Lebanon, almost in its entirety, was divided along religious lines.

In 1985, Israel withdrew from parts of Lebanon. In March 1989 General Michel Aoun, who had been appointed as Prime Minister until the election of a new president, declared Liberation war against Syria. On November 22nd of the same year, members of the Lebanese Parliament met in Taif, Saudi Arabia, where they signed what came to be known as the Taif Agreement. The meeting was initiated by the Arab League as an attempt to reconcile the different warring factions. The agreement included the transfer of some power away from the Maronites such that the Muslim Sunni Prime Minister who is appointed by the Maronite President is no longer accountable to the President, but rather to the Lebanese Parliament. It also gave Christians and Muslims equal number of representatives in the Parliament, and in the Cabinet or Government, instead of the six to five representation of Christians to Muslims previously set by the National Pact. All, with the exception of General Michel Aoun, accepted the Taif Agreement.

In 1990, a vicious war broke out in the Eastern part of Beirut between the Lebanese Army headed by General Aoun and the Lebanese Forces headed by Samir Geagea that brought about much destruction and loss in lives, and "led to the emigration of tens of thousands of Christians" (Khalaf, 2014, p. 189). In October of the same year, the Syrian army, backed by the blessings of other Lebanese factions, attacked Eastern Beirut in an attempt to overthrow General Aoun, who was then granted asylum in France where he stayed for 15 years. This then brought the Lebanese Civil War to an end. And Israel eventually withdrew

from most of Lebanon in 2000. Syrian troops withdrew in 2005 following the assassination of the then Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, a Sunni Muslim affiliated with Saudi Arabia. The assassination brought the Lebanese together:

> "All of a sudden Lebanese voters were confronted with truly national issues that went beyond the borders of localized interests and intra-confessional debates. It has been said that the so-called "Cedar Revolution" was the awakening of Lebanon, the equivalent of the Arab Spring phenomenon with a better outcome. Two blocs emerged from the street mobilizations: the "March 14" and the "March 8" movements; both of them are inter-confessional alliances, with a third bloc of more "independent" minded politicians and technocrats (such as the President of the Central Bank) also playing significant roles in government. These two coalitions still dominate politics, leaving little space for the emergence of smaller groupings within this framework" (Perelli, 2014, p. 8).
>
> "The bitter experience of the civil war has amply demonstrated that neither side in Lebanon can easily force its opinion on the other. This means that the problems of Lebanon – including those concerning Lebanese history – can only be resolved in the light of the relevant realities" (Salibi, 1990, p. 221).

It is worth noting here that article 24 of the Lebanese constitution that was promulgated in 1926 states that the Chamber of Deputies (i.e. the Parliament) should have "equal representation between Christians and Muslims", and that there "should be proportional representation among the confessional groups within each of the two religious communities" (Constitution, 2015). And that the amended version of Article 95 of the Lebanese Constitution calls on the Chamber of Deputies to take

> appropriate measures to bring about the abolition of political confessionalism according to a transitional plan, during which the principle of confessional representation in public service jobs, in the judiciary, in the military and security institutions, and in public and mixed agencies shall be cancelled in accordance with the requirements of national reconciliation; they shall be replaced by the principle of expertise and competence. However, Grade One posts and their equivalents shall be excepted from this rule, and the posts shall be distributed equally between Christians and Muslims without reserving any particular job for any sectarian group but rather applying the principles of expertise and competence (Constitution, 2015).

This is yet to be realized.

1.6 The 34-day war on Lebanon: The Israel – Hizbullah war (2006)

In July 2006, Hizbullah, a Shiite Muslim political party affiliated with Iran, abducted 2 Israeli soldiers and demanded the release of Lebanese prisoners in Israel in exchange. What followed was a massive war on Lebanon that not only targeted Hizbullah areas but also the country's infrastructure. As a result one third of the Lebanese population, majority Shiite Muslims, were internally displaced from majority Shiite areas, mostly seeking shelter in majority Christian areas. Following years of separation, each within their own respective same-faith communities, this was the first time for many to meet their fellow Lebanese who

come from a different religion. Care-givers and care-recipients came to realize that they are people of the same nation with shared concerns, dreams, and values.

Still, Moaddel's survey following the 2006 war on Lebanon revealed that "feelings of insecurity are quite high among all religious groups in Lebanon," and that "each religious group trusted its own kind much higher than other groups." But, while the respondents expressed their preference to have "neighbors from the same group, Lebanese displayed little interest in religious segregation." Possibly on the basis of their belief that people who "belong to different religions are probably just as moral" as those who belong to their own, as confirmed by 71.3% of the respondents of the same World Values Survey in Lebanon (Survey, 2013) which is in alignment with the message of *A Common Word* initiative, in that

> When Christians and Muslims commit themselves to practicing the dual command of love, they are not satisfying some private religious fancy; instead, they are actively fostering peaceful coexistence in our ineradicably pluralistic world, which is plagued by divisions. They are making possible the constructive collaboration of people of different faiths in the common public space and for the common good (Miroslav Volf, 2010, p. 24).

1.7 The Syria Crisis (2011- to-date)

Effective December 2010 there was a wave of uprisings that overtook a number of Arab countries starting with Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain, and others. These were not identical uprisings, for the factors and the circumstances differed between one country and the other. The Syria uprising started in 2011 in what was described as a legitimate demand for reform by a peaceful opposition. Yet, the movement was soon hijacked by Islamic fundamentalist groups such as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, who had their own extremist agendas as their name declares. The war, which is referred to in the West as a "civil war", is perceived by the locals as the war of others on their land. This is mainly due to the presence of mercenaries from different parts of the world fighting alongside the extremists, against the government forces.

Today the war is in its sixth year, the Syria crisis is described as "the world's worst humanitarian crisis since World War II" and according to the United Nations' Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), 13.5 million people in Syria today are in dire need of multi-sectoral support, of which 6 million are children. Around 6 million are internally displaced (UNOCHA, 2016, p. 2). Around 5 million others have fled to neighbouring countries in search of safety. Indeed, today "one in four persons in Lebanon is displaced from Syria", in fact, "Lebanon has the highest per capita concentration of refugees in the world" (UNHCR, 2015, p. 4).

The Lebanese government cautioned that the "massive influx of refugees has a wide range of consequences, including in the areas of labour market dynamics and poverty, access to basic services such as

education and health care, and pressure on the physical environment (water, shelter and sanitation). It has also created social tensions between refugee communities and host communities, with negative perceptions including allegations of criminality, particularly affecting the most vulnerable groups, women included (Nations, 2013, p. 10) .

1.8 Research aim

This research attempts a comparative look at local and international faith-based development organizations active in Lebanon to determine whether the context has or can impact the objectives and practices of these organizations. And so seek in the research process to identify potential avenues through which these same FBOs can positively influence the context.

The researcher's rationale is that both faith and development are focused on the well-being of mankind. And, in a sectarian context such as Lebanon, it is anticipated that organizations that bring the two together facilitate a holistic transformation that further emphasizes the well-being of mankind. Or, if not, they at least have the potential to do so. The research is meant to shed light on the current role of such organizations in Lebanon today as potential agents of positive change at a time when sectarianism may actually have given rise to them.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Context – Multi-faith Lebanon

In 2009, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) projected that the population of the Arab World (Middle East North Africa) will reach 395 million in 2015, out of which over 60% are under 25 years of age which makes the Middle East North Africa (MENA) region one of the most youthful of the world (UNDP, 2009, p. 3).

Another prominent attribute, specific to the Middle East, is that it is the cradle for the three Abrahamic and monotheistic religions, namely Judaism, Christianity and Islam. This enriching diversity has rendered the region an important and attractive place for pilgrims from all over the world. A feature that is at times perceived to be the underlying cause of conflicts in the region. This is one point of view! Another is that these conflicts are in essence of a political nature yet are "wrapped in the rhetoric of religion" (Muck, 2009, p. 181).

In terms of demographics, MENA has the largest concentration (> 90%) of Muslim-majority countries, and almost all proclaim the *Shariaa* as the source of national legislation. While the largest *percentage* of Christians is in Lebanon (estimated at 40.5% of the country's population), the largest concentration of Christians in the MENA region is in Egypt (8.8 million as compared to less than 2 million in Lebanon).

Lebanon, a small country of 4,025 square miles (10,425sq.km) in area, is probably the only Arab state in the Middle East whose constitution does not proclaim Islam as the state religion. Syria, a neighbouring country and a secular state, confirms its non-confessional identity though its constitution stipulates that the religion of the president is Islam.

Table 1: Religious composition of Arab countries

Country	**Population [July 2015 est.]**	**Majority Religion**		**Minority Religion**
Gaza Strip	1,869,055	98-99%	Muslim [predominantly Sunni]	<1.0% Christian; <1.0% Other
Saudi Arabia	27,752,316	85-90%	Muslim [predominantly Sunni; 10-15% Shia]	Other
West Bank	2,785,366	80-85%	Muslim [predominantly Sunni]	12-14% Jewish; 1-2.5% Christians; < 1.0% Unspecified
Turkey	79,414,269	99.80%	Muslim [predominantly Sunni]	0.2% mostly Christians & Jews

Iran	81,824,270	99.40%	[90-95% Shia; 5-10% Sunni]	0.3% other; 0.5% Unspecified
Yemen	26,737,317	99.10%	Muslim [65% Sunni; 35% Shia]	0.9% Other [Baha'I, Hindu, Christians… refugees included]
Iraq	37,056,169	99%	Muslim [60-65% Shia; 32-37% Sunni)	0.8% Christian; > 0.1 Buddhist, Jewish, Folk religion, other
Jordan	8,117,564	97.20%	Muslim [predominantly Sunni]	2.2% Christian; 0.4% Buddhist; 01% Hindu; <0.1 Jewish; <0.1 Folk religion; 0.1% Other
Egypt	88,487,396	90%	Muslim [predominantly Sunni]	10% Christian [majority Coptic Orthodox]
Syria	17,064,854	87%	Muslim [74% Sunni; 13% Alawi, Ismaili, and Shia)	10% Christian; 3% Druze
Oman	3,286,936	85.90%	Muslim [majority are Ibadhi, lesser numbers of Sunni and Shia]	6.5% Christian; 5.5% Hindu; 0.8% Buddhist; <1% Jewish; 1% Other; 0.2% Unaffiliated
Qatar	2,194,817	77.50%	Muslim	8.5% Christian; 14% other
Kuwait	2,788,534	76.60%	Muslim	17.3% Christian; 5.9% other and unspecified
United Arab Emirates	5,779,760	76%	Muslim	9% Christian; 15% Other
Bahrain	1,346,613	70.30%	Muslim	14.5% Christian; 9.8% Hindu; 2.5% Buddhist; 0.6% Jewish; 1.9% Other; <0.1 Unaffiliated
Lebanon	6,184,701	54%	Muslim [27% Sunni; 27% Shia)	40.5% Christian [includes 21% Maronite Catholic; 8% Greek Orthodox; 5% Catholic; 6.5% Other Christian); 5.6% Druze; very small numbers of Jews, Baha'is, Buddhists, Hindus, and Mormons
Israel	8,049,314	75%	Jewish	17.5% Muslim; 2% Christian; 1.6% Druze; 3.9% other
Source: World Fact Book, August 13, 2015				

Lebanon, the country of focus in this research, is often described as a mosaic of 17 or 18 different denominations or confessions – mostly Muslim and Christian. These include Christian Maronties, Roman Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Armenian Orthodox, Armenian Catholic, Latin, Chaldean, Assyrian, Protestant, Evangelical, and Copts; while Muslim denominations include Sunnis, Shia, Druze, and Alawites. Terms such as "majority" and "minority" religious groups are often used in Lebanon though out of the existing denominations none is, on its own, a *majority.* It is a country with high levels of religiosity (Garde, 2012, p. 306) where the vast majority believe "in God and in a human soul" (Moaddel, 2015), and use words and terms that refer to God in almost every conversation. An aspect that is equally so elsewhere in the Arab countries.

Table 2: Respondents to: *How important is religion in your life?*

Country	Total	Very important	Rather important	Not very important	Not at all important	In-appropriate	No answer	Don't know
Bahrain	1200	40.6	46.3	9.8	3.1	0.1		0.1
Palestine	1000	87.5	9.4	2.3	0.7	-		0.2
Iraq	1200	84.7	12.8	2.3	0.2	-		
Jordan	1200	93.3	6.2	0.2	0.1	-		0.2
Kuwait	1303	86.5	7.4	2.1	0.5	-	2.4	1.2
Lebanon	1200	52.9	24.1	11.9	8.2	-	1.3	1.7
Qatar	1060	98.9	0.9	0.2	-	-		
Turkey	1605	68.1	24.6	4	3	-		0.3
Egypt	1523	94.1	5.7	0	0.1	-		
Yemen	1000	95.8	2.8	0.4	0.8	-		0.2

Source: World Values Survey (2010-2014)

Hence, *faith* can be one element why religion is a key part of one's culture and community identity in Lebanon. Another, and possibly more pronounced, is the distribution of institutional power in the country. Since the state took its independence in 1943 and to-date the Lebanese president is always a Maronite Christian, the prime minister a Sunni Muslim, the speaker of parliament a Shiite Muslim, while the Vice-Speaker and the Vice-Premier are Greek Orthodox Christians. Moreover, and to a considerable extent, "private schools and universities, student unions, professional associations, sports clubs and the media have confessional characters" (Ariss, 2010, p. 60).

Sectarianism became stronger during and following the almost two decade civil war (1975-1990) that left its toll on the country and its people, fragmenting society, increasing displacement, creating geographic segregation, unemployment, and negatively affecting the economy and standard of living. The civil war, the country's sectarian structure, and the competing loyalties of its citizens further weakened the state and severely affected public services. As is the case in other post-conflict contexts, Lebanon witnessed

the rise of non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations (FBOs) included, that actively sought to address the emergent war-related and other humanitarian needs in the country.

In multi-faith contexts that have witnessed violence, the religious identity of an FBO creates trust in the recipients. For FBOs, their faith and that of their workers continues to be the source of their inspiration, motivated by their desire to obediently live out their faith in practical ways. It is not strange then that the image of religious organizations in Lebanon and the MENA region is that they are "a fixture of civil society" (Jawad, 2009, p. 82).

The Lebanese civil war was not the first such occasion that religious organizations in the region sought to address the needs of their people. Under the Ottoman rule (1516-1918) the Ottoman Empire established public schools where teaching was in the Turkish language, while Christian and Muslim denominations established their own private schools in urban and rural areas, where teaching was in the Arabic language. "Muslims established annexes to their mosques that came to be known as *kuttab* where they primarily gave attention to teaching and reciting of Quranic verses as well as language, grammar and mathematics. In parallel, Christians initiated what came to be known as the 'Oak School' or *antosh* that was often annexed to churches and monasteries where a student learnt the Arabic and Syriac languages as well as the reciting of Biblical verses" (Arzuni, 2012, pp. 166-167). Faith-based schools, both Christian and Muslim, came to exist towards the end of the 18th century as separate entities from the churches and the mosques, teaching Arabic language and sharing their religious teachings (Arzuni, 2012, p. 167). Real schools only started towards the first quarter of the nineteenth century and as a reaction to the establishment of mission schools. Faith-based and missional schools spread during the last quarter of the nineteenth century and with the beginning of the 20th century.

It is worth mentioning here that Lebanon enjoys religious freedom mandated by Article 9 of its Constitution and which states that "There shall be absolute freedom of conscience. The state in rendering homage to the God Almighty shall respect all religions and creeds and shall guarantee, under its protection the free exercise of all religious rites provided that public order is not disturbed. It shall also guarantee that the personal status and religious interests of the population, to whatever religious sect they belong, shall be respected."

Indeed, each of the existing denominations has its own legal personal status law that it follows, which is another reason why in Lebanon, religion plays an important role in social life. This system also meant that people had to belong to a certain denomination regardless of whether they were religious or not, merely to tend to matters such as marriage, births, deaths and other issues.

Social ties and religious beliefs have also been found to be the motivation that lead workers of faith-based organizations to join them. It is this same faith that motivates FBO workers to go the second mile as they address the needs in the community. An aspect that is appreciated by care recipients and is repeatedly

mentioned in their conversations. It is worth noting here that some FBO workers perceive their religion as a "service offered to clients"; others see their social work as a type of "religious ministry" (Flanigan, 2010, p. 35).

This, in brief, is a snapshot of the country and context where faith-based organizations (FBOs) subject of this research project operate. A country where around 30% of the resident population live below the poverty line (Centre, 2008, p. 15). A context where affiliation to one's confessional group can be stronger than to the nation itself (Hajjar, 2013). And a context that perhaps gives FBOs the legitimacy needed to respond, and effectively so, where the government's public services have failed.

2.2 Sociology of Religion

Religion can be described "as threatening, inspiring, consoling, provocative, a matter of reassuring routine or calls to put one's life on the line. It is a way to make peace and a reason to make war" (Calhoun, 2011, p. 118).

David Martin highlights that "the quest for meaning and identity are fundamental," and "meaning, purpose and identity are a pretty powerful trio that reason, or certainly empirical science, is not designed to answer. And that's the area that religion occupies" (Martin, 2008).

Peter L. Berger understands religion to deal with the "sacred" and defined it as "man's relationship with a sacred cosmos," characterized by a "mysterious and awesome power, other than man and related to him," (Repstad, 2007, p. 19) and which Durkheim described as "superior in dignity and power to profane things" (Stein, 2012, p. 15).

Religion takes on different meanings and expressions in different contexts (Haar, 2011, p. 10). Rana Jawad described religion in Lebanon as "an axis of spontaneous social and political action", where faith in God is as important for the caregiver or service provider as well as to "the service user who ultimately depends on God to protect them from misfortune or lead them to a welfare organization" (Jawad, 2009, p. 85). The following table is part of a survey conducted in Lebanon, and reveals the perspectives of 1200 respondents with regards to the importance of religion in their lives:

Table 3: How important is religion in your life?

	%
Very important	52.9
Rather important	24.1
Not very important	11.8

Not at all important	8.2
No answer	1.3
Don't know	1.7
N=	1200
Source: World Values Survey (Lebanon 2013)	

An understanding of the role and practices of faith-based organizations in Lebanon, subject of this research, necessitates an understanding of the role of religion and its relationship with society and with social service. In the following section, we will endeavor to look at the perspectives of classical sociologists such as Karl Marx, Max Weber, Emile Durkheim, and others, and how their own experiences, as well as those of contemporary sociologists, compare with the realities of religion in the Middle East region in general, and the Lebanese context in particular.

This process will also necessitate gaining an understanding of what is implied by religion and/or religiosity and other terms that have at times, less so today, been used interchangeably with religion. One such differentiation is between "religion" and "spirituality". While the first is seen to imply institutions, sets of beliefs and doctrines, and behavioral codes and patterns, "spirituality" is seen as a search for the sacred and is "personal and subjective" (Dein, 2005, p. 528). Spirituality, some believe, has to do with an encounter or an experience with the sacred; possibly even without the person having to be religious (Peter Walker, 2012, p. 117). Kurt Alan Ver Beek differentiated between the two as follows:

> spirituality as a relationship with the supernatural or spiritual realm that provides meaning and a basis for personal and communal reflection, decisions, and action. While religion is generally considered an institutionalised set of beliefs and practices regarding the spiritual realm, spirituality describes the personal and relational side of those beliefs, which shape daily life. So while one could be spiritual without being religious or vice versa, in practice the two are commonly intertwined as people experience and describe their spirituality through a religious perspective (Beek, 2000, p. 32).

Others see spirituality as a "restructuring" of religion as part of modernity, "a contemporary alternative to religion in today's pluralistic society" (Dein, 2005, p. 531). Others still see the differentiation between religion and spirituality as a strictly western perspective.

The term "religion" is assumed to have been derived from the Latin word *religare*, i.e. to bind or unite (Hoyt, 1912, p. 126). Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Emile Durkheim saw the relevance of religion to human societies. Durkheim spoke of the integrating function of religion. He described it as a "social fact" (Berger, 2011, p. Appendix I). He recognized religion's ability to unite around a set of beliefs that a group of people, forming a community, live by. Beliefs that give meaning to life. This "functional" definition has a

substantive element that "involves beliefs and practices which assume the existence of supernatural beings" (Davie, 2007, p. 19).

While Durkheim separated in his definition the sacred from the secular, he saw the source of influence not in the sacred but in the unity of people, the coming together around a unified belief or objective. The sense of solidarity brought about by religion was felt by Durkheim to be more important than the object of the faith, hence emphasizing the social role of religion, particularly in sustaining "stability and equilibrium", and considering religion "a prerequisite for every society for it to survive" (Repstad, 2006, p. 151). The active role of the Catholic Church in Poland in taking a public stand pro human rights and against the injustices of the prevalent Communist regime in the 1980s is one example of how religion "united" the people through becoming their voice, and consequently gaining their trust and drawing in around 90% of the Polish population to church.

This sense of solidarity that Durkheim spoke of is quite evident amongst the people of Lebanon where religious identity plays an influential role in society and where to a large extent "national political conflicts inevitably organize around religious allegiances and strategic alliances among sect leaders" (Flanigan, 2010, p. 21).

Another functional role of religion has to do with the set of rituals which, may differ in form between one place and culture and the other, though they essentially address a communal need such as "the final rite de passage which brings life to a close" (Habermas, 2010, p. 15).

On the one hand, this cohesive nature of religion may be one reason why, according to a Lebanese FBO worker, the people's first choice when seeking help in a post-war multi-faith context as Lebanon is to approach those service providers that they consider their *own*. "Religious identity is often times an important factor in understanding communities" (Khan, 2008, p. 41).

On the other hand, this uniting feature, and as Philip W. Barker and William J. Muck note, renders religion "the easiest tool for mass mobilization and mass formation" (Muck, 2009, p. 179). A function that international and regional governments, political leaders, media corporations and others take advantage of, wrapping up political issues and agendas in "the rhetoric of religion" to stir divisions that facilitate their own agendas. Misinterpretations of the issues as is the case with Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* merely serve to pour more oil on the fire, igniting inter-religious fears and hatreds that lead to more polarization and demonization of the different "other".

This *uniting* and *mobilizing* characteristic has been taken advantage of, whether intentionally or unintentionally, throughout history. Examples can possibly include the Irish-British multi-faceted conflict which can be described as ethnic and political too, although its religious image is the one by which it is most widely known. The same is true of the Lebanese civil war that was given a religious image amongst others and which further fragmented the country along sectarian lines. Again today, the fight against terrorism is

being portrayed as a war against a particularly religion, producing further polarization. The question then becomes, what is behind this mobilizing power of religion?

Indeed, Karl Marx (1818-1883) viewed religion as an ideology and was concerned about the "abuse" of religious content and its misuse by oppressive powers to justify their subjugation of the poor and the powerless. In such instances, religion can also become a factor in creating what Robert Chambers called "the poverty trap" where the poor and the weak become captive to what Jayakumar Christian, describes as "the god-complexes of the non-poor", i.e. the socio-economic-political systems that distort the identity of the poor by a "web of lies" (Myers, 1999, p. 77).

Christian, whose experience is in the Hindu context, cautioned that every culture has "beliefs that disempower people, discourage change, and label oppressive relationships as sacrosanct and ordained" (Myers, 1999, p. 75).

Marx saw that religion can only be understood in relation to the context in which it exists, particularly emphasizing the social and economic dimensions. He feared that religion may become a haven that the not so well-to-do, i.e. people of lower social class, cling to when unable to face their realities, which is an ideology that is widely spread mostly amongst the affluent and the self-independent who see God as a myth, that the weak imagine and approach out of despair.

Max Weber (1864-1920) saw "the individual as the atom of sociology" (Repstad, 2006, p. 35) and was interested in the influence of religious convictions and beliefs on the behavior of individuals and people groups, serving as a change agent that can be either positive or negative depending on the relevant group and its beliefs. He highlighted in what he called "elective affinity" the role of religious convictions in motivating people, particularly referring to the relationship between Protestantism and capitalism, an outcome of obedience to Biblically-based social ethics such as good stewardship, diligence and professionalism motivated by Proverbs 22:29 "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings" (Weber, 2003, p. 53).

Weber saw the importance of context and noted that the relationship between religion and society varies with time and place. He was concerned with the impact of the content of any particular religion on the individual and collective behavior of its followers as the principal carriers of these beliefs in society. Weber's fears come true when extremist militant groups, in the Middle East and beyond, use misinterpretations of religious teachings to recruit others and to justify atrocities carried out in the name of God.

Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) who, like Marx, was concerned about "hegemony" or the ideological domination of the capitalist economy and the ruling class over the working class, saw the positive influential role of religion made possible through raising awareness against injustices. Evidence of the latter is in the life and work of such people as human rights activist Martin Luther King, Jr., also in the role played by the

Catholic Church in Poland in 1980 when it challenged communism and Soviet influence (Davie, 2007, p. 143).

Talcott Parsons (1902-1979), an American coming from a different context and historical experience, saw religion as part of the social system. He believed in the functional role of religion not only for society but for the individual too. Thomas Luckmann explained religion as "a search for one's identity in a wider context" (Repstad, 2006, p. 82). Faith helps people find answers to the meaning of life, death, life after death (Pargament, 2015, p. 25). But not only that. In such a conflict-ridden region and country like Lebanon, religion is very much part of people's coping mechanism, that enables them regain hope and persevere.

The potential that Parsons saw in religion, particularly its ability to bring about harmony, integration and solidarity in the community (Repstad, 2007, p. 46) is a value that a segment of the Lebanese people aspires towards. One such effort is Adyan (i.e. *religions* in Arabic) Foundation that was founded in 2006 for interreligious and spiritual solidarity. Adyan's mission revolves around "valuing religious diversity", "promoting coexistence", "diversity management among individuals and communities", on "the social, political, educational and spiritual levels" (Adyan, 2015). An important recently launched fruit of Adyan is a civic education curriculum that "fosters an increased sense of citizenship" (Star, 2014).

2.3 Industrialization and Modernity

Major historical events and movements such as the Age of Enlightenment or Reason (1685-1815), modernity, secularization, the rise of social differentiation and pluralism, were anticipated by sociologists such as Max Weber and Emile Durkheim to lead to the decline of religion. With the Enlightenment began an intellectual movement with ideas about God, reason, nature and humanity. Modernity in certain societies was seen to *privatize* religion or limit it to a relationship between the individual and God.

In their desire to rationalize or pursue knowledge, freedom and happiness, European societies pursued each a distinctive journey relevant to its particular context and major events taking place at the time. With industrialization came economic development that impacted culture, society and political life. Consequent outcomes included the rise of the working class, specialization, rise in educational levels, and a shift from dependence on nature and the environment to a more service-oriented economy. Sociologists emphasized the relationship between industrialization and economic development, and the impact on values, culture and politics. One theory anticipated that modernity's influence on culture and politics will bring about a change in values. Proponents of another theory saw that values were independent of the economy. Disregarding external factors such as colonialism, the post-war modernization theory diagnosed the underdeveloped economy of countries as a result of traditional values that needed to be replaced with modern ones. On the other hand, the emergent neo-Marxist theorists blamed it on global capitalism noting that

underdeveloped countries where the developed countries are investing larger resources are the ones that are experiencing the greater growth, and that the neglected others remain locked in "powerlessness and structural dependence" (Baker, 2000, p. 20). The same can be said of rural vs. urban societies, where little or no investment is made in rural areas that remain under-developed, while investments focused on urban settings may lead to economic growth and a gradual shift away from the traditional way of life.

Ronald Inglehart and Wayne E. Baker believed that "modernization is probabilistic, not deterministic," i.e. while they agreed that economic development does bring about change in social and cultural values, yet, there are other factors in the equation that define the element and scope of these changes. Values are "path-dependent" and highly influenced by the historical heritage of a country, the type of society – whether agrarian or other, the prevalent worldviews – i.e. traditional vs. secular/rational, and survival vs. self-expression. Those who emphasize traditional values are more religious and highly regard family life, "social conformity rather than individualistic striving, favor consensus rather than political conflict…" (Inglehart, 2000, p. 25).

Societies that struggle with trust, change, diversity and gender equality are mostly those who maintain survival values as compared to self-expression and quality of life. The opposite is true of those who embrace quality of life and self-expression, and whose labor force is transitioning into the service sector, i.e. those societies who have started their journey with modernity, leaving behind the agrarian way of life and are on a transition to industrialized or post-industrialized life-styles.

Moreover, theology, religious thought and political realities can affect the type, scope and direction of change in a particular society. Again, there is no unified clear cut response to modernity. While USA was the first country in the world to have all its labor force transition into the service sector, its society maintained traditional and religious values, unlike most European societies. Japan too is a secular country yet continues to be influenced by its religious heritage. All this is to say that historical heritage plays an important role in setting the path of change of values in a society. Moreover, culture acquires values from prevalent religious traditions that are with time absorbed and/or adopted at the national level too, such that when a particular religious tradition is no longer of influence, its values will continue to be maintained within the thus formed national culture, which is then carried on from generation to generation through the educational and media institutions. In the same token, ethnic communities who leave their country and seek shelter elsewhere will continue to maintain their own ethnic values even though they live in a totally different context. As a result there are no uniform traditions, though there are different variations of shared historical experiences. That said, perhaps because of their joined experience, Christians, Muslims and Druze in Lebanon carry in them that which distinguishes them from regional or global people of their own respective faith groups. Moreover, perhaps, it is fair to say that Christians, Muslims and Druze in Lebanon carry

common traditional and cultural values that they do not share with their respective non-Lebanese same-faith people, and this as a result of their interaction together.

Pluralism – both cultural and religious – was perceived as a threat to the notion of a unified truth, and so yet another factor that led to the decline of religious institutions. Leslie Newbigin defines cultural pluralism as the attitude that appreciates and celebrates diversity. Religious pluralism, on the other hand, "is the belief that the differences between religions are not a matter of truth and falsehood, but of different perceptions of the one truth; that to speak of religious beliefs as true or false is inadmissible" (Newbigin, 1989, p. 14). With pluralism came the possibility of choosing which religion to follow. However, the more religious "choices" or options people had, the less authority did religion have in their eyes, and less interest, hence the assumption that "an increase in religious pluralism would lead to greater secularization" (Davie, 2007). Yet, there is a difference between birth-right religions and a religion that is chosen through conviction and which is way of life for the people. Moreover, pluralism gave rise to new forms of religion such as women-centered religion also known as "designer religion", and male spiritual movements both of which are completely alien to the Middle East context.

An anticipated outcome of modernity is functional differentiation and the diminishing influence of religion in the public sphere. Today, however, religious institutions in different countries actively involve their congregations in a variety of programs and faith-based social networks, raising awareness about public affairs, encouraging diversity and involvement (Davie, 2010, p. 196). The role of faith-based organizations and their involvement in responding to the needs in society, and the provision of services whether in an exclusive or inclusive manner will be considered in some detail in the faith-based section of this research.

2.4 The sacred and the secular

Grace Davie described secularization as "one word, with many meanings" (Davie, 2007, p. 49). In general, the secularization theory implied *more modernity, less religion.* Sociologists like Karl Marx predicted that industrialization, modernity and pluralism will lead to secularization and hence the relegation of religion and God to the private realm, and their retreat from the public sphere. A process of *commodification* of religion during which it loses its authentic message, and ends up pursuing new interpretations that result from the clash between religion and economy (Keskin, 2011).

Measuring the decline or growth of religiosity by the frequency of attendance or participation is not a reliable indicator particularly in the presence of what Grace Davie calls the "believing without belonging" group of people who have faith but do not feel that they can become part of the larger whole through regular participation in religious practices at the institutional level. And the presence of others who *belong but do not believe.* Moreover, each religion has its own set of expressions of faith or indicators that are crucial to it. Not

all give priority to regular attendance and participation. The same is true within the different denominations of the same religion (Warner, 2010, p. 59).

Jose' Casanova defined secularization as a) the decline of religious beliefs and practices in modern societies; b) privatization of religion; and c) the differentiation of the secular spheres (state, economy, science) (Casanova, 2006, p. 7).

Berger spoke of a secularization of society, culture and consciousness (Berger, 1967, p. 107). To him, "the original 'carrier' of secularization is the modern economic process, that is, the dynamic of industrial capitalism."

However, in the 1970s, Berger and others revisited the secularization theory in light of the realization that the contemporary world cannot be described as secular, with the major religions going through a period of resurgence. There were societies that were both modern and religious at the same time. The United States of America was one such example where despite its highly developed economy, faith-based organizations play an active role in the public sphere, and where modernization is accompanied by a strict separation between church and state. The one geographic area where secularization was clearly evident was Europe. But was Europe the exception or the rule? Evidently there is no one uniform experience, otherwise, if modernity leads to the decline of religion, then how can one also explain the phenomenal global growth of Pentecostalism? A movement that is spreading from the Global South across all cultures and contexts, and through immigration to countries in Europe and North America.

Another "exception" today is the resurgence of fundamentalist Islam in the Arab World and Asia that has led proponents of the "diminishing" theory such as Berger and others to reconsider. Indeed, a close look at the Arab uprisings that started in 2010, other conflicts in the Middle East too, reveal the rise and role of extremist and fundamentalist groups that have hijacked the future of these societies, in the name of God and religion.

Again, each country has its own context-relevant path as was the experience of five ex-communist societies namely Russia, Belarus, Lativa and Lithuania that went through an economic decline in 1990 that led them to shift into survival values that include an attachment to God and religion (Inglehart, 2000). In Russia, for instance, and following the fall of the Soviet Union, the Russian Orthodox Church developed a close relationship with the Russian state that further led to a strong nationalistic spirit in the country, both aspects being characteristic of traditional societies.

Japan too presented yet another different example of non-conformity as Shinto is described as the religion of the state and of the Japanese people. These examples eventually drew attention that rather than being the norm, Europe was in fact the exception, as Grace Davie noted.

Coming back to the country of focus in this research, religious and pluralistic Lebanon, Lara Deeb and Mona Harb speak of "a significant proportion – indeed a critical mass – of young people," in *Al Dahiya*, a suburb of Beirut with majority Muslim Shi'a population, that "strive to live moral lives" out of "genuine concern for their souls." These are educated youth who do not shy off from discussing and even stretching moral norms in a manner that enables them to enjoy leisure that remains "consistent with their lifestyle" (Harb, 2011, p. 306).

Upon changing his initial position re the secularization theory, Berger confirmed that secularization was confused with pluralization, and "secularity with plurality. Modernity does not necessarily produce a decline in religion; it does necessarily produce a deepening process of pluralization – a historically unprecedented situation in which more and more people live amid competing beliefs, values and lifestyles" adding that an individual can be both religious and secular (Berger, 2012, p. 3).

Empirical data revealed that the theory of secularization was in many ways Eurocentric, at a time when, as Berger noted, the world is "as religious as ever" (Davie, 2007, p. 64).

Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart understood secularization as a *tendency* that is *situation-specific* (Inglehart, 2004, p. 53). While some religious regression theories were based on the European experience, other focused on the projected impact in light of the European Enlightenment and rationalism and the anticipated impact of the spread of education and scientific knowledge. Others still were influenced by Durkheim's functionalist perspective, and assumed that the growth of welfare states, and the rise of public services that take over the functions carried out by religious organizations, will eventually diminish the religious institutions' moral and spiritual role too. This theory too was short-lived as there are increasing opportunities today in the welfare systems of *secular* Europe and elsewhere in the world for religious people and organizations to get involved, influenced by other factors such as the political climate in each country, the voluntary sector and the prevalent religious tradition (Davie, 2009, p. 193). David Martin also drew attention that the level of religious freedom and the type of relationship that a religious tradition maintains within a welfare state is highly dependent on how resistant, or not, was the tradition to the transformation process (Warner, 2010, p. 58).

Others understood religion in terms of demand and supply, and so emphasized that religious freedom allows creative competition that attracts people and leads to congregational growth. The Supply-side theory unwittingly disregarded the *faith* element and gave credit instead to the rise or decline in religiosity to the influential, or otherwise, role of religious organizations, their type of programs and leaders. To this point of view, pluralism offered an opportunity, an incentive to *compete* positively instead of growing complacent. Experience, however, once again points to situation-specific factors taking for instance the position of the Catholic Church in Italy which provides sufficient evidence that it is possible for a religious institution to maintain a strong and steady role without exerting any additional effort. The Demand-side theories assumed

that societies' exposure to multiple religions would weaken people's belief in the uniqueness of the truth, and so drive them away (Inglehart, 2004, p. 7). To them, pluralism was perceived as a challenge to religion, not an incentive for competition. To others, it is an opportunity for citizens to make their own choice of religious values and community, rather than just follow in the footsteps of their parents.

Norris and Inglehart's *theory of secularization based on existential security* took into consideration human security not as originally defined in the 1994 UNDP report as *freedom of want* and *freedom of fear,* but in the revised sense of the concept as communicated by the UN's Commission on Human Security, i.e.

> …to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment. Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms – freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations. It means using processes that build on people's strengths and aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity (Unit, 2009).

They believed that vulnerable or at-risk societies tend to be religious, and that though economic development, socio-economic equality and the consequent rise of welfare safety-nets for the people can lead societies to develop a sense of "existential security" that can gradually drive them to lose interest in religion, the reality is that other unanticipated factors and crises situations can be equally threatening to human security. These can range from wars, to financial crisis, natural disasters. And each society has its own situation-specific set of risks.

They also pointed out that one's experiences influence their values and their demand for religion such that "the experiences of growing up in less secure societies will heighten the importance of religious values, while conversely experience of more secure conditions will lessen it" (Inglehart, 2004, p. 18). Moreover, culture is influenced by economic and political changes and so as communities move towards industrialized and post-industrialized communities their levels of security improve and their reliance on religion and their adherence to religious values lessens (Inglehart, 2004, p. 18).

It is perceived that demand for religion is not constant. When one's security is threatened, they seek authority and discipline that reflect some sense of control. People who grew up in a more secure environment are more tolerant of the "risks" involved than people who grew up under very insecure conditions. As communities move from agrarian to more industrialized lives, the conditions of their security and in turn their culture change. For instance their reliance on sun and rain for their livelihood becomes dependence on machinery and electricity, and hence human-controlled elements. And as the society develops into a knowledge-based one, productivity depends on information, creativity and imagination.

In 2009 UNDP identified 19 different threats to human security in Lebanon. The bulk of these risks reflected the corruption of the state, the public sector's inability to adequately address such basic needs as

safety, education, water, health, appropriate economic conditions, employment opportunities, state security. Other major risks reflected the negative influence of sectarianism including religions extremism, tension with the different *other*.

Table 4: Principal perceived threats to human security (%)

Threats	Kuwait	Lebanon	Morocco	OPT
Environmental pollutants	91.2	77.8	74	-
Water shortages	73.5	80.5	76.9	82.3
Deterioration of agricultural land	-	-	-	78.4
Occupation and foreign influence	-	85.1	-	96.2
Governmental failure to protect citizens	-	87	-	86.9
Arbitrariness of government	-	80.1	-	-
Lack of social protection	-	73.4	-	71
Poor health services	-	80.9	72.3	73.4
Poor educational services	-	-	-	-
The spread of corruption	-	86.3	-	89.4
Slow legal procedures and difficulty in obtaining rights	-	73.2	-	73.7
Weak solidarity among members of society	-	70.2	-	
Tense relations among different groups	-	80.8	-	83.7
Religious extremism	-	79.9	-	-
Disintegration of the family	-	74.7	-	75.2
Lack of access to basic services	-	81.1	-	75.4
Epidemics and communicable diseases	-	86.2	70	75.6
Unemployment	-	86.5	81.2	91
Poverty	-	86.4	86	90.6

Hunger	-	88.7	75.9	95.4
Assaults on persona and private property	-	89.1	-	80.4
- Not Available				
(Source: UNDP's Arab Human Development Report 2009)				

The prevalence of human security risks was further emphasized in a World Value Survey that was conducted in Lebanon in 2013 as follows:

> 39.1% expressed *very much* concern, 32.4% expressed *a great deal* of concern and 17.9% expressed *not much* concern over the possibility of a war involving Lebanon;
> 40.8% expressed *very much* concern, 31.6% expressed *a great deal* of concern, and 16% expressed *not much* concern over the possibility of a terrorist attack;
> 42.2% expressed *very much* concern, 27.8% expressed *a great deal* of concern, and 20.1% expressed *not much* concern over the possibility of a civil war starting in Lebanon;
> 24.5% expressed *very much* concern, 20.6% expressed *a great deal* of concern, while 226.3% expressed *not much* concern over the possibility of having the government wire-tap or read their mail or email;
> 28.6% expressed *very much* concern, 29.8% expressed *a great deal* of concern, and 24% expressed *not much concern* over not being able to provide their children with a good education;
> 25.8% expressed *very much* concern, 28.1% expressed *a great deal* of concern, and 26.9% expressed *not much* concern over the possibility of losing their job or not finding one;

Norris and Inglehart's theory makes sense when one considers the afore-mentioned statistics in light of 63.6% of the respondents of the same World Values Survey that was conducted in Lebanon identifying themselves as religious,

Table 5 Question: Independently of whether you attend religious services or not, would you say you are:

	%
A religious person	63.60
Not a religious person	29.20
An Atheist	3.30
No Answer	3.90
N=	1200

52.9% of the respondents in the same Survey confirmed that religion is *very important;* while 24.1% shared that religion is *rather important.* And around 85.8% expressed at variant levels the importance of religious or familial traditions.

Table 6 Question: Tradition is important to this person; to follow the customs handed down by one's religion or family.

	Total	Sex		Age		
		Male	Female	Up to 29	30-49	50 & more
Very much like me	26.7	27	26.3	23	23.2	35.8
like me	26.4	24.1	28.6	27.2	26.7	25.1
Somewhat like me	21.2	21.8	20.8	20.8	23.7	18.9
A little like me	11.5	11.4	11.6	11.7	13.7	8.6
Not like me	7.7	8.3	7	9.3	7.3	5.9
Not at all like me	5	5.6	4.4	6.6	3.7	4.4
Don't know	1.5	1.7	1.3	1.5	1.7	1.2
(N)	1200	588	612	453	409	338

Source: World Values Survey (Lebanon 2013)

While the human security aspects are highly relevant in a context like Lebanon and the Middle East still the faith element should not be ignored. The same with the people's need for answers for spiritual concerns such as salvation, redemption, life after death, which is why it is argued that industrialization and modernity may lead to a decline in attending religious institutions, but not in spirituality (Baker, 2000, p. 47).

Norris and Inglehart also noted the influence of the historical legacy of given religions on the cultural traditions in particular societies. These are transmitted from generation to another by religious and educational institutions, as well as the media. And in the case of ethnic minority groups in Lebanon, holding on to these cultural traditions is a means of preserving their identity and particularity as a people group. Which is why in their schools, ethnic minority groups teach the new generations their language and history, over and above what they are taught as part of the official Lebanese curriculum.

These cultural values are not static. They are influenced by the changes around them, yet at the same time they reflect Worldviews that are themselves impacted by the historical legacy. Majority religions influence a society's cultural and value system impacting as well those members of society that are not themselves adherent to the majority faith (Baker, 2000, p. 36).

Amongst the negative consequences of secularization is the fragmentation of extended family and community and the loss of traditional values such as social solidarity which was replaced by individualism. Fertility rates are affected by secularism and development. While fertility rates have dropped in secularized countries, they remain high in under-developed countries where people hold on to traditional religious

beliefs. As a result, rich nations are becoming secular while the majority of the people in the world today are religious. In fact the spread of modernity means less population growth in the modernized countries, while underdeveloped countries continue to witness population growth. This explains why despite the spread of modernity, in terms of numbers the world today is more religious than ever.

Coming back to Lebanon, 98.8% of the respondents of the World Values Survey expressed their belief in God.

Table 7: Question: *Do you believe in God?*

	Total	Age Group		
		Up to 29	30-49	50 and more
Yes	98.8	98.9	99	98.2
No	1.2	1.1	1	1.8
Total (N)	1200	453	409	338

Source: World Values Survey (Lebanon 2013)

These figures, in fact, draw attention to the variance in percentages between the respondents who expressed their belief in God, and those who described themselves as religious. This is where one needs to differentiate between religion and spirituality, especially as spirituality is not negatively affected by modernity and industrialization as experienced in certain contexts or societies that have witnessed a decline in religion.

Evidently amongst the respondents are those who believe in God but do not consider themselves religious. One possible explanation worth looking into in a future study is their understanding of the term "religion" and whether it implies a sense of belonging to religious institutions, while belief in God is more about faith and spirituality including thinking about the meaning and purpose of life. In parallel, and according to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA),

> The total Fertility Rate in Lebanon declined from 3.75 children per woman in 1980-1985 to 2.01 children per woman in 2000-2005 (Replacement level fertility is 2.1) and 1.58 children per woman in 2005-2010. Projections show that total fertility will decline further to reach 1.48 children per woman in 2015-2020 and will remain at the same level in 2020-2025 at which point it will start increasing again, and will get to 1.63 children per woman in 2045-2050 (ESCWA, 2015).

Table 8: Total Fertility Rate in Lebanon, 1980-2050

Year	Total Fertility Rate (Children per woman)
1980-1985	3.75

1985-1990	3.23
1990-1995	2.80
1995-2000	2.43
2000-2005	2.01
2005-2010	1.58
2010-2015	1.51
2015-2020	1.48
2020-2025	1.48
2025-2030	1.5
2030-2035	1.53
2035-2040	1.56
2040-2045	1.59
2045-2050	1.63
Source: United Nations, World Population Prospects: The 2012 Revision Available on: http://esa.un.org/wpp/unpp/p2k0data.asp	

It is believed that culturally developed secular societies produce fewer people and so invest in fewer people, both sons and daughters. Poor societies produce larger number of children, have high infant mortality rates, and value sons more than daughters. One limits the development of women but raises a larger number of children, while the former produces a higher standard of living but with a fertility rate below the replacement level. Consequently, the reality is that "the net effect is that the religious population is growing fast, while the secular number is shrinking" (Inglehart, 2004, p. 24).

2.5 The power of religion in the public sphere

Joseph Ratzinger, former Pope Benedict XVI, spoke about "pathologies in religion" and "pathologies of reason" that can be detrimental to the individual and to society. This is why religion "must continually allow itself to be purified and structured by reason", and

> reason too must be warned to keep within its proper limits, and it must learn a willingness to listen to the great religious traditions of mankind. If it cuts itself completely adrift and rejects this willingness to learn, this relatedness, becomes destructive (Ratzinger, 2005, p. 78).

Jurgen Habermas described the relationship between faith and knowledge, or the sacred and the secular, as that of "constructive coexistence" drawing attention that religion's "meaning-endowing function provides a moral basis for public discourse and thereby plays an important role in the public sphere" (Michael Reder and Josef Schmidt, 2011, p. 6).

There is a resurgence in the interest of the public importance of religion, particularly as sociologists revisit and rethink the meaning of religion and secularism, the sacred and the secular. Volf emphasized that

> Religious faiths, including Christianity and Islam, are reasserting themselves in two important senses. First, the number of their adherents in the world is growing in absolute and relative terms as compared to nonreligious worldviews. Second, religious people increasingly consider their faith not as simply a private affair but as a significant shaper of their public engagements. Religion matters profoundly, and matters in the public as well as the private sphere (Miroslav Volf, 2010, p. 23).

Habermas described the public sphere as a "social space – distinct from the state, the economy and the family – in which individuals could engage each other as private citizens deliberating about the common good" (Vanantwerpen, 2011, p. 2). The role of a neutral state is to guarantee equal rights to religious and secular citizens. Civil Society provides the mechanism through which religious parties can contribute towards the democratic process.

John Rawls' theory for the involvement of religion in the public proposes "constitutional freedom of conscience and religion" and identifies the equal political participation of all citizens, and the intentionality of the parties to arrive at "rationally accepted outcomes" as key components in validating the democratic process. While Rawls spoke of civic solidarity the need for a genuine readiness on the part of civilians – both religious and secular – to better understand each other's views, he proposed a rather restrictive role for religion in the public sphere in that religious citizens cannot base their intervention purely on faith, nor can they use religiously-based reasoning to support their own ideas, missing out on what the amazing contributions of Martin Luther King and others did to the fields of human rights and democracy (Habermas, 2010, p. 124). Though it can be argued here that such instances bring together faith-based and secular thinking. Another major and global-level contribution is that of Protestant Christians in the founding of the United Nations and the development of the Charter and Declaration of Human Rights. A role that was intentionally down-played or "historically lost in the telling" as "an imagined secularity in the discourse of human rights was the only practical way forward." (Linden, 2008, p. 73)

Habermas saw that both secular and religious citizens should accept that the other can and has something unique to offer, and that secularized citizens should offer to translate the religious language to one that is more easily understood by the non-religious (Habermas, 2005, p. 51).

The prevalent assumption at the time was that modernization (process of industrialization, urbanization, and rising levels of education and wealth) will lead to secularization and the decline of religion. However, that was not exactly the case. For instance, Britain is described today as

> a post-Christian, post-secular society where interest in spirituality is gaining ground, and minority religious communities are finding a new public voice. Nevertheless, Christianity remains a cornerstone of national identity and the Church of England has a special role in terms of access to Parliament and policy debate (Jawad, 2012).

As Berger discovered "certain religious institutions have lost power and influence in many societies, but both old and new religious beliefs and practices have nevertheless continued in the lives of individuals, sometimes taking new institutional forms and sometimes leading to great explosions of religious fervor" (Berger, 1996). Religious groups that sought to conform to modernity declined. Others, experienced a revival. Still, there are various ways of being modern. Modernity for Islam reasserts certain unities of territory, power and faith and way of life – an integral relation between these three. (Martin, 2008)

How one understands modernity is reflected on their way of life. According to Tugrul Keskin, the new modes of production, lifestyles, mass consumption … brought about an opposite reaction in Muslim societies. "A process of desecularization with Islam playing a growing role in the political and social arena" (Keskin, 2011). For instance, Muslim perception of modernity as imposed by western capitalism led to *religious revivalism in Muslim societies*. In fact, to-date, Neo-liberalism and the expansion of globalization into Muslim societies brought about a different reaction than that experienced in Europe in the nineteenth century.

While the so-called Weberian "modernity-friendly" Islam of Turkey, Malaysia and Indonesia supported and adopted the neo-liberal economic conditions, the Sharia-based Jama'a-el-Islamiat in Pakistan that calls for Islamization, opposed it. As a result, and as a reaction to what was perceived as Western interference, and contrary to Weber's expectations, rather than witness the diminishing role of religion, there was a movement of Islamization, secularization of society, religious revival, and the resurgence of the collective Muslim identity (Keskin, 2011).

Then, here too the reaction was not uniform across all Muslim societies. While market-oriented Islamic movements are working within the new market conditions, other Shari'a-based Islamic movements are becoming radicalized. According to Keskin, if the latter movements are unable to adapt to prevailing market conditions, then they will gradually lose their foothold. The radicalization of such movements is further aggravated by theories such as the Clash of Civilizations that only serve to trigger polarization, defensiveness and conflict, as Edward Said put it, lead "competing imperial powers to invent their own theory of cultural destiny in order to justify their actions abroad", and the lesser people to "respond by

resisting their forcible manipulation and settlement" (Said, 1998). Such theories are blown out of proportion to serve hidden agendas that thrive on division and hatred.

The US experience, was explained as the outcome of different dynamics that are particular to the US including the separation of church and state that preceded church growth, religious freedom, presence of competitive religions that protect against complacency, and the diversity of active faith-based organizations (Warner, 2010). In parallel, others saw that religious monopolies as is the case in Northern Europe can lead to complacency as religious leaders do not exert particular attention to encourage a sense of belonging through being relevant to the society's needs (Stark, 2000). Or not, as is the case in Italy.

The separation of church and state took different shapes in different European countries. German churches today continue to provide healthcare and welfare to the community; also many schools are faith-based and managed by the church. There is a prevalent sense of solidarity in European societies such that the strong feels responsible to provide support for the weak. This is equally true on the part of individuals, municipalities, voluntary organizations, and the state. And so as welfare states are pressured to think through the level of support that they provide, religious institutions are challenged to review their stance, and whether their response should be limited to the public sphere where they can advocate for the continued support of the State, or act as service-providers and fill in the gap, or do both.

2.6 Sociology of Giving

The strain of the social responsibility leads private voluntary not-for-profit organizations to seize every opportunity to raise the needed support in pursuit of their cause. The struggle appears greater for faith-based organizations that often find themselves caught in an on-going race that could leave its toll on their organizational direction, affecting their alignment with their vision and mission or leading them to "lean slightly towards a schizophrenic nature in their negotiations with funding agencies" (Hovland, 2008, p.185).

Non-profit organizations are "the means by which donors and volunteers achieve their philanthropic interests and aspirations" (Joyaux, 2008). Their culture of philanthropy implies "building community, creating civil society, and nurturing civil capacity" (Joyaux, 2008, p.25). Prince and File developed profiles for seven faces of philanthropy ranging from *the Communitarian, to the Devout, the Investor, the Socialite, the Altruist, the Repayer and the Dyanst* (File, 1994, p.13). Each with a different motivation and expectations anticipating to find fulfillment through the non-profit organizations of their choice.

Max De Pree (De Pree, 1997, p.34) stated that "non-profit organizations have become the chief way for thousands to focus individual efforts into truly marvelous achievements." This is equally true of other sources of funding whereby each offers its own set of benefits and challenges. And the larger the contribution, the more serious the impact on the organization's mission, structure, and strategy.

While in certain countries public or government funding can be a major source of support for the voluntary sector, FBOs, in general, approach such resources with hesitation for various reasons including competing objectives and the strain on the organization in terms of procedures, regulations and accountability measures that necessitate a high level of professionalism. An aspect that will in turn impact the FBOs structure and the capacity building of its team. Not to mention the risk of having to wear lightly their faith and beliefs (Ebaugh, Chaftez, Pipes, 2005, p.453).

The same tension may also be true when partnering with foundations, corporations, etc. Hence, small-size FBOs enter into such partnership relationships with caution weighing the implications carefully in advance. The decision to join hands or seek funding from potential partners with competing missions is to a certain extent dependent on the organization's culture and its alignment with its adopted and proclaimed values.

Though according to Jennings and Clarke (2008, p.270) "donor wariness of faith-based organizations runs significantly deeper than concern over issues of their effectiveness, or their potential division and exclusion…" FBOs "differ enormously in the way they deploy faith in their pursuit of developmental, humanitarian, or broader political, objectives" (Jennings, 2008, p.271).

International non-governmental organizations and faith-based ones seek private and public funding to fund their relief and development programs. Organizational identity plays an important role in accessing such funds. "Religiously motivated givers tend to be more loyal and more generous" (Vinjamurai, 2012, p. 45), and so much more dependable for an FBO. In fact, some FBOs choose to steer clear from public funding to maintain their autonomy especially as multilateral public donors such as the United Nations, the European Union and others control access requirements to such resources. Still, accessing both public and private funding calls on FBOs to be strategic in their branding and marketing process, reflecting a balanced identity that provides assurance to religiously motivated donors that their values and beliefs remain intact and hence encourages individuals to fulfill their religious giving obligations; and at the same time these FBOs seek to adopt more secular development language and practices that assure public donors of their adherence to international humanitarian standards and codes of conduct (Khan, 2012, p. 92).

Moreover, the media plays an important role in raising awareness and support for humanitarian aid. Chouliaraki speaks of the media's (television) function as an agent shaping an ethical responsibility that "extends beyond our own neighbourhood" (Chouliaraki, 2006, p. 19). The art or approach used in communicating a distant suffering can lead to a new sensibility that may be manifested in charity or public action, even if at a distance. At the same time, overexposure to human suffering can lead to compassion fatigue. Mediation is intended to narrow down the geographic distance that separates the "sufferer" from the "spectator" who lives elsewhere in the world through the internet, satellite TV… connecting both.

Viewing the suffering of another may stir the emotions of pity, indignation and tender-heartedness. Analyzing what prompts social action, Boltanski distinguishes between a politics of pity and that of justice. Pity alone is rather powerless. Feelings of sympathy develop into anger and indignation that in turn stimulates commitment to action. Action from a distance may be limited to speech. Using Hannah Arendt's Biblical illustration of the Good Samaritan, Boltanski identifies several features starting with the spectacle of suffering, the absence of speech, the ready availability for action, practicality, particularity, and realistic nature of the support that had the best interests of the sufferer in mind (Boltanski, 1999, pp. 8-10). There was no obligation to support, merely a moral responsibility that arose from a casual responsibility. In parallel, lack of responsiveness to the situation may be dependent on lack of sufficient information in the hands of the potential helper. Effective communication not only leads to charity, but also to a desire for public action against the injustice (Boltanski, 1999, pp. 188-191).

Another major source of funding for faith-based organizations are same-faith religious believers who want to see the world become a better place and feel more confident that if they contribute through their own same-faith organizations, then the latter will surely allocate their contributions in a manner that is aligned with their own values and beliefs. Both the Muslim and Christian religions [major religious groups in Lebanon] teach their followers to take care of the weak and the needy in the community. Hence, giving is very much an act of religious obedience for the givers. However, the identity of the recipient organization is determined by how the FBO markets itself and to what extent its presentation of itself meets with the expectations of the potential donors or givers. More will be said on this point in the following section.

2.7 Faith-based organizations

"Many of the major flaws in the development process have arisen from a failure to come to grips with the metaphysical questions concerning human life, which provide the framework for any meaningful debate about the aims of development and how to understand and measure progress or the nature of good life" (Haar, 2011, p. 4). Both religion and development have to do with the transformation of the individual and the community. While one works from within, the latter starts with external factors.

The international community at large is increasingly being bombarded with competing good and valid causes compared with rather limited sources for intervention. Secular international non-governmental organizations are increasingly recognizing the importance of religion and its potential societal influence as religious organizations are the providers of education in many countries around the world (Marshall, 2011).

Faith matters in the Middle East region, Lebanon included. It is part of everyday life and can either be an important agent of change or a major hindrance to development as cautioned by the World Economic Forum that was held in 2010.

FBOs are only one subset of the voluntary sector "formed by private initiative" and "independent" of the government or any public body (Fowler, 1999, p.38). In Lebanon, FBOs are amongst over 6000 NGOs registered with the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs (Seyfert, 2015). The voluntary sector fills in the gaps created by the weakened government and public sector. In fact, the Lebanese government has been known to sub-contract public services to different NGOs that have become major service providers in Lebanon.

During the Lebanese civil war, the country that became divided along religious lines, saw the rise and active presence of NGOs, faith-based ones included, in different parts of Lebanon. Some were founded to cater to the needs of specific militia groups that were prevalent at the time; others had political agendas. Other still were founded with a genuine interest in responding to the humanitarian needs resulting from the war. Some carry a specific ethnic identity and were founded to respond to the needs of their own ethnic groups. While some focused on their own same-faith communities, others served a wider community.

Clarke and Jennings (2008) defined an FBO as "any organization that derives inspiration and guidance for its activities from the teachings and principles of the faith or from a particular interpretation or school of thought within the faith". Clarke distinguished five types of FBOs involved in public policy, social and political life, as well as direct response to the needs of the poor. These are: Faith-based representative organizations such as churches, mosques…; Faith-based charitable or development organization; Faith-based socio-political organizations; Faith-based missionary organizations; and Faith-based radical, illegal or terrorist organizations.

The focus of this study is on faith-based charitable and development organizations. This distinction is of great importance particularly amidst an ongoing debate on the "divisive" role of politically-oriented FBOs where the quality of services provided differs between one group and the other, as the organizations become tools in the hands of political elites and factions for the purpose of generating grassroot support that comes in handy during elections and at the risk of further fragmenting society (Seyfert, 2015).

Certain contexts facilitate for some FBOs, rather than others from a different faith, to be involved in same-faith communities due to cultural and religious, proximity (Benthall, 2012). This is the situation as well with same-faith donors who are keen to see that their support goes strictly towards their own same-faith communities for different religious or cultural considerations. In this case, there is a sense of unity or cohesion that brings together the donor, FBO, and community.

Moreover, in conflict-ridden areas, a challenge that FBO workers at times face is that they are themselves members of a community with specific affiliations that can create prejudices that impact their work and mission. A study conducted amongst FBOs working in Lebanon and two other countries that had previously gone through civil wars revealed that the religious identity of the FBO workers influenced their "attitudes toward service provision" (Flanigan, 2010).

In Lebanon today, there are secular NGOs equally active in addressing the needs, however those tend to focus on specific sectors. According to Flannigan, "much community-based health and social service provision that targets the poor remains in the hands of religious institutions and FBOs, who primarily serve members of their own sect" (Flanigan, 2010).

2.8 Conclusion

Durkheim, Weber, Marx and others predicted a secular future, while Clarke (2008, p.263) argued that "religion and faith has not given way to secularism, but maintained, if not extended, its reach into society at large." There is an ongoing debate as to the role of FBOs in any particular society. *Voices of the poor,* a World Bank study conducted in 2003 noted that FBOs "emerge frequently in poor people's lists of important institutions… Spirituality, faith in God and connecting to the sacred in nature are an integral part of poor people's lives in many parts of the world" (Bank, 2003).

Lebanon is a multi-faith country where religion is important to at least 53% of the population. It is a country that has had its share of divisions and conflicts, and whose people look to God for guidance, consolation, and support. Yet, "to create a country is one thing; to create a nationality is another" (Salibi, 1990, p. 19). More often than not the religious affiliation of a considerable number of the Lebanese people remains stronger than their affiliation to their country or nation. The reality is that "each citizen in Lebanon had to belong by law to one of the recognized religious communities, and the religion and sect of every person had to be clearly indicated not only in the government registers, but also on the individual identity card. This meant that every Lebanese citizen, regardless of personal wishes, was officially recognized as having two identities, one national, the other confessional" (Salibi, 1990, p. 195).

While at times religion's ability to unite and mobilize people has served as a positive change agent in the community, at others religion has been misused as a divisive tool uniting people of one religious faith or culture against others who are of a different faith, culture or ideology. The question, as Edward Said asked, is whether "we want to work for civilizations that are separate or whether we should be taking the more integrative but perhaps more difficult path which is to try to see them as making one vast whole, whose exact contours are impossible for any person to grasp" (Said, 1998, p. 10). Civil society organizations, faith-based ones included, have the potential to play this integrative role in a public sphere that allows "constructive coexistence" between the different religious groups on the one hand, and between the sacred and the secular on the other. Perhaps more so in Lebanon where confessional loyalties "inspire local and personal initiatives, and account for much of the resourcefulness and cultural diversity and vitality of the Lebanese" (Khalaf, 2012, p. 42).

Chapter 3: Research Objectives and Approach

The chapter starts by the underlying philosophical assumptions, followed by describing the research design including the sample population, data collection process and analysis, ethical considerations too. This is followed by a presentation of the research process and outcome.

3.1 Overview of philosophical assumptions and worldview paradigms

The research seeks to identify and integrate meaning from the objectives and practices of faith-based organizations in Lebanon to better understand the relationship with, and the influence of, the local context on the formation of such organizations and the manner with which they each fulfill their mission in the community. The information sought is interpretive in nature and necessitates a certain amount of detail in narrative form that can be arrived at through in-depth one-on-one interviews with the sample population.

This level of detail necessitates a qualitative approach that gives space to the researcher to probe and pursue information trails that surface during the interview particularly information that is only available at the interviewees' level, or which the interviewees can easily access. Which is why the research has adopted a qualitative approach over a quantitative one, using semi-structured interviews that cover the diverse areas of interest from the rationale behind the founding of the sample population, to identity and affiliation, vision, mission and values, stakeholders - including donors, and the organization's understanding and expression of faith in development.

The research is inductive as it relies on the data collected using open ended questions to determine amongst other things the relationship between the FBOs' mission and the communities served, and how far they can go in adapting their message if at all. Data collection through the interviews is simultaneously analyzed drawing attention to themes and concepts that are gradually extracted from the interview transcripts, coded and categorized as part of the theory generation process which is arrived at following reaching a saturation at the category level. Based on the input received, the research proposes new theoretical perspectives that are relevant to the potential role and mission of faith-based organizations in Lebanon.

The importance of context cannot be underestimated, and hence, since the research is grounded in the Lebanese FBOs experience, then the resultant theory is anticipated to be first and foremost relevant to Lebanon, and from thereon possibly to other countries that share a more or less similar context.

The philosophical framework of the research is social constructionism as compared to positivism as the latter carries more of a scientific framework that entails observing and measuring data, reducing reality to that which is observable, ignoring underlying patterns. While in social constructivism people try to make sense of the world they live in through creating meanings from subjective experiences. To Berger "there can

be no social reality apart from man" (Berger, 1966, p. 3) and society "is a product of collective human activity" (Berger, 1966, p. 81). An understanding of the dynamics that impact FBOs in Lebanon, the role of religion included with its opportunities and challenges, and the influence of context on FBOs, is rather complex and has at its heart the interaction of people, driven by values and aspirations that cannot be handled or measured through a quantitative method.

Social constructivism is multi-faceted and is perceived as the formation of knowledge - subjective knowledge shared by the stakeholders, and their understanding of the meaningful experiences that they create in interaction with others. Indeed, the theme of this research *FBOs in Lebanon: Objectives and Practices* is broad and the theme encompasses the outcome of interaction with care recipients, peer organizations, relevant government entities, local and international donors … each of which forms and transforms this "reality" that is pursued through this research. In other words, since the research includes organizations from different belief traditions, an insightful "reality" can be achieved through a comparison of each participant's interpretation of influential factors affecting their fulfillment of their mission in Lebanon today. It should be mentioned here that the interviews were restricted to a representative member or two of each of the sample population, depending on who had the sort of organizational information needed.

This focus of the research is not a black and white issue as even the interpretations of the interviewees are impacted by their own personal experiences, as is the interpretation of the researcher influenced by their own values, experiences and history of working in faith-based organizations in Lebanon for the past thirty years or so.

Moreover, meaning is not constructed apart from historical and social factors which is why it was deemed necessary to include in the research questions relevant to the historical factors that may have influenced the founding and role of faith-based organizations in Lebanon over the years.

Social constructivism involves context, social processes, and the formation of social institutions such as family, religion, schools… which then become externalized and objective and give rise to the need for integration, and the creation of a unified understanding and legitimization. The formation of this body of knowledge transcends a particular generation, giving rise to traditions (Skoldberg, 2009, pp. 26-27). Yet traditions too go through modification impacted by the change in context and the interaction of the relevant players.

The social constructivism worldview is very wide and varied, and as aforementioned involves interpretation (Creswell, 2007, p. 21). Studying social reality entails a considerable level of interpretive insight, both at the level of the research as well as the researched entity as represented by the interviewees in this research, which comes from an understanding of the cultural and historical context in which the FBOs operate. According to Berger and Luckmann, there are different realities in the world, but only one basic one that is shared with others, and which is the world we live in (Skoldberg, 2009, p. 25).

In parallel with social constructionism, critical realism emphasizes the objectivity of reality. Reality, to this school of thought, involves "the empirical, the actual and the real". The "real" dimension is central to this worldview, and includes anything that leaves an impact, not merely material things (Skoldberg, 2009, pp. 40-41). The challenge, though, is that critical realism greatly undermines the experiences of the individual or the community which is why it was not deemed the preferred option for this research. Still, it should be noted that even a qualitative research as this can make use of supportive objective data such as information on the practices of religion in Lebanon, and on the activities of the FBOs, that can shed some light on certain aspects of the research such as the growth or decline in the number of religious people in Lebanon or not, that further supplements the interpretive data arrived at from the interviews. In fact, the literature review chapter, i.e. chapter two, makes use of several quantitative sources of information that are relevant to the theme at hand including measurable choices they make such as participation in religious events and practices, number of people who seek to benefit from services from non-same-faith organizations, etc. While this is helpful and supportive of the task at hand, still the type of detailed information needed can only be obtained through a qualitative approach.

3.2 Grounded Theory

The research attempts to identify and explore categories of meaning that are relevant to specific faith-based organizations in Lebanon, their objectives and practices, and this through interpreting their social experiences, learning about their context, analyzing behavioral patterns that are relevant to them and to the communities they serve. The proposed research adopts an idiographic approach as opposed to a nomothetic one because it seeks to gain an understanding of the FBO phenomenon from the specific experiences of the sample population. The research process seeks to unveil and identify themes that can help generate a new theory that is grounded in the local Lebanese context that is unique in many ways.

With the objective of seeing new theories developed, the authors of the Grounded Theory approach, Glaser and Strauss, encouraged researchers not to rely on existing studies in the field that they may not be influenced by them. That said, the authors realize that the researchers will themselves have a certain degree of bias relevant to their own experiences and areas of expertise.

Glaser and Strauss believed that anyone can generate a theory so long as they have the needed ingredients of empirical data and some form of comparative analysis skills to arrive at the theory for action (Skoldberg, 2009, pp. 56-58). The Grounded theory process enables the researcher to interact with the data and involves theoretical sampling that allows adjustments along the way to better serve the theory formation. It can accommodate a variety of data collection methods at the same time, although for the purpose of this research the process was restricted to semi-structured interviews and an analysis of communication material.

The data analysis in a Grounded Theory approach applies a coding process that in turn allows the identification of categories of meaning, themes and indicators that surface during the interviews and so directly feed into the theory generation process. In fact, the data collection and the data analysis take place in a simultaneous process that takes the researcher to and fro until there is a saturation of concepts or themes. The process involves as well the transcribing of the interviews, and in this case their translation into English as six of the interviews were conducted in the Arabic language. In addition to the interviews, the research analyzed communication tools of the respective FBOs looking at how they present themselves, their vision and mission, the discourse used, etc.

In line with the approach of Glaser and Strauss (Skoldberg, 2009), a considerable part of the literature review was done following the interviews in an attempt to gain a better understanding of issues and events that surfaced in the interviewees responses. For instance, almost each of the interviewees repeatedly referred to specific events in the history of Lebanon that either led to their founding or to the launching or expansion of specific programs of theirs. The historical "confessional" nature of Lebanon was one such topic. Also, the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990) and the resultant geographic segregation of the country along confessional lines. A third was the Syria crisis and the influx of Syrian refugees into Lebanon (2011 – todate). A fourth was the impact of conflict and security risks on the religiosity of the people. A fifth, was the people's trust in same faith FBOs. It is worth noting here that in a confessional or sectarian country as Lebanon, even the recording of history can be biased one way or the others which made it more challenging to find different perspectives of historical events that can also add value to the understanding of the complex context that these FBOs operate in.

Accordingly, and following the interviews, the researcher conducted an in-depth literature review that went as far back as the Ottoman rule in an attempt to understand the factors that led to Lebanon's current "confessional" complexities, and the circumstances that led to the founding of the subject faith-based organizations in their current format. The historical review covered the afore-mentioned events, and a literature review on the sociology of religion and the potential positive and/or negative influence of religion – and secularization – in different contexts.

Moreover, the interpretation of the respective organizational missions, and how that is translated in their respective approach including their identification of which communities to serve, led the researcher to look into the different typologies of faith-based organizations and how is that affected by the specific context of the respective people groups or communities served.

3.3 Research themes and objectives

This research attempts a comparative look at local and international faith-based development organizations active in Lebanon to determine whether the context has or can impact the objectives and

practices of these organizations. And so seek in the research process to identify potential avenues through which these same FBOs can positively influence the context.

3.4 Description of the participating organizations

The last census conducted in Lebanon was in 1932. With the sensitive role of religion in the country, the consecutive governments were concerned that a new census might create an imbalance in the current power-sharing governance module which includes representation of the respective religions in the parliament. The concern was that the findings of such a census may destabilize the country and jeopardize the prevalent norm of assigning major public offices on confessional basis.

In the absence of a census, the only sources of population information are the municipalities through the electoral roll or register. The most recent religious distribution of the Lebanese population is estimated[1] as follows: 54% Muslim (27% Shiite; and 27% Sunni; 40.5% Christian (includes 21% Maronite Catholic; 8% Greek Orthodox; 5% Greek Catholic; 6.5% Other Christian); 5.6% Druze; and others. Accordingly, no denomination can of itself form a majority. Yet, if the population is considered in terms of the total population of Christians and Muslims, then the former will be identified as the minority faith, while the latter forms the majority faith.

The initial plan of the researcher was to interview different FBOs that would reflect the different denominations that make up the religious composition of the Lebanese population. However, the research is also specifically focused on *development* faith-based organizations. A factor that limited the research population to religious denominations that have active same-faith development FBOs. Accordingly, the researcher had to re-strategize and select a sample population whose religious affiliation is as follows: Muslim Sunni (1), Muslim Shiite (1), Druze (1), Christian Maronite / Catholic (1), Christian Orthodox (1), Ecumenical Christian (2), Evangelical Christian (1). The organization that did not respond was an International Muslim organization.

Moreover, the researcher initially considered focusing on local faith-based organizations only. Yet, during the sample population selection process it became evident that most local faith-based organizations tended to focus on their own same faith communities, an aspect that hinders the research from looking at how do FBO present themselves and their mission in non-same faith communities. Accordingly, the researcher had to revise the sample population criteria to include international faith-based organizations that have same name member organizations active in Lebanon, or are themselves directly active in Lebanon. To distinguish between them, local organizations that participated in this research are referred to in this research as L1, L2,

[1] https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/le.html

L3 and L4 with the letter "L" denoting their local identity. Organizations that are both local and global, i.e. registered as local entities in Lebanon yet are also members of global same-name and same-mission organizations are referred to as LG5, LG6 and LG7, with "L" referring to their local status, while the letter "G" refers to their global identity. G8 is used to refer to the one organization that has a global identity only.

In terms of community focus, L1, L2 and L3 are local organizations from different denominations, each mostly focused on its own same-faith community. L4 is also local yet focused on a non-same-faith community. LG5, LG6 and LG7 are local, but affiliated to global parent organizations. All three organizations work though out the country with people of all faith. G8, which is also international, is active throughout the country regardless of the faith of the communities served.

3.5 Theoretical sampling

Grounded theory involves theoretical sampling which Strauss described as "controlled by the emerging theory" (Skoldberg, 2009, p. 67), and wherein everything is "comparable". It is also a tool that enables data collection and the identification of categories and codes to go hand in hand leading to the formation of a new theory.

With more than 6000 NGOs in Lebanon, the research identified an initial criteria for the selection of a representative sample population of faith-based organizations that included Christian and Muslim NGOs that have active humanitarian and development programs in Lebanon. The initial identified criteria included the following elements: a national civil society organization, faith-based, Lebanese, involved in humanitarian aid and development, and not owned by a political figure nor associated with a political party. A fairly broad criteria.

The research identified two NGO directories available online for NGOs involved in humanitarian aid and/or development work. These are the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) list of NGOs[2] uploaded on their Lebanon website, and the Lebanese Daleel Madani[3] civil society portal. Both these directories necessitate that an NGO take the initiative to register itself. In doing so, each NGO is in a way acknowledging that their work is part of a larger whole; and that they're not averse to networking; and possibly – since they cared to register in development networks - that they've been exposed to at least a minimum level of international aid standards, and possibly the Code of Conduct. But not necessarily so.

In going through the names of NGOs listed in the two directories we came across the first finding: Most local FBOs in Lebanon address the needs of their own faith-specific communities. An aspect that

[2] http://www.undp.org.lb/partners/NGOs/GeographicArea.pdf

[3] http://daleel-madani.org/

hinders the research from discovering if there's any relationship between the community served and the FBO's expression of faith in that particular community. So one of two things had to be considered: Either choose to forego one of the objectives of the research, i.e. identifying the relationship, if any, between the community served and the FBO's expression of faith in that particular community, or adjust the sample population criteria to include faith-based organizations that operate in non-same faith communities, and which were mostly international organizations with local same-name member organizations. The researcher chose the latter option.

The next finding was that not all of the 18 denominations present in Lebanon have active same-faith FBOs involved in humanitarian and development work. This meant that the research did not include a sample population that is representative of the eighteen religious groups prevalent in Lebanon. Still, it was important to get representation from the largest denominations and that was fulfilled, alongside other smaller denominations too.

Hence, the researcher took into consideration both findings and adjusted the project design and the criteria of the sample population such that 1) not all 18 denominations were represented in the sample population; and 2) the research criteria was expanded to include not only local but also *international* FBOs that are actively present in Lebanon in the fields of humanitarian aid and/or development. Accordingly, 9 Faith-based organizations were identified: 4 local, 3 international and local, and 2 international, out of which eight responded and participated. Hence the participating FBOs were as follows:

Table 9 FBOs that participated in the research

Local	Local and Global	Global
4	3	1

3.6 Development of the questionnaire

The research sought to look at selection of FBOs in Lebanon, from diverse religious affiliations, to gain a closer look at such organizations – from the leadership themselves – and gain inside information with regards to various aspects or factors that may have influenced the objectives and practices of FBOs which can range from their respective identity, and that of their care recipients, supporters too, the context itself, as well as the perceived image and the pursued one. The questionnaire had to be designed to bring out the needed information.

Guided as well by the projected aims of the research, the questionnaire was designed for a semi-structured interview that would take no more than an hour of the respondent's time. It was divided into sections that addressed the history of the founding of the organization, its official status as a registered entity

in Lebanon, its affiliation both local and global (if any), vision and mission, communities of focus, faith and development, image, values, funding base, and challenges faced if any because of the faith identity.

The sought out data that informed the questionnaire design was guided by a combination of the researcher's individual experience in the field, as well as by the preliminary literature review that preceded the interviews. While the researcher's experience led to the identification of the main areas to cover in the research questionnaire, the literature review enabled a deeper understanding of the scope of the issues and consequently the shaping of the questions in a manner that would bring out the responses needed to inform the research and possibly shedding light on additional factors that may be relevant to the research.

For instance, awareness of the confessional nature of the context, and that faith-based organizations in Lebanon are not a recent phenomenon, led the researcher to seek information about the history of each organization, the circumstances that led to its founding, and the relationship between its identity, geographic focus, and the religious affiliation of the people and communities they serve. Indeed, much can be learnt about an organization's ethos and values from the story of its founding, and its journey since then as it compares to its communicated vision and mission.

The literature review also led to reflective questions on where the organization sees its faith at its highest, and how is that guided by their understanding of their faith, and consequently, how does it impact their choice of individuals or communities to serve, the identity of their supporters, their image as perceived by them, as well as their peers, and other constituents.

Moreover, having worked in an international faith-based NGO, the researcher included questions around the perceived and pursued image of the organization, touching as well on the dual-identity of those that are both local and global. Which image is perceived as the more dominant and/or pertinent one in a multi-faith context like Lebanon, and how is that influenced by the occasion in which the local FBO is represented? Also, the tension that may arise when a parent organization and other sister ones operate in a context that is different from Lebanon's and how would that affect the terminology used in expressing the local organization's vision and mission.

The diverse perspectives covered in the literature review that preceded the development of the questionnaire, enabled the researcher to offer the sample population of FBOs to share directly about the challenges, if any, of being a faith-based organization in the Lebanese context. Also, the perceived opportunities that are before them, if any.

The questionnaire (Appendix "A") was developed in English language and translated into Arabic, which is the mother tongue in Lebanon. Particular attention was given in developing the Arabic version of the questionnaire to ensure that the intended meaning is not lost in the translation of the questions, and that the Arabic terms used are the ones that FBOs in Lebanon would understand to refer to the intended meaning. The same level of contextualization and accuracy is needed when transcribing and translating the responses.

3.7 Conducting the Interviews

While the development of the questionnaire was preceded by a literature review that looked at the sociology of religion, secularism, the sacred and the secular, the role of religion in the public sphere, the sociology of giving, and faith-based organizations, the more technical aspects relevant to the role of faith-based organizations in Lebanon were reviewed following the interviews, as recommended by the authors of the Grounded Theory. Other areas that were thoroughly reviewed following the questionnaire were historical events that were mentioned as relevant to the founding and/or shaping of the respective FBOs.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted with the leadership level members of the eight FBOs that took part in this research. Five of the interviewed FBOs requested to receive the questions in advance. An English-Arabic e-version was developed that had each question in both languages side-by-side, was sent to them by email. This was also followed-up by a phone call just in case they had any questions. Bearing in mind the level of business of the participants, it was understandable that it was some time before the interview appointments could be set. Although some took less time than others.

A total of ten people were interviewed from eight different FBOs: four women and six men. In two of the organizations, the researcher met with two people. In one case, the information sought through the questionnaire crossed over the responsibilities of two of the leaders. In the second organization, there was a bit of a confusion between the new organizational director and the public relations person as to who will take part in the interview. Eventually, both were involved.

Seven of the interviews took place during the period May 2014 till January 2015. The eighth organization, global but not local, took slightly more time to set the appointment as they needed to first secure approval from their international office.

The setting of the respective interviews was decided upon by the respondents themselves. The environment was very friendly and informal in all of the interviews which may partly be due to the researcher's knowledge in the field through her involvement in the non-profit sector for more than twenty years.

Each of the interviews, with the exception of one, took no more than one hour of the interviewee's time. The exception was an interview that was interrupted by phone calls and visitors. Clearly the timing of the appointment was not very suitable.

Once again, and prior to starting the interviews, the researcher went through the ethical considerations mentioned in the initial email, and sought approval on recording the interview. The participants appeared non-hesitant in responding to the questions, even to those questions that were more sensitive than others and which had to do with the religious identity of the organization and its relationship with the communities they serve.

The research started with two pilot interviews in May 2014. Though both responded to the questions, the volume of information shared differed greatly between the two reflecting, perhaps, the personality of the interviewees. This was very helpful in alerting the researcher to be mindful during the interviews of how much time was still needed for the remaining questions and so ensure that the interview remains within the projected one hour limit. In fact, the volume and quality of information received further highlighted that semi-structured interviews were the appropriate research tool for this kind of a research.

During the interviews, and while they were being recorded, the researcher maintained additional notes on a hard copy of the questionnaire that was in hand to keep track of important points or terms used that were of use in the coding and categorization process. One of the interviewees requested permission to record the interview for themselves. This interview was attended by a third person as an observer.

Following each interview, the researcher requested copies of communication tools produced by the respective FBOs. These then, along with the websites, were included in the research process, looking at how each FBO expresses its faith and identity, as well as its vision, mission and values.

3.8 Analysis of communication material

Alongside the interviews, the research included an analysis of communication tools and publications that the interviewed FBOs use to communicate their identity, mission, programs and news. The discourse – whether more on the religious side, or more humanitarian and/or developmental in nature, was insightful. Another area of interest, in relation to FBOs that were affiliated with a global parent organization, was to see how similar or different is their presentation of their image in Lebanon, their discourse too, from other sister organizations located elsewhere in a different context. The information received from the websites and other publications was of equal importance to the research as in general these are the window through which the world views these organizations and forms a preliminary opinion of them.

3.9 Data analysis

The researcher had already conducted a preliminary review of the organization's website as part of the sampling process to ensure that their sectoral scope fits with the intended criteria. Prior to conducting each of the interviews, the researcher re-visited the website for a more detailed view on aspects relevant to the research and in line with the questions covered in the interview. This information was very helpful in matters relevant to the communication of identity, the presentation of image, and the adopted discourses. Key relevant points were written on the questionnaire that the researcher held during the interview(s).

Following each interview, the researcher transcribed (and translated into English) the recording. The questionnaire format was used for the transcription to enable comparison of answers between the various

respondents. The researcher then read the transcribed interview once, twice and three times, identifying in what is known as line-by-line coding or open coding, issues or phenomena that are then codified. These were then translated into themes and categories that are relevant to the research. What followed was a reflective reading of the "coded" responses of each interviewee in an attempt to come up with the key representative points per each interviewee. The researcher also looked at the frequency of the identified codes and concepts to further determine their relevance to the research. Next, and rather than apply the axial coding recommended by Strauss and Corbin, the researcher chose to reflect on, and link relevant codes and theme, grouping together some categories. A step that leads gradually towards the main or central theme or category that is relevant to all other categories, and on which the new theory is based.

3.10 Themes emerging from the coding process

The coding process highlighted eighteen different categories that were later on grouped together in accordance with their relevance to each other. Such themes or categories included:

3.12.1 Identity

3.12.2 Sense of responsibility towards same faith community

3.12.3 Context and/or sectarianism

3.12.4 Inclusivity vs. exclusivity

3.12.5 The motivation of care recipients

3.12.6 Role of Religion

3.12.7 Tension between private and public sectors

3.12.8 Image

3.12.9 Local vs. global

3.12.10 Donor Relations and/or influence

3.12.11 Perceived tension re religious symbolism

3.12.12 Rationale for FBO existence

3.12.13 FBO mission

3.12.14 Values

3.12.15 Other possible scenarios or alternatives – What could be done differently

3.12.16 A sense of entitlement on the part of the care recipients

3.12.17 Expressions of faith

3.12.18 Framing of the mission and image.

3.11 Discourse analysis of FBO communication

Functionalists perceive discourse as "an all-embracing concept which includes not only the propositional content, but also the social, cultural and contextual contexts" (Alba-Juez, 2009, p. 9). Schiffrin "views discourse as 'utterances', i.e. units of linguistic production (whether spoken or written) which are inherently contextualized" (Alba-Juez, 2009, p. 13). "It follows that discourse analysis is also concerned with language use in social contexts, and in particular with interaction or dialogue between speakers" (Alba-Juez, 2009, p. 9).

A future theme for research, that was not part of this one, is a comparative view of secular vs. faith based organizations' understanding and/or intended meaning of human rights and humanitarian aid and development terms and discourse used by both, particularly in the Arab World where humanitarianism "has undergone multiple modifications, adapting with time, place and circumstance" (Moussa, 2014, p. 1).

> Some scholars relate the concepts of 'humanitarianism', philanthropy and charity to pre-Islamic Arab tribal values, including *karam* and *jud* (generosity). These values developed within a particular milieu in which constant competition over water and scare resources (pasture and food) compelled small tribes to ask assistance and protection of larger ones (Moussa, 2014, pp. 5-6).

A secular development discourse that some may argue includes "buzzwords" such as *equality, poverty, empowerment, capacity building* came up in the interviews, and may mean different things to different people. Same for *transparency and accountability, participation, sustainability, etc*. at a time when the term "development" itself is perceived as "elusive, since it depends on where and by whom it is used" (Eade, 2010, p. 19). While religious text, Christian or Muslim, may include supporting verses or commandments relevant to poverty reduction, empowerment and the capacity building of the marginalized and the weak, yet it would be interesting to take a closer look at how each of these terms translates in different faith traditions – perhaps even within the different denominations of the same religion, as well as the range of prevalent interpretations within secular organizations as influenced by the respective values of the latter.

A religious discourse which forms "an important element of religious life" (SZTAJER, 2008, p. 50) was equally evident through the quoting of verses that motivate the interviewed organizations to be doing the work they're currently involved in, including the usage of such terms as *calling, obedience, incarnation of love, etc.* Terms that a humanist or non-faith based organization would not feel comfortable around yet which are part of the day-to-day experience of religious people.

An interesting situation arose in one of the interviewed organizations where the pull between the religious and the humanitarian discourses presented a "separated" dual discourse within the walls of the same organization. A pull that was clearly relevant to the organizational function of the respective interviewed people. Whereas the public relations person was keen on presenting an image that is accepted by all, the

director who has a religious function was keen on emphasizing the religious inspirational spirit and text that motivates them to stand by the poor and the sick, noting as well that:

> Others give too but we are offering something that not all others have. What is distinctive is that we are not tending to our work as a profession. Our focus is on the human being. There are divine virtues and values present such as mercy, compassion, forgiveness, love… these are huge themes that cannot be found in governmental organizations… You can describe love but how can you incarnate it? That is the message of our organization, the incarnation of love. I'm sharing the message through the way I interact with others. Through my smile, my life.

There was also a human rights discourse that came across such statements as the *right to have children taught their own religious or ethnic values and traditions, preserving the rights of the handicapped and the marginalized, justice,* and others. Issues that can easily be accommodated or included within both a religious and a humanitarian discourse.

A local vs. global discourse was clearly visible with FBOs that were local with established entities in Lebanon, and at the same time members of global parent organizations. The cons and pros of having a dual identity kept coming up, including the challenge of having to wrestle with an organizational culture that was both local and global, and how that impacted the staff, as well as the organization's image in the community. An aspect that in some instances gave rise to a hybrid culture that brings the two together as applicable in the local context yet without becoming strange to the global context. One particular FBO noted that they were perceived as local within the communities they serve, yet international amongst international donor organizations. Another organization noted that they are considered local because their staff are recruited from within the communities where they operate, at a time when they were not a local organization. A third FBO noted the advantage of being a local organization in the ability to access funds that they would not normally have access to as a global entity, and vice-versa.

The relevance or insights gained from highlighting such discourses is not specifically related to the choice of words used per se, but rather to their relation to the context including the adaptation and framing of an FBOs message to be more or less aligned with what is perceived as more "acceptable" or less controversial language that render the organizations more on the inclusive rather than exclusive side.

3.12 Validity of research

The researcher recorded the interviews, most of which were conducted in Arabic, then transcribed, translated and typed in English. Then listened to the audio recordings while reading the typed transcripts to verify the content. The transcripts were read thoroughly and attentively, categorizing the data in the text in accordance with categories that are clearly visible in the interviews. A list of these categories and their supportive texts was developed to further facilitate the communication of the findings. A thorough exercise

was done to ensure that the terms used in the interviews are appropriately and accurately translated into English.

3.13 Ethical Considerations

The theme of the research is considered somewhat sensitive in a highly confessional medium like Lebanon. The value of the contribution of a potential new theory is dependent on the quality of information received from the respondents and their ability to share freely. Therefore, it was important to 1) interview the right people; and 2) provide assurance that the identity of the interviewees and that of their respective organizations will be treated as confidential, and will not be made public.

A supporting letter was requested and received from the Robert Gordon University attesting that the proposed research is being pursued as part of a doctoral program. This letter was made available to the sample population upon request.

Official separate email messages were sent to the leaders of the nine selected organizations – to the CEOs, Country Directors, etc. introducing the researcher, the focus and scope of the research, the educational institution and program through which it is being pursued. The letter included a commitment towards such ethical considerations as maintaining the name of the organization and that of the respondent anonymous, and to stop the interview directly upon the request of the respondent. The request, which clarified that the interview will not take more than an hour's time, sought permission to audio record the interview to ensure the accurate presentation of the respondent's input, committing to delete the recorded interview directly upon transcribing the content.

This was followed up with phone calls. Five out of the nine approached FBOs requested to receive the questions in advance. An official letter of authorization from the Robert Gordon University was sent in advance to one of the organizations, and upon their request. Eight responded positively, one of which requested time to seek approval from their international office. The nineth FBO did not respond, and did not eventually participate in the research.

Interviews with the respondents of the eight participating FBOs were held at the date, time and place of their choice - six at their offices, one at the respondent's home, and one at the office of the researcher.

Another ethical consideration that the researcher needed to address was the accurate translation of the questionnaire from English to Arabic language while ensuring that none of the intended meanings of the questions is lost in the translation. The same will be equally true while transcribing and then translating the responses from Arabic into English, which is the language in which this thesis will be presented.

3.14 Research Limitations

Since its initial design phase, the scope of this research was the sample population itself without including input from the respective stakeholders such as field workers, care recipients or members of the communities served, donors… nor secular peer organizations. This was particularly so since the intended focus of the research is on the denominational mix in Lebanon and their representative same-faith organizations that respond to the humanitarian and development needs in the country.

Another limitation is that faith-based organizations in Lebanon have only recently started attracting the attention of researchers and so while the past few years have witnessed interesting researches in the field, there is not much historical data to compare FBO objectives and practices with.

3.15 Researcher's values and experience

In terms of values, the bias that the researcher brings to the research is a belief in holistic aid and development that involves the spiritual dimension too. Unfortunately, extremists all over the world have used religion as a pretext to abuse and disempower people, entangling them in a web of lies created by overbearing religious, but also social, political, and economic systems that keep them from achieving their full potential as people created in the image of God (Myers, 1999, p. 79). The researcher believes that true religion is all empowering as it enables people and communities to realize their true worth and value in the eyes of God the Creator, and which motivates them to stand up to dominating structures that pull them down.

In terms of the researcher's credibility, it should be mentioned here that the researcher has been involved in the nonprofit sector for close to thirty years, working in two faith-based organizations that are themselves focused on the provision of humanitarian aid and community development programs. Both FBOs were founded on religious values and motivated by religious beliefs.

The researcher worked in a local humanitarian and development organization that is also a member of a global faith-based organization that carries the same name and mission. As Operations Manager, the researcher was involved in responding to felt and communicated needs through overseeing the design and implementation of humanitarian and development-related projects throughout Lebanon, and in communities of different faith. Following that, the researcher joined a local Lebanese faith-based organization that is also involved in education – including special needs education, and development, and which recently expanded its relief work following the influx of Syrian refugees into the country. The researcher is currently directly involved in pursuing, engaging and growing partnerships that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.

Three of the approached organizations were familiar with the researcher's involvement as an employee of another independent FBO that was intentionally not included in this research. Contact with three others was facilitated by an introduction from the researcher's employer, and this following identifying them

as potential participants in the research. The remaining two that were not aware of the researcher's identity were informed prior to starting the interviews.

It is worth reflecting here on the influence of this research experience on the views and perceptions of the researcher particularly in relation to the Lebanese context and the factors that led to sectarianism in Lebanon, and the intentionality behind establishing Lebanon as such, way back during the Ottoman Empire. The huge impact of the context was somewhat underestimated prior to undergoing the research.

Other eye-openers include the challenges that FBOs wrestle with between attempting to maintain their religious and ethnic specificity while steering clear from fundamentalism and extremism. Another reminder was that with the current geographic segregation of Lebanon along sectarian lines, secular NGOs too can be found to focus their services in areas where there is a particular majority faith community. So while some may be quick to judge FBOs, an objective overview of the situation will reveal that the context is equally impacting secular NGOs too. In fact, the interviews drew the researcher's attention to the fact that despite their respective faith-based identities, almost none of the interviewed organizations showed satisfaction with the confessional status quo of the country. In fact, they wrestled with the need for an alternative but one that works with the local multi-faith fabric without undermining one group or the other. However, knowing that no religious group in Lebanon can form on its own a majority group, it was deemed insightful to see how the size of the religious group or denomination influenced their view of the role of their FBOs.

Chapter 4: Research Analysis

4.1 Introduction and overview

Despite years of aversion to working with faith based organizations, there is an increasing recognition amongst the international donor community that *Faith Matters* (Clarke, 2006, pp. 835-848). Indeed, a mapping of faith-inspired organizations in Europe and Africa was conducted in response "to mounting evidence of the significance of faith dimensions and institutions in development activities and gaps in knowledge about their work" (Berkley Center for Religion, 2009, p. 5). This was preceded in 1998 by the establishment of The World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD) that links both worlds (Berkley Center for Religion, 2006). Similarly, the United Nations Population Fund developed Guidelines for Engaging FBOs as Agents of Change stating that

> There is clearly an important parallel faith-based universe of development, one which provides anywhere between 30-60% of health care and educational services in many developing countries. At a time when basic needs are becoming increasingly harder to provide for more than half of the world's population, we can no longer avoid acknowledging these parallel faith-based development interventions which reach so many and provide so much. Many are critical venues for outreach, resources, and service delivery. (UNFPA, 2009)

Lebanon is no different as 28% of medical centers and dispensaries in Lebanon are run by FBOs (Cammett, 2011, p. 74).

This research looked at eight faith based, non-governmental, and non-homogenous organizations that are currently active in Lebanon, and which range in terms of religious inspiration and beliefs between Christian, Muslim and Druze.

The sample population includes 4 local organizations; 3 others that were both local and global (or international) in that, in addition to being officially registered as local NGOs in Lebanon, they each are a member of a global NGO family represented elsewhere in the world; and 1 international organization that was represented in Lebanon in its international status, but not registered as a local Lebanese entity. An attempt was made to involve another international (non-local) organization but no response was received.

These are legally established organizations that seek to address humanitarian needs and deliver development services in Lebanon. The selected faith-based NGOs vary in size. They represent diverse religious expressions and beliefs within the broader Christian and Muslim religions existing in the country. They also represent different approaches to "living out" or expressing their faith. At least seven of these organizations are structurally independent of their denomination.

The interviews looked at the circumstances that led to their founding in Lebanon, the relevance of their religious identity and beliefs to the people groups or communities they serve; the expression of their faith in relation to their vision and mission, their identity and image.

A concern amidst a confessional system like that of Lebanon is that certain faith-based organizations may use welfare to leverage support for political groups with a sectarian orientation. This is just one way of how religious institutions are increasingly gaining political power throughout the world today (Habermas, 2010, p. 114). Depending on the strategy of such FBOs, this may include catering to the needs of their own in-group communities and/or out-group communities. It should be mentioned here that the one criterion in the selection process of the sample population of this research is that an FBO be not owned or directly affiliated to a political faction.

4.2 Definition of a faith-based organization

The sample population represented what Clarke describes as "faith-based charitable or development organizations which mobilize the faithful in support of the poor and other social groups, and which fund or manage programmes that tackle poverty and social exclusion" (Clarke, 2006, p. 25). In other words, this research is not about "socio-political organizations which interpret and deploy faith as a political construct… in pursuit of broader political objectives", but rather focuses on those faith-based organizations whose main agenda is the well-being of the community.

Faith-based organizations' commitment to stand by the vulnerable and the needy in their community is motivated by their faith. Their ability to stay in a community for a longer period of time (than a secular NGO or INGO can) enables FBOs to build relations of trust with the community, and so influence behavioral patterns that entrap people in poverty-related issues. In fact a recent study on the work of Evangelical churches amongst Syrian refugees in Lebanon highlighted the relational aspect of faith-based organizations that addresses an important need amongst the vulnerable and the needy in the community. The same study called for a balanced view in considering the role of faith-based organizations particularly noting the beneficiary communities' perception of secular humanitarian organizations that promote non-traditional methods that are deemed sensitive in that particular context (Kraft, 2015, pp. 11,16).

4.3 Rationale for Existence and Influence of context

Identity is created as a result of interactions in the daily walk of life. It is formed by a variety of factors including experiences, social and ethical choices, and affiliations. Identity is based on values that lead to social cohesion, and a sense of belonging (family, religion…). The risk of fundamentalism lies in the exclusion of others which leads to social polarization that can fragment the larger entity. The key is in the

values that influence attitudes and behaviors. Religious values included. Consequently, religion can be an agent of social integration or division (Repstad, 2006, p. 103).

Lebanon is a highly religious country with a history of wars and conflict situations that led to the rise of a very active civil society. NGOs, including faith-based organizations, have become trusted service providers. Religious identity is strong in Lebanon, and while it is perceived by some as a divider, others find in religion and religious institutions, faith-based NGOs included, a safety net that they rush to in time of difficulty (Repstad, 2006, p. 67).

The interviews started with a question related to the rationale that led to the establishment or founding of the organization. A number of factors were shared, some more relevant to some, while others more common than the rest. For instance, the prevalent unmet basic and/or emergent needs at the time were one factor that led to the formation of each of the FBOs that made up the sample population. The interviews highlighted the religious entities' dissatisfaction with public services in Lebanon, and the perceived imbalance in the provision of these services. The FBOs shared their frustration with the inability of the government to actively address community needs. One FBO explained that they were driven to take the responsibility of public sector organizations despite not wanting to, expressing their genuine frustration with the State for not tending to the rights of the handicapped, and the marginalized, providing shelters for the abandoned rather than leaving the responsibility to the civil society. An added and recent particular source of frustration for some FBOs was the government's lack of active response to the influx of Syrian refugees into Lebanon (2011-todate) as compared to the active measures taken by other governments in the region such as Turkey and Jordan that set up official camps for refugees. As a result, NGOs in Lebanon wrestle today in an attempt to address the needs of over one million two hundred thousand Syrian refugees that are scattered all over the country.

Moreover, and since the sample population came to exist at different intervals of time – before, during, or after the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990), this indicated that the dissatisfaction with the public sector services was not necessarily an outcome of this war. In fact, improving the quality of public service was one of the desired outcomes of attempts at civil service reform that were made back in 1959 and then again in 2008. Political and sectarian pressures were amongst identified factors that weakened the public sector (Sabine Hatem, 2013).

When asked how will the desired strengthening of the public sector services impact their role, one of the FBOs explained that "the more the government or public sector organizations gain strength, the more we give them space", adding though that this does not mean that FBOs will relinquish their current services, but that a positive competition is healthy all round.

Religious Motivation was another factor that led to the establishment and/or involvement of each of the sample population. The stories shared of the founding of the *local* organizations, referred to in this

research as L1, L2, L3 and L4, are in line with Weber's theory on the role of religion in motivating people to social action; and the importance of religious content and its interpretation by members of the respective religious groups in leading them to get involved as agents of change in the community (Repstad, 2006, p. 35). Seven respondents cited verses either from the Bible and/or from the Qur'an that call upon them to stand by the orphan and the widow, by the poor and the marginalized. Verses quoted from the Bible include, for instance, Matthew 25:34-40 which states:

> 'For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'
> Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'
> The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

And a Qur'an verse specifies the purpose of the *zakat*, or almsgiving, as follows:

> Alms are only for the poor and the needy, and for those employed to collect (the funds) and for bringing hearts together and for freeing captives and those in debt and in the way of Allah and for the traveler – an obligation imposed by Allah and Allah is Knowing and Wise (9:60).

Indeed, the interviews revealed that the involvement of the sample population of FBOs in addressing the needs of the community was inspired and motivated by their religious beliefs, and perceived by most as an act of obedience. It is worth noting here that research confirms that the same is equally true of Christian and Muslim FBO volunteers in Lebanon (Flanigan, 2010).

The same was equally true of those organizations that had an international affiliate as confirmed by LG5, LG6, LG7 and G8. In fact, LG5, LG6 and LG7 saw their work as an expression of their faith and a practical reflection of God's love to individuals and communities.

It was critical then to identify *whose unmet needs* were each of the FBOs, or their founding religious entities, particularly concerned with, and the basis for their concern. This was relevant since some unmet needs are predominantly specific to one or the other ethnic community and/or religious group, while others are more common. Also, while some FBOs are focused on particular geographic locations in Lebanon, others have a wider geographic focus. Two main ideologies surfaced in the interviews as described hereafter.

L4, a local FBO, came to exist when its founders encountered the needs of a highly marginalized non same-faith community, and responded because they were motivated by their faith to serve people of all faiths and none. The founders themselves not Lebanese, and having grown in totally different contexts, did not consider the concept of "separate communities" nor did they seek to understand the reasons behind the

isolation of this particular community that they stumbled on. Instead, they rushed to the people's aid without giving much thought to anything else:

> We don't have a hidden agenda. We just chose to go where nobody usually dares to go. Evidently these people were despised and marginalized. We weren't interested in understanding the prejudice. Maybe we were a little bit naïve, but we didn't care. We weren't thinking Muslim or Christian. We wanted to work with the most vulnerable in Lebanon.

The community accepted them and what started as a humble personal initiative to address illiteracy and health care grew into a legally registered community empowerment and development organization with education and health as its two main programs, and a very diverse staff, and intentionally so, to "reflect the population of Lebanon". Still, the community guessed that they were of a different religious group not because of any religious activity or displayed religious symbols, but because of the founders' nationalities. Though this in itself is an assumption or an indication of prevalent misperceptions with regards to nationalities and religious affiliation.

LG5, LG6, LG7 and G8 confirmed that their geographic spread is driven by need and not on the basis of religious or ethnic considerations. LG5 and G8 described themselves as the humanitarian arm of their specific religious denomination. Yet, they both shared that there is a certain level of dissatisfaction amongst their own respective same-faith local communities due to not giving priority in the provision of services to their own same faith people.

That was the communicated approach of five of the interviewed FBOs. Another, specific to L1, L2, and L3, was a sense of obligation and responsibility towards their own same-faith communities. For instance, L1 came to exist at a time when its denominational leadership saw the need for educational and social services in the geographic areas that are predominantly inhabited by their own same-faith people. "There were non-same-faith schools in the area where our children were going and excelling, but these were insufficient," noted L1.

"We still live in a context where we are focused on the needs of our own people," shared L2. This FBO has officially documented the circumstances that led to its coming to existence and which included the advancement of other religious groups, referred to in the narrative literature chapter as the "cultural and scientific book" (Khalaf, 2014, pp. 157-159), over their own as the former were actively involved in establishing welfare organizations that provided much needed services for their own people, including educational institutions that were open to all. The challenge, for other religious groups, was that these educational institutions, driven by their faith-based identity, taught their religious beliefs and values to all students regardless of their religious background.

In parallel, the existing public schools at the time would not admit students to their elementary level classes without having gone through some sort of educational preparation that some communities as those of

L2 had no access to. As a result, L2 community leaders and members came together and decided to establish their own welfare or charitable organization, i.e. L2. Yet, as they documented, because of the limited finances at the time, they decided to restrict their activities to their own community. "In a way, it can be said that we were founded as a 'reaction' to the work of other religious groups, though not entirely so", noted the interviewee.

Seeing their children going to other faith-based schools where, though they were receiving proper education, they were also taught religious beliefs and values that differ from their own, was perceived as a threat that might dilute that which distinguishes their culture and tradition. Hence, the desire to preserve their specificity as a denomination and a culture was evidently an equally important element that led to their establishment.

L3 noted that it came to exist as a faith-based organization in obedience to religious teachings with regards to tending to the poor and the orphan amidst increasing needs and decreasing public services during the Lebanese Civil War. And in doing so, it sought to primarily address the needs in their own community, but not exclusively so. Yet, "there is a demographic reality that imposes itself", referring to the influence of the Lebanese Civil War that has geographically segregated the country along sectarian lines, such that working in areas that are predominantly inhabited by their own same-faith people meant that the people they serve were to a large extent their own.

L1, L2 and L3, have education as an area of focus, and each has schools located respectively in geographic areas that have a concentration of majority same-faith population. Interestingly each of these three organizations was founded at a totally different phase in the Lebanese history. When L1 founded their very first school "it was a dream come true" and a reason, the interviewee noted, for same-faith community and religious leaders from Lebanon and beyond to come over and celebrate. "Why should we not have schools of our own that teach our own religion, values, traditions…There is no harm in having faith-based educational institutions so long as they do not plant seeds of differences and hatred," they shared. Yet, for L2, "our motive was to address the education needs in our community." Still, all three FBOs noted that while they do have students, teachers and staff from a different faith, these however remain a minority.

Another added benefit for L1, L2 and L3 was the importance of religion and religious education in forming good, balanced and well-rounded or holistic citizens.

L1, L2 and L3 have each developed their own religious education program that matched their own ethos and values. "Religion is a primary issue, though it is not the goal. It is a means to create a holistic person. We educate the children and plant the seed that enables them make their own choice when they mature," explained L1 adding that "religion is highly relevant in the process of building a well-rounded society." L3 described their religious education program as being one that "values the other, promotes dialogue, appreciates diversity and avoids ambiguity." L2 noted that the religious education they offer is a

discipline and an education, and is not offered with the objective of producing religious scholars, but rather good citizens. Adding that, "we are not a religious association but one that believes that religion should be taught yet in an open-minded manner."

All three local FBOs explained that the reason they each had to develop their own curriculum is to avoid fundamentalism. All three mentioned student exchange programs between their schools and other non-same faith-based schools in the country to encourage interaction between students who otherwise may not have much of an opportunity to meet and be enriched by others who are of a different religious belief, especially as L3 pointed out that "the Lebanese war ended a long time ago and we have not yet been able to integrate this generation," an aspect that was described as painful.

This came across in another interview where the respondent noted that families in their area who follow a different religion, and who form a minority group there, do not enroll their children in non-same faith schools, not even in secular school in the area, but drive a distance to nearby areas to enroll their children in schools that follow their own religious beliefs. Since this is not the case in all parts of Lebanon, it was suggested to be a residue of the war or war-related incidents in specific parts of the country. In other words, culture and values such as religious tolerance are "path-dependent" and highly influenced by historical events (Inglehart, 2011, p. 220).

This reality was emphasized in the preamble of the National Charter for Education on Living Together in Lebanon that was designed by Adyan as "a roadmap… fostering the role of education in strengthening coexistence and peace culture in Lebanon:

> The Lebanese society is in fact suffering from a memory charged with images of confessional violence and an increasing segregation based on confessional belonging, in addition to the dissemination of false convictions and stereotypes of the other citizen of a different religion. The exploitation of the religious feeling leads to political mobilization and to promoting sectarian communitarian mentalities. This leads to community impulse at the expense of a citizenship based on partnership between citizens and on common public life values. Some wrong ideas attributed to religion lead to the deviation of the religious belonging concept tending towards extremism and severity therefore disfiguring the message of divine religions calling for peace, justice, serving the nation and solidarity among citizens (Adyan, 2015).

While the education services offered by three local FBOs, namely L1, L2 and L3, where to a certain extent exclusive to their own respective same-faith community(ies), two of them referred to their students' participation in Adyan's *Alwan School Program* for Education on Inclusive Citizenship and Coexistence.

In parallel, these three local organizations noted that while their educational institutions are serving their own communities, the organizations' respective health care and other services are very inclusive, as they are of a humanitarian nature and do not include a religious component, but are motivated by faith.

The responses of L1, L2 and L3 are in tune with what Durkheim described o as a collective consciousness that is directed towards their own people (Repstad, 2006, p. 32), and which resulted from the prevalent sectarianism in Lebanon. A sense of solidarity and dependence with the desire to maintain and preserve their own specificity necessitated holding steadfast to one's common values and beliefs, and hence their emphasis on education in same faith faith-based educational institutions to enhance community bonds through religious education. "We have a specificity that we need to preserve while interacting and being inclusive of others. A specificity that distinguishes but does not separate," explained one of the three. Still, not all faith-based educational organizations teach religion.

Social justice was yet another pursued objective. L1 stated that the organization itself and the social services they provide enable them to attain "rights which we do not enjoy in this country. Now that we have organizations we strive to reach the same level as other faith-based groups." In other words, active faith-based organizations increase the visibility of same-faith minority groups, giving voice to the voiceless in the public sphere. A voice, which Habermas describes as guided by their "religiously grounded conception of justice" (Habermas, 2010, p. 128). Indeed, both the Bible and the Qur'an include verses on justice. For instance, the Bible in Micah 6:8 states: "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." In other words,

> Justice has four dimensions: 1) deliverance of the poor and the powerless from the injustice that they regularly experience; 2) lifting the foot of domineering power off the neck of the dominated and oppressed; 3) stopping the violence and establishing peace; and 4) restoring the outcasts, the excluded, the Gentiles, the exiles and the refugees to community (Gushee, 2003, p. 349).

The Qur'an too emphasizes the importance of social justice as revealed in a number of verses including

> "O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor: for Allah can best protect both" (4:135).

Evidently the Lebanese history, context and religious culture influenced the founding of these three organizations as faith-based ones. "This is how Lebanon is," explained L1, "a sectarian country. There's a national culture that leads one to play a role." L2 noted that "we live in a divided country and so have to take care of our own," adding that L2 may not have been founded as a faith-based organization had it not been for the prevalent circumstances at the time of its initiation.

The integrative role of religion (Repstad, 2006, p. 32) that Durkheim described as creating a sense of unity and cohesiveness through shared beliefs among communities, is a quality and a function that religious groups increasingly experience in situations of uncertainty or perceived vulnerability or threat. It is certainly

present, as evidenced in this research, in a pluralistic context like Lebanon that can be a nurturing environment for religious and ethnic people groups to draw closer to those who share their distinctive same-faith beliefs and values. A concluded reality in a research on values, religion and development is that vulnerable families turn to religious institutions and communities in times of hardship (GIZ, 2015, p. 3).

L1 described the Lebanese context as a diversity that can be enriching if "managed well" and "a curse" if not, adding that "during the civil war, religion became intolerance." L3 also strongly emphasized that as an organization they find the term "religious difference" repulsive as it is in contradiction with their foundational belief in the other and in cooperation on all aspects that enrich humanity.

4.4 Identity, Image and Branding

In an attempt to gain an understanding of how comfortable is each of the interviewed organizations with its faith-based identity, it was deemed necessary to take a closer look at the projected corporate image of each, and how do they present themselves in their own communication tools, both printed material and digital.

L3 noted that in Lebanon one can easily tell from the name of the organization its religious affiliation. The reality is that there is this branding process that has already taken place. That, and the fact that the respective mission and vision statements stated on the organizations' websites and in their publications reflect their approach, along with their inspiration, focus and aspirations.

Seven of the eight organizations that participated in this research clearly indicated on their websites and most of their publications that they were inspired by their own respective religious beliefs and values. The names of organizations L1, L2, L3 and G8 include a clear indication of their religious identity. The logos of LG5 and LG7 reveal their religious identity. Moreover, and at least for a considerable percentage of the Lebanese community, the names of L1, L2, L3 and to a certain extent LG5 have become more or less synonymous with the denominations they represent. L3's name has a religious connotation and is known to be affiliated with a particular religious denomination. Though, a challenge communicated by these FBOs is that their faith-based identity creates a sense of entitlement within their respective same-faith communities. This came up in five of the eight interviews that are part of this research, specifically with L1, L2, LG5, LG7 and G8, even though L1 and L2 are already focused on their own same-faith communities. L1 explained that although people who need support go wherever they can to get it, still "they realize that we take the religious call to help the poor and the orphan seriously and so hold us responsible." It is a responsibility that L1 described as becoming a burden with the increased dependency in the absence of adequate public services. L2 shared the same challenge noting that their image is that of a well-resourced charity at a time when they are financially constrained, "we need to work on changing our image as people do not believe that we no

longer have a surplus. When we ask them to contribute, they ask to take out the 'charity' connotation from our organization's name".

On the other hand, L4 and LG6 do not include in their name or logo any reference to their religious affiliation. L4, which is a local FBO, has a secular name and does not include in its vision or mission or anywhere on its website or newsletters any reference to its founders' religious beliefs. It does, however, use the word "hope" which has been used universally to refer to "faith" (Eagleton, 2009). It also uses the term "chaplaincy" services in one of its programs without clarifying any specific religion.

Alongside the aforementioned communicated corporate image, it was deemed necessary to seek the input of each of the interviewees on how they perceived their respective organization's image.

With Lebanon and the Lebanese described as religious, being faith-based was perceived by the interviewed FBOs to be an asset. "People understand it and expect it. Those who are not religious extremists do not have a problem," was L4's comment. Two others stated that people go where they know they will receive assistance, regardless of the religious identity of the caregiver. What may hold them back, explained one of them, is fear and pressure from extremists in their community who would not take kindly to seeing adherents of their own religion and/or denomination seek support from organizations affiliated with another faith.

For LG7, their faith-based identity is primarily an asset, but can be a liability too because holistic transformation cannot take place without addressing the spiritual aspects of poverty and broken relationships. This is particularly sensitive in contexts and communities where ethnic or religious beliefs or their misinterpretations may be at the root cause of the marginalization of particular segments of the community.

When asked about how they are perceived in the communities where they are present, G8, an international non-local organization that was founded following the end of the Lebanese Civil war, clarified that the way they operate has given them the image of a local entity, rather than the international one that they are. This FBO operates in various parts of the country and in partnership with local entities. And because "you have to pay attention where you're working" it recruits the staff of any particular project from the community where the project is being implemented. Hence, the reason they are perceived as a local organization is because their staff come from the local community.

G8's representative added that their religious identity is "in name only", and that being a faith-based organization has not been a problem for them, "to the contrary, we have lots of instances where it has worked in our favor, being 'in-between'". I.e. because G8's on-the-ground teams are of diverse religious affiliations relevant to the communities where G8 projects are being implemented, the organization does not reflect a particular religious identity.

Also, with the community's perception in mind, L4 shared that they do not have on display in their centers any form of religious symbolism. Its staff form a "small Lebanon" in terms of their diversity. "There may be a bit of a confusion about our identity which I think is good because people come to appreciate others not because of their religion but because of who they are with them," noted one of the L4 founders. "We never shared our religious affiliation. We wanted the people to see our values, rather than carry a label that communicates our faith identity." But because the founders come from particular nationalities the people assumed that they are affiliated with a certain religion.

FBOs, such as L4, choose a secular discourse to communicate their mission and the work they do. For instance, terms used to reflect the programs carried out in a highly marginalized community due to prejudice include *solidarity, social integration, overcoming poverty,* and *empowerment,* each of which are community development terms used by secular organizations too. Themes that are in line with human rights language and issues, but also with the religious values of L4.

The research also looked at the FBOs' identity from the perspective of local vs. global, and how the expression of a local organization's identity and mission compares and/or differs from its global identity and mission. For instance, LG5, LG6 and LG7 are autonomous local entities and are at the same time members each of an international network that carries the same name. As part of the research, it was deemed insightful to review whether each of these local but international organizations and the corresponding members in their respective international network communicate their identity, vision and mission in the same way. Such a revision revealed that within the broader guidelines, the actual programs implemented between one country and the other vary to a certain extent in accordance to the needs in each particular context.

A challenge for those that have a dual identity – local and transnational – is that things can at times be somewhat confusing: "We are autonomous and we are not", noting that their local identity is heavily shaped by the culture. The context has, to some extent, driven "the new approach we have to our spiritual ethos, although it remains faithful to our organizational identity."

Looking at LG5's global network that shares the same religious belief, the actual programs implemented by each entity of the network are dependent on the needs in the country and hence the wording of the vision and mission vary slightly from one to the other to accommodate the specificity of the prevalent needs and the context, but also the level of religious freedom and tolerance in that particular country. Common terms used and/or their variants included: *human development, human dignity, social justice, advocacy, poverty, solidarity, emergency response*…which are in line with the mission statement of the mother or parent organization that does not, in turn, include sharing the faith by word as one of its objectives.

LG5's mother organization has been known to serve as the voice of the voiceless in different parts of the world. The faith element for the LG5 network is the inspiration that led this organization and its community to respond to the needs of people without discrimination. The faith element is expressed publicly

through life and deed, as communicated in the interview. This may be so since it is identified as the humanitarian arm of the local affiliate religious denomination whose mission is focused on direct faith-related tasks. In other words, the denominational structure takes the lead on the religious track, while LG5 is focused on the humanitarian and developmental aspects.

In terms of the adaptation of the "who we are" and "what we do" messages, it was noted that in majority non same-faith countries, the local entity merely stated its relationship with the same-faith religious institution present on-the-ground in the country, without mentioning details relevant to its source of inspiration. This maybe the effect of the majority-minority faith context which is repeatedly played out in various parts of the world where a particular FBO is of the minority faith, and the context is one where extremist groups prevail, or others prejudiced against minorities. An aspect that led one of the interviewed FBOs to change its name in a country where extremism was associated with their particular religious denomination.

When asked about LG5's image in the country and whether it is perceived as a local or global entity, the Public Relation (PR) person responded saying: "when addressing the local community, we present ourselves as a local entity; but when we're addressing an international body, we then present ourselves as an international body." The PR representative added that LG5 is perceived locally as an NGO not an FBO, yet went on to say that "people see it as the humanitarian arm of its affiliate religious body." Thereby confirming its faith-based image in Lebanon. Stating as well that LG5 has become a brand of its own synonymous to charity.

LG6, a local entity that pursues its mission in partnership with local grassroots organizations, explained that "everyone knows who we are from the start. Our partners know that alongside my involvement at LG6, I have a religious role too on the personal level."

LG6 is a member of a network of same-name organizations that exist in a number of countries around the globe. The parent organization maintains a website that provides easy access to different regions where its network spreads with a list of the countries where member organizations operate and their respective web-addresses. "Our organization adopts a more or less context-relevant culture or approach in each country," as evidenced by the slightly different wording of the organizational information between one country and the other, along with the level of detail shared. For instance, the member entity in a North African country chose not to emphasize the religious motivation element of the organization, even though they mention the name of a well-known same-faith local organization there with which it partners. Other variations include mentioning "God" only without sharing specifics that denote the religious affiliation. Despite this variation, the full details are available and accessible on the internet through just typing in the name of the organization. In other words, while the organization offers selective context-relevant information

in its respective countries, all the information is available on the website with a clear link from the page of the respective member entity.

It is worth noting here, that the parent organization of LG6 is currently revisiting the expression of its faith element to ensure that it is not lost between the different contexts that they operate in. The interviewee was one of several people involved in the revision process.

LG7 too is both local and international. “We have a slightly different image in North America than in Lebanon and other parts of the world.” LG7’s website is part of the organization’s international website and which thus communicates the vision, mission and values of the entire organization. Hence, the main wording of the organization’s identity, purpose and scope are the same.

LG7 is also operational throughout the country working both with same-faith as well as other-faith communities. LG7 believes that identity is heavily shaped by culture, religion included, accordingly “we have begun to de-emphasize our religious identity which can be a divider in this context, championing *instead the focus of our faith* whom we think can be a bridge for all people groups in Lebanon.” The idea basically is that, for this context particularly, LG7 is “emphasizing the focus of our faith *for our work*, and not for our identity,” adding that the context in Lebanon has, to some extent, driven the new approach that LG7 has to their spiritual ethos, while continuing to be faithful to their organizational identity. “It is a combination of cultural specificity and the global reality that we are living in.”

What followed was another insightful context-relevant comment: “I thought that our religious identity may be a challenge for us when working in a different-faith community. However, according to our staff, it is the specific non-Arab identity of the founder that is the challenge, not our faith.” This is because a considerable percentage of the population blames the unrest in Lebanon and the region on Western interference.

While LG7’s publications reveal an extensive networking process with local and international agencies of different religious backgrounds, and a clear communication of its religious inspiration and motivation, the interviewee shared that in Lebanon the manifestation of the organization’s faith varies from community to another depending on LG7’s project staff and leadership in any particular local community. LG7’s staff come from diverse religious backgrounds and are occasionally defensive when stating the organization’s religious identity, “but we’re working on that.” LG7 noted that they care for the physical and the spiritual. “We care for the whole person. The role of faith is very obvious in our core values, vision and mission which drive our programming and objectives. Admittedly though, the actual expression of our faith in our programming and objectives differs according to context.”

An organization’s website says a lot about its desired image. L1, L2, L4 and LG7 had Arabic content on their websites reflecting their Arab identity and that their websites were also used to promote their services locally. In parallel, the contents of the websites of L4, LG5, LG6 and G8 could be accessed in

English (and for some in French too) but not in Arabic, which may be a reflection of the usage of the website possibly as a communication tool for donors and potential ones, rather than a tool to promote their services locally.

G8, which is a member of a global network carrying the same name, does not have a website of its own. G8 is inspired by faith, yet its vision and mission do not speak about sharing the faith, but about addressing the needs of the community and empowering the local representative body to do the same.

The need to remain sensitive to the context, not just the Lebanese context but any context, led a local FBO that started a fund-raising entity elsewhere in the world to drop their religious affiliation from the name of their foreign counterpart as that was perceived to carry a political connotation in that particular country.

L4 that works with a different faith group, shared that crossing cultural and religious barriers can be very difficult in Lebanon, yet at the same time it is greatly appreciated at the level of the international donor community. And this raises attention to an advantage that local NGOs have in being able to access funding that would not be available for international entities. The opposite, though, is equally true when targeting international donors that necessitate having a representative partner in the donor country.

It is worth noting here as well that the donor-base of an organization can have implications on the way a faith-based organization demonstrates its faith. The opposite is equally true. For instance when the majority of on organization's funding is from same-faith individuals and communities that have certain expectations, the FBO needs to take those into consideration lest it loses its constituents and supporters. In parallel, gaining the trust of international donors means having to be more inclusive than exclusive, and able to work towards such larger goals as the United Nations' Millennial Development Goals.

L2 and LG5 spoke about becoming "brands" of their own. L2 spoke about creating a sense of belonging, a family that others aspire to be part of. Adding that they have a 'brand' that they're not using well, and that their name has become synonymous with "charity".

The image that each organization portrayed and the manner with which it communicated and/or reflected its religious beliefs had to do with its own theological interpretation of its religious mandate, which is why each fine-tuned their approach accordingly. L4, for instance, noted that nowhere in their religious doctrines does it say that they should accompany their work with the poor with a verbally communicated religious message. In other words, in their understanding, witnessing by deed and life is sufficient and acceptable.

Two of the interviewed organizations, specifically L4 and G8 spoke of "team building" staff events or gatherings focused around values and themes that deal with the wellness of the human being. And though the shared values are in fact inspired by religious beliefs, neither of the organizations mentioned that. Although LG5, LG6, LG7 and G8 include staff members that do not share the organization's religious

beliefs, LG6 confirmed that they at least are tolerant of the faith and so participate in periodic devotions or religious retreats and/or spiritual activities or events.

For G8, "we do not talk about faith. We talk about values, humanitarian principles and the Code of Conduct… Our staff retreats are not focused on faith but on team-building. Any faith-related issue is handled by our local affiliate religious structure, not by us as an organization." G8 stressed that their role is to disseminate "the culture of good as is the case with any other NGO". Clearly the interviewee was more comfortable using secular terminology as compared to one that has a religious connotation.

L4 made the comment that their staff is very diverse "A small Lebanon! This is our mission too."

4.5 Religious or Humanitarian and Development Discourse?

In line with the proposed scope for this research, the researcher relied primarily on information received during the interviews conducted with the respective FBO leadership and their representatives. These were then cross-analyzed with the communication tools such as the organizations' websites and a sample of publications provided by the FBOs themselves, to determine to what extent the respective FBOs used religious discourse in describing their mission, values and programs. The scope of this research did not include interviews with stakeholders such as staff (other than the interviewees), partners, and beneficiaries to stand on their view of the image of the respective organizations. Nor did the scope include input from organizations other than those directly involved in the research.

The range of services offered by the sample population included education, social and compassionate care (orphans, migrant communities, refugees…), health care, religious education, special needs education, housing, economic development, child's rights, public health... These FBOs communicated a *humanitarian and development discourse* that is concerned with the wellbeing of the individual, and a *religious* one that is attached to values and ethics that to a large extent guide or define the mode of operation of the first.

Indeed, both faith and development have to do with the quality of life of the human being and the alleviation of poverty. While the one may be described as "inner transformation", the other is focused on the "external environment" (Haar, 2011). These FBOs are at the "intersection" of secular and religious organizations because of the work they do on the one hand, and their religious identity on the other, i.e. they are "firmly rooted in their religious identity but committed to operating within the development sector" (Clarke, 2015, p. 41).

Accordingly, these organizations adopted two discourses. Their vision and mission statements as well as the terms used by the interviewees included such concepts as: humanity; human development and/or transformation; developing the mind and the spirit; hope; love; social, religious, and educational support; human dignity; social justice; solidarity; dignity; elimination and/or reduction of poverty and exclusion; work

with the poor and oppressed; emergency relief; and bear witness to the good news. Terms most of which are considered development language and are also used by secular development NGOs. This is not strange when the "work of development has always been the domain of faith-based entities. The 'intruders' may well be so-called secular organizations" (UNFPA, 2014).

FBOs, like secular NGOs, are nonprofit and voluntary, yet their religious motivation and values are a clear distinctive, as is their long-term commitment and presence on the ground, building relations of trust that further enhance and strengthen their role and their ability to mobilize the community faster than NGOs. A role that is on the rise today, as confirmed by UNFPA, with a reported rise in spiritualism and spirituality in an era that is observed as a post secular world.

A closer look at the themes and concepts used reveals that they are mostly *human rights* discourse and issues that a humanist would relate to, though not with the conversations about God, faith and belief. Such human rights terms can carry an added dimension – a spiritual one – for FBOs that is not necessarily included in secularist or non-religious organizations. For instance, and as noted in The Economist Magazine, an FBO may speak of "family values" when they mean "serving God" (UNFPA, 2014).

However, the meaning of a term used may not only differ between an FBO and an NGO, but possibly as well between different religious families and traditions. Almost all religions share such values as compassion and care for the needy, yet the actual unpacking of the meaning of such terms has to do with the respective religious beliefs and doctrines. The doctrinal understanding of the meaning is reflected in the attitude, the approach and the practice. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Nations, 2008-2009) that was adopted by the United Nations on December 10th, 1948 came in response to conflict situations, particularly World War II, and was a step towards ensuring common understanding and respect of each other's rights. But though it was drafted by a group of people that bring together a diverse representation of religions and cultures, it was perceived by Islamic organizations to carry a Western spirit with four out of the eight people involved in drafting the document Christian. This led to the development and approval of the Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights (Council, 1981) that was based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and reflected the Islamic identity.

The term "modern humanitarianism" was felt to be "associated with the legacy of Western colonial ambition" particularly since terms such as "humanitarian" and "humanitarianism" were "new to the Arabic language", and may imply "humanism" (Ofteringer, 2015, p. 7). Which also led to "rooting" in the Islamic tradition the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief (ICRC, 1996), highlighting the five values of the Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) and which are social justice, sincerity, excellence, compassion and custodianship, as compared to the principles listed in the original Code of Conduct and which are humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, respect for

local culture and custom, local capacity building, involvement of beneficiaries, address basic needs and reduce future vulnerability, preserve the dignity of the beneficiaries, and accountability.

Other Islamic efforts included the development of a set of twenty-one principles that constitute The Islamic Charter of the Work of Goodness (ICWG) that is still under discussion with the Organizations of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) (Ofteringer, 2015, p. 15).

Unlike the term "humanitarian" which gives more of a relief understanding, the draft ICWG is based around the *amal al-khair* which is the Arabic term for work of goodness and which goes way beyond just relief and humanitarian aid. This is reflected in that "for many Islamic organizations carrying out humanitarian work, there is no clear distinction between relief and development" which also involves "religious predication and the memorization of the Qur'an" (Ofteringer, 2015, p. 16). Which would clarify L2's rationale in saying that their religious teaching or education program is part of the overall education service, and not separate from it.

In terms of scope, the ICWG which remains in draft form and under discussion with the OIC, covers such principles as the dignity of the aid recipients, sustainable development, accountability and others that are in alignment with pursued international aid standards.

On the Christian side, in 1999 a group of local and international Christian humanitarian and development organizations established the Micah Network "to motivate and equip a global community of Christians to embrace and practice integral mission" which is another term for holistic transformation or holistic development. Inspired by Micah 6:8 from the Bible "What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God", the Micah network was burdened by the need to *demonstrate*, not only proclaim, the gospel: "If we ignore the world we betray the word of God, which sends us out to serve the world. If we ignore the word of God we have nothing to bring to the world" (Network, 1999). The Micah Declaration is not intended as a parallel document with, or replacement of, the Code of Conduct which is more focused towards humanitarian aid or relief. It is an affirmation of Christian values and a movement towards inclusive and transformational development, that is guided by biblical understanding, and that demonstrates the love of God in practice without discrimination.

Both documents – though approached with a different rationale, and though are not specifically representative of the respective religions – are an attempt to emphasize what is meaningful to the respective faith groups and highlight a clear religious mandate that they seek to live by.

In some ways the perceived understanding of these principles or guidelines, in particular their application, can take slightly different forms between one place and the other, including between member entities of the same international FBO. Factors that play a role include the local FBO's interaction with the local context and culture on the one hand, and the exposure, on the other hand, of the international parent organization to the dynamics of the cultures of other religious groups through globalization and migration.

This diversity in application can be very enriching and can influence as such the image of the particular FBO, giving it a certain flavor or character that distinguishes the sister organizations of a particular global FBO from each other. For instance, G8 noted that more cooperation exists in other countries between the local affiliate religious structure and G8's sister organizations than in Lebanon, because the presence in Lebanon of numerous same-faith religious leaders rendered coordination challenging. Hence the relationships in Lebanon between G8 and its affiliate structure is different, and this is impacted on the image of G8 in Lebanon.

4.6 Adapting the message

It is worth noting here that a considerable number of FBO workers in Lebanon perceive religion as one of the services rendered by the FBOs (Flanigan, 2010, p. 35). Still, while religious beliefs were an important incentive that led to the rise and growth of these organizations, the methods or approaches used by the interviewed FBOs in expressing their faith whether by deed and life only, or by life, deed and *word* differed somewhat between one faith-based organization and the other. Factors that played in included the organization's mission, their interpretation or understanding of their religious doctrines, the community context in which they exist or serve whether it is a multi-faith one or not, the status of their religion in that particular context, i.e. whether it is a minority or majority religion in the community, the history of the area and accordingly the level of tolerance or acceptance for people of different faith, and possibly others too. In fact, and to a certain extent, the context influences the image that an FBO, particularly a minority-faith one, feels comfortable revealing in areas that are majority non-similar faith, or areas that may have witnessed tensions of a religious nature in the past.

FBOs increasingly use secular terminology and approaches that will grant them credibility as an active voice in the public sphere. Still, the image they communicate and the pursued approach in fulfilling their mission needs to be aligned with the aspirations and standards of their local and international constituents and partners, including same-faith donors who chose them over others because of their faith affiliation and as a measure to ensure that their funds go towards their own same-faith people, communities, and in a manner that agrees with their values.

In a multi-faith context as Lebanon, it was deemed helpful to take a closer look at the mix of interviewed FBOs and explore the presence of any signs of pressure on any of them to adapt its message. And in such a case, to what extent are they able to do so without betraying their mission? Keeping in mind the geographical segregation of Lebanon along sectarian lines, and the rise of religious extremist voices both locally and regionally, how would such pressures (if any) look any different between those organizations that serve their own same-faith communities, and those that serve individuals and communities of all faith and no faith?

Each of the eight FBOs interviewed as part of this research has at one time or the other received funding from secular and international organizations alongside support received from religious organizations. An indication possibly that they each are familiar with international aid standards and terminology as revealed in their respective organizational documents – mission and values included. Among the eight FBOs there were those that are focused on their own same-faith communities, and others that work with people of all and no faith.

Concern for the wellbeing of their own respective same-faith people and community was a common value amongst L1, L2, and L3. They each came to exist at a different time in history. In each case the trigger that got them started was a concern for humanity, albeit a concern that was focused on a people group that they felt they had a comparative advantage with in lieu of their shared religious beliefs, possibly geographic concentration and proximity too.

For L1 the concern was that there were not enough schools for their children in the areas where their faith group formed a population majority. Another concern was preserving their specificity as a people group. Their children were going to schools where they were being taught the values and beliefs of another faith. For L2, mission organizations were starting educational and health institutions for other denominations. “We’re not against that, but what about us? Why don’t we do the same?” For L3, it was war time and there was a rise in the number of orphans in their own community and in parallel the level of education in Lebanon was deteriorating: “We needed to take care of the orphans in our community. The vulnerable too.”

Moreover, L1, L2 and L3 communicate their religious beliefs to their students through their own religious education programs. For L1, their program was developed with their people in mind and with the objective of building a well-rounded society. Also creating a healthy environment where they can live a morally decent life as a community. L2’s concern is to form good citizens. While L3 highlighted that the purpose of their religious education program is to promote dialogue and an environment that celebrates the enriching diversity.

In the background of these concerns was a weak public service sector that prompted Lebanese civil society – FBOs included – to fill the gap. The religious motivation is vividly clear in the values, mission and principles of L1, L2, and L3. None mentioned that their services are specific for their own same faith people, and in fact, all three of them mentioned in their interviews that the patients who benefit from their health care centers are from all religious denominations, although the majority are from their own same faith group which was attributed to the geographic segregation in the country.

Another common value – and concern - in a multi-faith context such as Lebanon’s, is the right to preserve their own unique religious identity as part of the overall national identity. This, in fact, is a human right so long as they do not promote separation through their organizations or create exclusive communities

that are antagonistic towards other faith-groups. Needless to say, greater is the benefit if alongside preserving their unique identity they are able to encourage more interaction between the various religious groups, and so tear down the stereotypes that hinder each from enjoying that which makes the other different.

When asked about the sources of their financial support, each confirmed that their main support base consists of same-faith constituents, but not only them. L1 noted that at one time they had started a fund for their support and amongst the contributors were key community leaders from diverse religious backgrounds. L2 noted that their major donors in a huge health project were adherents of another religion.

L3, went a step further. Alongside its faithful same-faith supporters, L3 established income generation projects to ensure financial independence and the sustainability of the services offered.

Each of the respective interviewees mentioned a challenge or two that they wrestle with. For L1 a challenge is the need to stay on good terms with everyone simply because they do not have an affiliate country that they can rely on for support. Another challenge is identity-related: "how do we preserve our specificity yet at the same time become inclusive?" Also, how to develop and update their vision in line with new times and changes without risking that which is foundational. L1 shared an instance when a partnership with a foreign government body had them look for a possible win-win scenario that would not jeopardize a religious-cultural value that they hold on to in their educational institution.

For L2, their challenge was the need for financial resources to maintain their services. At one time they received considerable support from regional majority same-faith countries. Today, L2 is starting their own fundraising mechanism. A challenge is that over the years, a sense of dependency accompanied by a sense of entitlement has emerged amongst some of the families served such that they refuse to even consider contributing towards their services. Another challenge is that some religious people tend to consider L2 as "bland" from the religious dimension. A description that the interviewee disagrees with. "For us, religious education is a discipline and the goal is to form 'good citizens' as compared to religious scholars."

For L3, during the Lebanese Civil War, religion became a divider, synonymous with intolerance. The lack of integration of the new generation years after the end of the war is "painful". L3 is involved in an education program with Adyan that works on diversity, reinforcing values, and the understanding of citizenship that embraces religious diversity. The challenge is that the media promotes an opposing spirit. "It is difficult to work in a community dominated by religious and denominational fanaticism." L3 has an internal policy that calls on staff not to discuss religion and/or politics while at work due to the sensitive nature of both.

L1 noted that Lebanon is a "sectarian" country with much diversity. "We need to learn how to manage it, otherwise this diversity becomes a curse." For L1, schools and education are a means of moving forward noting that "faith-based schools can be a two-edged sword. What is important is that we do not raise our students on extremism", and become exclusive groups, shutting others out.

Similar to L1, L2, and L3 the five other organizations carried a burden for the community, yet their order of priority differed. For L4, LG5, LG6, LG7, and G8, their understanding of their religious mandate took them beyond their own same-faith communities.

Five of the eight interviewed organizations work with people of all faith. All five explained that their selection is need-based, and their motivation is religious and value-based. The expression of their faith in Lebanon is mostly by deed and life, more than by word.

L4's context is very sensitive but "they accept us because we are outside of the tensions", i.e. not associated with any of the religious or other factions. Still, L4 shared that things would have been easier had they been doing the same work in a same-faith community. The sensitivities would be less.

"Our vision and mission are wide enough not to be a problem. The risk is in losing our faith-based values." While L4 does not exhibit in their centers any form of religious identity, the community knows who they are. L4 perceives that their desire to work with the poorest of the poor in Lebanon and their acceptance of others are manifestations of their faith as inspired by Matthew 25 and Proverbs 30:31. Other factors include the "the non-judgmental way that we approach others as well as such organizational values as justice, empowerment, professionalism, integrity, transparency…" aspects that have enabled them to build relationships of trust with a highly marginalized community. For L4, being faith-based meant putting their whole work in the perspective of God and praying for people.

The fact that L4 works on empowering a people group that is from a different religious faith has rendered them an attraction to secular donors. "We've learnt to adapt to the desires of the donors while fulfilling our own objectives. We do not compromise, we adapt", sharing a story of how they negotiated a win-win opportunity that met with the objectives of both L4 and their potential international donor. L4 clearly stated that they do not partner with same-faith donors or local partners that have an extremist streak in them so as not to jeopardize their image or their work.

LG5 is present in diverse parts of the country and works with communities from diverse religious and ethnic groups. LG5 described their work as "the incarnation of love". Two LG5 people were interviewed - the PR person and a religious leader – and two different discourses surfaced. The responses shared by the PR person were focused on the "humanitarian" side of their work. The religious leader, on the other hand, shared practical illustrations of how the manner with which they conduct their services is in itself an expression of their faith and values – i.e. used a religious discourse. "Our role is to plant. Our organization plants in the hearts of people. I share the message as I interact with members of the community – through my life, my smile. I do not offer people copies of our religious book. I do not approach people in my organizational capacity, but in my spiritual identity as I walk alongside the vulnerable and the needy. An aspect that is not experienced through a secular or governmental organization because the latter go about their humanitarian responsibilities as 'work'."

On the internal level, and regardless of their level of religiosity, LG5 invites its staff to participate in periodic religious activities including meeting with a religious counsellor whose role is to stand upon their spiritual needs.

LG6 noted that in each country their organization takes a more or less context-sensitive approach. Some countries tend to be more open. For instance, in the past, and upon completing their work with a particular family, they would present the household with a copy of their religious book. This is no longer acceptable in some countries, in Lebanon included, while it continues elsewhere. LG6 explains that they work with organizations of diverse religious and non-religious backgrounds. Their religious identity is made clear in the agreements they sign with their respective local partners. Their faith however is reflected in the work they do and the values that are manifested in the implementation of their projects, and the relationships built in the process. In other countries of majority same-faith population, the proclamation of the faith can also take an additional verbal dimension through the staff which would mostly be followers of the same faith.

In a highly sensitive multi-faith context like Lebanon, LG7 were concerned that their faith identity can be a "divider" and so they've had to start working on "de-emphasizing" their religious identity. "The context has driven the new approach… people are starting to realize that if we do something one way in Lebanon, it'll have some effect elsewhere in the world so we are trying to unify our message across the board. I'm talking about public perception."

G8's mandate in Lebanon is different. While in other countries they work through the in-country affiliate structure, this is not the case in Lebanon. G8's faith element, according to the interviewee, is restricted to their relationship with their affiliate same-faith structure.

While all five organizations are able to translate their faith in practical terms through accepting people of a different faith and working with them on needs basis, clearly they've had to accommodate the context by doing things slightly different, or implied that things would have been easier had they been working in a same-faith context. And here, bearing in mind the demographic reality that imposes itself, the context differs between one community and the other, and one town and the other in the same country.

4.7 Shared values and experiences

Certain shared values and experiences surfaced during the interviews. The sense of responsibility towards the community is one such value which corresponds to one of four widely accepted principles that guide humanitarian action with the purpose of protecting "life and health and ensure respect for human beings" (Aid, 2014).

Humanity or "people are at the heart of humanitarian action" is both a Christian and a Muslim value and is referred to in the ICWG as "humankind, human dignity and the sacredness of human life". Concern

for the well-being and the future of orphaned children in their community was the starting point for L3. “Our keenness to preserve their dignity led us to ensure that they are enrolled in educational institutions where they sit side-by-side with students who come from diverse social strata, no matter how high up, sharing the same classroom, desks…and education.” Today, in addition to working with orphaned children, L3 has quality programs for another underprivileged and underserved segment in their community, that being children with special needs.

Similarly, the founders of L4 fell upon a poverty-stricken but non-same-faith community that is intentionally marginalized by the wider community for a variety of reasons. On their very first visit L4’s attention was drawn to the number of children who had eye infections. So they promised that they’d be back the next day, and they did, bringing with them saline water and two bags of medicine. Having kept their promise to return the next day gained them the attention of the people who started inviting them into their houses to have coffee with them. They sat and had coffee with their hosts against the advice of the wider population. Through these visits L4 founders realized that the families lack access to medical care and education. “We wanted to do more and do better for the families and the children, especially since children as young and as small as nine years old could not be integrated in any school system because they were too old and never been to school before. The age of nine was too young to be condemned to a life of illiteracy. So we began gathering the children and working with them starting with numeracy and literacy”. And of course things developed from there such that L4 today has a school and a health care center catering to the needs of this otherwise still neglected community. “We were not thinking Muslim or Christian. Our desire was, and continues to be, to work with the most vulnerable people in the country.” This continues to be their desire as L4 today has expanded its services to include as well vulnerable Syrian refugee families in their vicinity.

Whether driven by cultural (religious included) proximity to address the needs of their own faith community, or “called” to work with the wider community, each of the FBOs was filling a gap made considerable by the weak public services sector that would normally be the appropriate body to respond to these needs. In such situations, people “increasingly identify with, and rely upon, traditional community structures and religious identities for meaning and security” (ActAlliance, 2015). Indeed, L1 that caters to the needs of its own same-faith community highlighted that “students come to our schools because they know that we feel responsible for them.” Yet, at the same time, L1 and L2 spoke of a sense of entitlement that has grown within their respective communities as people expect them to address their needs. “The financial burden is becoming too heavy,” which is why both L1 and L2 spoke of fundraising initiatives to help them meet the growing demand for support.

This sense of dissatisfaction and entitlement is not only amongst the communities that are served by their same-faith FBOs. Other faith-based communities are not happy to see their same faith FBOs serving

other non-same-faith communities. “It is difficult,” said G8, “for the people to accept that our priority are the needs and not our religiously-affiliated community.”

Advocacy is a shared value that came across in the interviews with the international FBOs. Faith-based organizations often times not only fill the gaps but also become advocates and activists challenging the social and/or political order in issues relevant to human rights. Other causes too.

Their ability to work long-term with the people gives them credibility and allows relationships of trust that are invaluable when addressing issues that require a change in behavioral patterns and norms. For instance, one of the programs of LG5 is focused on standing alongside a marginalized minority group in the country whose rights are constantly violated by a considerable percentage of the Lebanese community. LG5’s awareness raising and advocacy campaigns are sensitizing and mobilizing the wider Lebanese population and relevant government and social bodies to address the issue and ensure that these people’s rights are protected. What LG5 is doing is work on changing a discriminatory culture to one that appreciates the other and believes in equality.

Moreover, and amidst rising concern for the plight of the people of Syria, and the growing complex needs of Syrian refugees in Lebanon that represent today around 25% of the local population, FBOs such as LG5 and LG7 that are both local and global are using their networks to advocate globally the plight of the Syrian population, campaigning for peace in Syria, and for continued support for vulnerable families affected by the Syria crisis.

A desired value that came up in the interviews is “inclusion” which is a key human rights principle. L1, L2 and L3 spoke about the need to move away from extremism, and towards the acceptance of others who are of a different faith or ethnicity. L3 spoke about capturing the spirit of their founder who promoted diversity and the richness of humanity; acceptance of the other even when they do not agree ideologically. FBOs that have developed their own religious education programs mentioned “acceptance” of the other as a key component in their respective curriculum, which one interviewee referred to as a “curriculum of diversity”.

Conversations on inclusion led to the need to break away from stereotypes in the communities where they’re working. For instance, the educational institutions of L1, L2 and L3 organize visits between their students and those of other different faith schools. L1 and L3 shared about their participation in “Alwan Lubnan Festival” (meaning *the colours of Lebanon Festival)* that was organized in 2014 by the Lebanese foundation Adyan (meaning *religions*) with the purpose of promoting a sense of citizenship and peace culture in Lebanon through art.

To break the stereotyping, L4 was keen not to talk about their own faith convictions, but instead reflect their faith values to the people through their day-to-day interaction, that they may “come to appreciate others not because of their religion but because of who they are to them.”

Most of the interviewed FBOs spoke of having staff members from other faith traditions. G8 recruits its staff from the same communities where it is implementing its projects. LG5, LG6, LG7 and G8 work in non-same-faith communities – an aspect which they see as a reflection of their values. L1 and L3 too mentioned having staff from non-same faith tradition though, in parallel, the students who are enrolled in their education programs are majority same-faith people. The rationale given by both organizations is that they are working in areas that share their own same-faith tradition.

L1 and L2 cited repeated occasions when they've been invited to share in events organized by other faith organizations. "Of course on such occasions I need to share from my own experience. And I do so without offending anyone." L3 noted that even during the Civil War when it was difficult to commute between one majority area and the other, "we used to meet together Christian, Muslim and secular NGOs and share experiences and learn from each other." Still, they all agreed that more work is to be done at this level.

The term "transparency" is another key human rights principle and value that came up several times during the interviews, yet it was given different emphases by the different interviewees. It is worth noting here that the ICWG mentioned "transparency" in the aid process, and the need to separate relief work from proselytizing (Ofteringer, 2015, p. 15). LG7 used the term in reference to their faith-based identity, including not having any political affiliations. It was used by L4 to mean the absence of a "hidden agenda"; and to imply integrity both in financial issues as well as in the way the team relates to each other, and to others. L3 noted that their complete transparency as a humanitarian, not political, organization with a clear mission and vision, gave them credibility in the eyes of international donors

Another value that came up repeatedly was "trust". For instance, L4 spoke about the relationship of trust that was built with the community because they promised to come back with medication, and they did. L3 mentioned the term in relation to faith-based donors who believe in the organization and that their contributions will be used in a manner that is in alignment with their religious doctrines and values.

Preserving the dignity of the care recipients was another shared concern of the interviewed FBOs, which is also a principle in the Red Cross Code of Conduct. It was used interchangeably with empowerment. This ranged from the quality of the services offered "just as if they were fully paying for it themselves," to preserving the dignity of the people by helping them break out of the circle of poverty that entraps them. And this through education and instilling high moral values, which also brings up another component which is holistic intervention that addresses not only basic physical needs, but also the moral and the spiritual too.

4.8 Conclusion

The world today is perceived to be going through a post-secular era that is witnessing the resurgence of religion in social and political life. In fact, "with 80 per cent of the world's population professing religious

faith, religion can be considered a common human characteristic" (Clarke, 2015, p. 39). Religion is becoming the "most relevant form of social organization and identity" (Jawad, 2009, p. 51).

In multi-faith Lebanon, faith-based organizations are not a new phenomenon especially when religion has always played an important role influencing life and behavioral patterns in the community.

This research takes a comparative look at the objectives and practices of a selection of faith-based humanitarian or development organizations that include local and international organizations, and which range in terms of religious inspiration and beliefs between Christian, Muslim and Druze. The research looks at the rationale for their establishment, the communities they serve, their expressions of faith, and the factors that do or may influence their mission. The interviews are conducted with representative leaders of eight faith-based organizations that are active in the provision of aid and development. In addition to the interviews, the research also analyzed such communication tools and mediums as their respective websites, publications, etc.

Inspired by their religious values and beliefs, and their sense of responsibility and concern for the well-being of the people, the interviewed FBOs came to exist at different times in the history of the country in response to felt and communicated needs.

In general, all interviewed FBOs felt that their faith-based identity is an asset. Those that are part of a global entity wrestled at times with having both a local and global identity, and the opportunities and implications of both identities. Others, who are working in a majority-faith community that is different from theirs, wrestled with the need to be context sensitive while preserving and reflecting their own faith and values.

FBOs interpretation of their doctrinal beliefs determined not only their mode of operations, but also the people groups or communities that they serve. Those that focus on same-faith communities share a sense of obligation towards the perceived best interests of their own people, which came hand in hand with a desire to preserve their own religious traditions, values and culture under circumstances which, at the time, were deemed as threatening to their specificity. Hence, the importance of religious education as a means of preserving that which distinguishes their religious traditions and culture.

FBOs are increasingly adopting a discourse that leans more towards being humanitarian than religious, although the terms used are in direct alignment with the organizations' religious values. This adaptation of their message can be a coping mechanism in a sensitive context, and an attempt at gaining acceptance in a non-same-faith community that falls within their needs-based area of priority. The adaptation influences the way an FBO reflects its faith and values, i.e. by life and deed as compared to by word, life and deed. However, the size of the challenge has to do with the mandate of the FBO itself and whether the reflection of its faith element is at the level of its vision, mission, and values only, or at the program level

too. The interviewed FBOs that fall into this category, perceive the fact that they are working in a non-same-faith community is a reflection of their faith and such values as diversity and acceptance of the other.

The interviewed organizations had certain shared values, experiences and aspirations. Challenges too. The sectarian context was perceived as a major influencer at all levels – whether in the need to respond to the needs neglected by the public sector that is weakened as a result of the sectarian system, or the desire of some to preserve their religious specificity while aspiring towards becoming more inclusive, and raising a generation that appreciates the different other. Moreover, amongst the shared values where human rights principles which, in addition to inclusion, include working towards the wellbeing of the community, also transparency and trust.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

This research looked at *Faith-based organizations in Lebanon: objectives and practices.* The context is a multi-faith one characterized by consociationalism or sectarian power sharing that weakens and hinders the public sector from taking an active role in addressing the basic needs of its people. It is a context where allegiance to religious identity is stronger than to national identity, and where religion and religious organizations, including faith-based *development* organizations that came to exist out of concern for the well-being of the people, play an active and important role.

It is the context of a country that has witnessed a series of wars, including a fifteen-year civil war that left its toll on almost everyone. Perhaps its impact is best expressed through the following results of a study conducted on the Lebanese students at the American University of Beirut.

> About 40% of AUB students witnessed the death of family members or friends, and more had family members or friends injured by bombs, bullets, or shrapnel. A large proportion of students (43%) cited damage to their family property. Many reported cases involving the kidnapping of kin or friends. Close to half the students (46%) were involuntarily displaced from their homes by militia groups hostile to their religious sects. Others were injured during the countless battles that shattered the country. Only a small minority – 16% - escaped these horrendous events of war; some were out of the country when battles began; others lived in places that were virtually unscathed by the war" (Faour, 1998, p. 3).

Such traumatic experiences are not easily erased from the memory, and take time to heal.

A concern in such a system of governance as Lebanon's is that faith-based organizations are sometimes perceived as agents of division that play into the sectarian environment. This can be true of politically-oriented FBOs, and others who are affiliated with extremist groups whose support comes with a price tag that further entraps and disempowers the recipients. Yet, in parallel, there are faith-based charities or development organizations that are genuinely concerned with the best interests of the community. It is with the latter type of organizations that this research is concerned.

The study looked at the impact of the Lebanese context on faith-based organizations, their objectives and practices, including their expression of faith in the communities they serve. Clarke (2008) identified four different ways through which FBOs choose to express, or not, their faith while pursuing their developmental mission. For instance, faith can play a *passive* role where the main focus of the FBO is on the humanitarian agenda; or it can play an *active* role in the motivation and "mobilization of staff and supporters", as well as in the identification of the beneficiaries without discrimination. A third role is the *persuasive* one where the underlying goal of the FBO is to win new people to the faith. There is also an *exclusive* role that has a social and political agenda and where faith provides "the principal or sole

consideration in identifying beneficiaries". All four types are prevalent in Lebanon, although they are not always as "clear-cut and exclusive" as any one particular FBO may choose to act differently with different programs (Clarke, 2008, pp. 32-38).

The eight organizations that were the focus of this research were motivated by their religious beliefs to help improve the quality of life of the community. These are organizations that manage to bring the spiritual dimension along with the humanitarian one. The spiritual element is not an add-on to the development components, but is the underlying spirit and values that are part and parcel of the FBO's DNA. Each FBO's understanding of its religious principles and values determine its mode of operation, and the manner with which it sets out to achieve its mission, including setting the priority, if any, that it gives to a particular people group over the other, whether needs-based, or driven by religious or ethnic affiliation.

The research took a comparative analysis of the objectives and practices of the sample population as shared by its leadership, taking into consideration factors that influence their existence, their mission and objectives, their stakeholders too starting with the people and communities they serve, to their funding partners.

The semi-structured qualitative interviews shed light on invaluable information particularly with regards to the influence of the context on the eight FBOs, as well as potential opportunities for FBOs to, in turn, influence the context. The research also enabled an analysis of communication tools pertaining to the sample population looking at how they present themselves and their mission to the public, and the terminology used to describe what they do. This too offered insights on how FBOs adapt their message in line with the context, and different scenarios adopted to adapt their message without compromising their mission.

A research limitation, however, is that the selected FBOs do not, as was originally planned, represent all 18 different denominations currently forming the Lebanese population mix. One reason for that is that not all denominations have their own faith-based development organizations, which are the focus of the study.

Still, this research contributes towards an understanding of the context-relevant influences on faith-based development organizations in Lebanon. Also, the potential role of such organizations as an active voice in the public sphere contributing, in the long run, towards a paradigm shift in thinking and practice away from sectarianism. Having followed a Grounded Theory approach, the understanding gained is primarily relevant to the Lebanese context, but may also be relevant to other multi-faith and consociational contexts outside Lebanon that may share similar people compositions and history of conflicts.

5.2 Main Findings

Clearly faith-based organizations in Lebanon are not oblivious or immune to the influence of their context, the complex history of the country, its geographic segregation along religious lines, and the prevalent political and religious polarization. Nor, for that matter, are the communities they serve. Both care givers and care recipients are themselves part of the same Lebanese fabric that continues to be molded and shaped by these same factors that define the country's context.

World Values Survey quoted in the narrative literature confirms that religiosity remains high in Lebanon today. In fact, Khalaf describes the confessional identity of the Lebanese as "both *emblem* and *armor*. It is an *emblem*, because confessional identity has become the most viable medium for asserting presence and securing vital needs and benefits," and "it is an *armor*, because it has become a shield against real or imagined threats" (Khalaf, 2012, p. 42).

Indeed, sectarianism is part of the national culture that brings together the shared experiences of the different religious groups and denominations in Lebanon (Inglehart, 2000, p. 37). It is a culture that "leads one to play a role", as noted by one of the interviewees, for "human action cannot be considered in isolation, but it is always related to other actions" (Repstad, 2006, p. 45). Hence, had the context been different "we may not have been established as a faith-based entity," reflected another interviewee.

As Clarke and Jennings noted, FBOs are influenced by their own respective religious beliefs and doctrines (Jennings, 2008). Their involvement in responding to the needs of people is in alignment with Weber's concept of Protestant Ethics and the "possibility that any system of religion can, in general, engender forms of action that have an important impact in everyday life" (Davie, 2007, p. 29), and which in essence refers to the role of religion as a change agent, be it positive or negative.

These same religious values that prompt FBOs to act, also guide their priorities. For instance, it is believed that "Islamic agencies generally tend not to venture outside the umma" having a stronger obligation towards their own same-faith people (Stein, 2012, p. 19). An obligation which, in the pluralistic context of Lebanon and for at least two of the eight interviewed organizations, comes hand in hand with the desire and/or perceived need to preserve their own religious culture and traditions. It is the uniting function that creates a sense of solidarity around the shared religious identity that Durkheim noted.

That said, it is worth mentioning here that "the sectarian nature of service provision in Lebanon is further reinforced by geographic segregation, which leads even secular organizations to serve primarily members of a single sect" (Flanigan, 2010, p. 50). Hence, this is another reality that needs to be taken into consideration as highlighted by one of the local FBOs that is focused on the needs of its own same-faith community.

The research confirmed Weber's perception that "different types of belief have different outcomes" (Davie, 2007, p. 29). Not all interviewed FBOs felt driven to give priority to their own same-faith communities. Others were more inclusive and needs based rather than driven by religious affiliation, and this also in obedience to their religious teachings.

Needless to say one's appreciation of any or both of these approaches is, in turn, influenced by the lens through which one sees the world, the Lebanese context, and the contribution of FBOs. However, despite the two different approaches or mandates, both have their own set of challenges – and opportunities, and both expressed their concern over the sense of entitlement prevalent amongst their respective same-faith communities, and which some FBOs found increasingly challenging particularly as the demand for support exceeds their capacities.

A challenge faced by the more inclusive FBOs, as revealed in the research, is the need at times to adapt their image or mission to gain acceptance in a non-same-faith context, and the consequent implications of that in the long run on the organization, particularly one that has a dual identity, local and global. The issue of adaptability became evident in the research that revealed that the expression of faith of FBOs working in non-same faith communities can differ between one geographic area and faith community and the other; and also between one country and the other. For example, one FBO whose affiliation with a conservative religious group elsewhere in the world created networking obstacles for them in Lebanon, chose to move towards a less conservative image in Lebanon and other parts of the world where the majority population is a non-same faith people group, although their initial image still prevails in same-faith communities and gives them wide acceptance.

It was clear from the interviews that FBOs that work in non-same-faith communities were conscious of the context-relevant sensitivities and sought out different strategies to facilitate the fulfillment of their development mission. "You have to pay attention to where you're working," were the words of one FBO that tackled the issue by recruiting from within the community of focus. The role of the field staff cannot be underestimated as they are key influencers of the image that is portrayed in the field. The same is true of the leadership. For instance, one FBO was considering to de-emphasize their religious identity and focus instead on the central figure of their faith to appear less threatening and facilitate acceptance. It would be interesting, under another research, to look into the response of the donors of these two organizations to explore the level of investment that the FBO has in educating its donor database on context-relevant sensitivities, and the latter's level of acceptance of such an adaptation of the faith identity and message.

Depending on the mission of the organization, the diversity of the staff, which is something commendable, can with time become a challenge particularly if the majority do not share the religious values and beliefs that the organization was founded on, and which distinguish – not separate - them from others. In the long run, this can divert the focus and mission of an FBO. And, in the absence of a state that equally

serves all communities, this change can consequently impact the direction of the FBO including its area of priority.

The adaptation process is not only true of FBOs in Lebanon as the analysis of the website information of those international organizations reflect a slight change in discourse from religious to developmental in this or that particular majority non-same-faith country or context. Which can be in fact, a reflection of the underlying dynamics, and the actual level of religious freedom in these countries – Lebanon included.

The sample population used humanitarian and developmental discourse that secular organizations understand and use, and which is concerned with the well-being of the individual, and a religious discourse that is attached to the values that guide the organization. One should note however that even in the development discourse there are "trends", which some call "buzzwords", that civil society organizations have to be attentive to in order to gain access to support, and faith-based organizations are no different. Regardless, FBOs today, in Lebanon too, are "among the leading advocates and actors in social programmes ranging from crisis humanitarian support to education, health, and human rights" (Marshall, 2011, p. 52). And it is important to note here that while the humanitarian and developmental aspects of an FBO are key in helping people improve their quality of life, the religious and/or spiritual component is not any less in importance as "belief in God, is for many, an important coping mechanism" (Kraft, 2015, p. 9). A shift from the faith element takes out the holistic component that renders FBOs particularly effective as change agents, including stifling what Habermas calls the authentic character and "meaning-endowing" function of religion in the public sphere (Michael Reder and Josef Schmidt, 2011, p. 6).

Still, organizational history both in Lebanon and beyond reveals examples of organizations – both developmental and educational - that were founded as faith-based with strong religious motivation and mission, yet drifted with time and either lost their distinctiveness or became completely secularized. This reality is a concern for FBO parent organizations who are constantly exploring means and ways of staying true to the mission, yet in a manner that grants them acceptance into the community and with their peers. Two of the interviewed FBOs with global affiliations noted the parent organizations keenness on consistency in the image that they present worldwide; an image that truly reflects their identity and which is clearly visible through the organization's website and their *inclusive* vision and mission.

In parallel, two other FBOs mentioned that people in need do not care for the religious identity of the caregiver. All they need is that they receive the needed support. If that's the case, then why choose to adapt one's image and mission?

"The key to understanding the impact that any FBO can make on society is the capability of the leadership to position and re-position the organization in such a way that both the organization itself and its membership become continuously and dynamically relevant to tackling societal problems as an expression of

their faith" (Olowu, 2011, p. 65). That and the increasing demand for services reflect the reality that the role of these FBOs has continued to grow and expand in the absence of a strong public sector as service provider.

Each of the eight interviewed FBOs came to exist in Lebanon at different periods of time, and today they share a common challenge: To-date the responsibility remains with civil society organizations in Lebanon to respond to the community needs. In some instances the State has even contracted civil society organizations to do their work. And as one interviewee shared with frustration, the civil society now has the additional responsibility of addressing the emergent needs of a growing Syrian refugee community of between 1.2 to 1.6 million that is scattered throughout Lebanon. "We cannot ignore them or their needs. We are called to stand by the poor and the needy", said one FBO leader.

As they respond to these and other needs, the program expansion is accompanied by an increase in the FBOs' financial burden as noted by two local but non-international FBOs to the extent that one of them, that had sustained their operations for a long period of time through the flow of same-faith funding, is now having to start a fund-raising division in an attempt to ensure the continuity of their programs.

Moreover, the ongoing support over the years has created a sense of dependency that is too difficult to shake off especially today:

> With an economy heavily reliant on sectors such as trade, services and tourism, the economic and social stability of Lebanon has been severely taxed by the Syrian crisis. According to a World Bank Assessment in October 2013, the economic impact of the Syrian crisis was estimated to cost Lebanon USD 7.5 billion. The country's GDP growth has plunged from 10 per cent before the crisis to 2 per cent. According to the World Bank, unemployment has climbed to nearly 20 per cent from 11 per cent in 2010, mostly affecting young people and the educated. Refugees are seen as taking jobs away from Lebanese, especially in the low-skilled, poorly-paid informal sector (UNHCR, 2015, p. 13).

How long can these FBOs – and civil society in general – continue to fill in the gap created by the inadequate public services sector? The challenge is not particular to Lebanon, as facing global economic challenges, the situation may change in some European welfare states as they may have to revisit and reduce their level of service coverage. Consequently, it will be left to faith-based organizations there too to intervene as service providers, or serve as an advocate for the poor and the needy in the public sphere (Davie, 2011, p. 155). A choice that FBOs in Lebanon can equally make.

The research shed light on mutual sentiments that can be turned into opportunities with the best interests of the Lebanese population in mind. Amongst the interviewees were voices that wrestled with the sectarian status quo and were keen to see more integration between the different faith groups. These are voices that are desirous of an inclusivity that unites at the national level, without diluting the uniqueness and specificity of the respective ethnic and religious groups represented in the country. This is a legitimate request since holding on to one's unique ethnic or denominational culture is what enriches the overall

Lebanese culture, this *mosaic* that is always used to describe the 18 religious denominations that make-up the Lebanese population. Yet, these same voices, communicated a sense of resignation or *fait accompli* that "this is how Lebanon is. A sectarian country. Many people have tried to change it but did not succeed". One FBO leader noted efforts made towards building bridges with other communities, yet complained of the media corporations that are themselves polarized and send out divisive messages that focus on the differences and so feed directly into the sectarian spirit.

The majority of the interviewed organizations expressed their belief in the positive contribution that religion brings to the community, including the development or formation of holistic and/or good citizens. One FBO leader highlighted that "we believe God is the source of love and mercy and that is what we share with our staff and children. We are against the Takfeeri ideology. We oppose it."

Though themselves part of the Lebanese fabric that sustains sectarianism, these FBOs are clearly seeking ways of reaching out to different-faith people and communities in an attempt to become more inclusive. This, along with their active presence and role as service providers, and the credibility that they've built with the people and communities they serve – as well as with other non-faith-based players, and their significance as faith-based entities in a highly religious context, can provide the ingredients needed to take baby steps, starting from the grassroots, to instill a more inclusive spirit that can, with time, overcome sectarianism.

5.3 Implications for FBOs

Whichever form it takes, extremism is unhealthy. Religious fundamentalism and sectarianism are no different and there is an opportunity for FBOs to become more vocal in the public sphere against the atrocities carried out in the name of religion both in Lebanon and elsewhere in the region. This creates an opportunity for FBOs to come together and model a higher level of cohesion and solidarity that unites rather than fragments the country. Such FBOs have what is needed to build bridges between the different communities and faith-groups. However, for a bridge to be sustained it needs to be firmly founded on both sides. Another important aspect in the bridge-building illustration that was recently shared in a conference focused on East and West relations, is that the process and the end-goal are more important than the bridge itself. That said, the end-goal is the integration of the community. And the process is what will make it or break it. Hence, the need for firm foundations on both sides. Foundations that are able to withstand the pressure that is bound to come down on the FBOs for attempting to break out of the prevalent divisive sectarian norm. And here, the maintenance of the bridge should be taken into consideration to ensure its longevity or, in other words, the sustainability of good inter-faith relations. And for this to happen, work should take place at the grassroot level.

Religion and religious beliefs are often misused and misinterpreted to create divisions. Perhaps then, faith-based organizations that are genuinely motivated by faith to cater to the well-being of the community have a role in dispelling misperceptions about religion and religious beliefs as a means of bringing people together. This is not a call to neutralize religious beliefs and values, which will not happen. But a call towards more national-level responsibility on the part of FBOs as agents of change that can gradually develop in the people a stronger national identity that is founded on shared religious values.

Based on information shared through the interviews, including the perceived frustration from the sectarian status quo, such FBOs have a potential role in building on the relationships of trust that they have with the community to promote such values as love your neighbor as yourself, i.e. tolerance and acceptance of the other, justice, compassion, forgiveness and reconciliation, peace, sacrificial living, etc, values that secular and other humanitarian organizations also believe in and promote. The responsibility is greater on those that have schools – particularly those that focus on same-faith students who have not had much opportunity to meet and interact with students of different faith communities. And, indeed, we see in Lebanon today the heads of the various faith-based private educational institutions that represent the various religious denominations, forming a committee that jointly addresses issues relevant to private faith-based schools. They come together on issues that are of nation-wide importance such as for instance the National Day for Students with Learning Difficulties that since 2013 is celebrated annually on April 22nd. Even though this event was initiated by a faith-based educational institution in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, and the British Council in Lebanon, still, it has become a national-level "cause" as it addresses the right of education for all, including children with learning difficulties.

Lebanon is not short of examples of similar initiatives. FBOs' influence and credibility come from the people's trust in them. In focusing on the general good of the community or the population at large, FBOs, including non-same-faith FBOs and secular organizations, can rally together towards issues that are for the general good, reflecting in the process, and with time promoting, a non-separatist culture.

Another contemporary and highly relevant issue is the refugee crisis in Lebanon, the country that today has the highest per capita concentration of refugees in the world and which has "come at a steep price for the country and its people" (UNHCR, 2015, p. 2). The refugee needs are huge and complex, and instead of faith-based and secular organizations taking initiative, some separately and others through existing networks, to address the emergent needs resulting from the influx of refugees, perhaps civil society organizations – both faith-based and secular - could have rallied together as one voice in the public sphere drawing more attention to the plight of the refugees, not forgetting the growing segment of Lebanese poor who are the most affected by the presence of competitive cheaper labor in the country.

The opportunity is there. One interviewed FBO leader noted that their human development mission is one that they share with other organizations, including secular or non-faith based ones, which is not an

issue as they meet with secularism on goals related to humanity, especially "the secularism that believes in God. We can move forward on common grounds that serve mankind. Our not agreeing on the ideological level will not hinder us from meeting or coming together with other organizations."

The question however becomes to what extent are FBOs at liberty or able to stand up to a divisive culture that empowers sectarian leaders? Or take an openly active role in the public sphere to this effect, when an alternative to the prevalent national governance system is a civil state that is neutral and that promotes equality amongst all its citizens, and includes a unified personal status law that diminishes the authority of their affiliate religious authority? Knowing that the sources of funding of local faith-based organizations are mostly same-faith constituents, what would be their position should these FBOs choose to pursue such an avenue?

There are voices in Lebanon today calling for secularism. If by secularism is meant "anti-religion", then the country will be replacing one discriminatory system with another. This, however, is only one very limited and limiting understanding of secularism. Habermas speaks about the need "to save also the authentic character of religious speech in the public sphere, because I'm convinced that there might well be buried moral intuitions on the part of a secular public that can be uncovered by a moving religious speech. Listening to Martin Luther King, it does make no difference whether you are secular or not. You understand what he means" (Taylor, 2011, p. 64).

FBOs work at the grassroots level and engage with the people – whether they be their same-faith communities or other-faith communities. Because of their nature, and ability to stay in a community for a long period of time, there are development FBOs that have built relations with the community that can qualify them to represent the people in the public sphere. Hence, the role and voice of such FBOs should not be silenced.

Frustration with the system is not a justification to borrow or adopt another that can be equally detrimental. In fact, the solution against the prevalent confessional governance system needs to be one that does not exclude religion, but a neutral system where all citizens – those of any faith, or no faith – are treated equally, and have a voice in the public sphere. To what extent are FBOs of different faith-groups that share a particular sectoral area of focus – health, education, special needs education, youths, children - able to get together and identify and promote or speak up for or against crucial national level issues relevant to the wellbeing of the people is something for them to consider.

Durkheim spoke about the role of religion in creating social cohesion through shared values. Social cohesion at the level of religious or ethnic groups of the community, rather than at the national level, can translate into fundamentalism against other groups. Based on the interviews with the respective FBO representatives, faith-based development organizations have the opportunity to create a culture that advocates not a separatist identity but the possibility of having several identities including one that unites at the national

level; and a religious freedom that is releasing under the auspices of an active and effective strong but neutral state. FBOs more than others stand a chance to bring about a change in the community, for if the misrepresentation or abuse of religion is creating the problem, then the proper manifestation of religion will bring forth the solution. The need is for non-extremist FBOs whose beliefs and values develop in them a respect for humanity, and an appreciation for those created in God's image even though they do not share their own beliefs.

Needless to say not all FBOs are the same which is why for the sake of this research, the set criteria specified that the sample population consists of faith-based humanitarian and/or development organizations that are not owned by political leaders.

Clearly the FBOs interviewed as part of this research are genuinely focused on the best interests of the people they serve. I'd like to argue that had the government addressed the basic needs of the community, then the role of the FBOs may have differed slightly. Moreover, were the public services being provided equally throughout the country, then perhaps these denominations would not be that protective of their respective people groups. They would be trusting that their needs will be met by the appropriate government bodies. Nor will others have to downplay their mission or identity. Instead, faith-based organizations would then be able to focus on other higher-level functions that are more in line with their mission, including instilling good and positive morals that encourage respect for diversity, and discourage extremism.

Faith-based organizations in Lebanon, as is the case with the larger family of NGOs, are agents of change that are filling a major gap created by the absence of an active and effective public sector. This renders FBOs an important resource, a "provider" and a "player" that cannot be ignored, particularly in a country and context where religion forms an important part of people's culture and day-to-day life.

A challenge that organizations that serve their own communities face is the high expectations of their respective same-faith communities, and a demanding sense of entitlement that was mentioned by five of the interviewed FBOs. Although the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Affairs respectively provide minimal subsidies towards the education of orphans and support towards hardship cases, at least five of the interviewed FBOs spoke about the volume of the needs and the huge burden that they're wrestling with.

The interviews conducted within this research illustrate that an FBO's understanding of their religious values and what is permissible and what is not defines their view of the recipients and hence their approach and means of preserving the community members' dignity. An understanding of the rights of the recipients including their right to receive support, impartiality and non-conditionality in the provision of support, and respect for people's culture influence the community's view of an FBO. And this is where interaction between faith-based and secular NGOs can challenge both towards raising the bar of the standards of operations – though this necessitates mutual respect to the unique contribution of the other, which

apparently is already in process at the community level from the comments made about existing joint collaborations at different levels. This brings us back again to the need to build bridges – not only between different faith communities, but also between the "sacred" and the "secular" in a manner that allows *iron to sharpen iron,* yet in a constructive manner wherein each group appreciates what the other brings to the table. The need is for more such movements at the national level.

The interviews confirm that "religious nongovernmental organizations practice a form of humanitarian aid that is ideologically guided by faith traditions… this gives them privileged access to faith-based communities, and professed advantages to secular agencies under certain circumstances" (Stein, 2012, p. 124). The eight FBOs are involved in responding to the needs of the community out of concern for the people which is why four of the interviewed FBOs were involved in education programs. All agreed that the importance of religious values and education cannot be under-estimated whether in building bridges or walls of separation between different religious and ethnic communities.

Three of them developed their own religious education programs to steer away from fundamentalism. Perhaps, there's a need for a change in the education programs – including religious education programs. A change away from the sectarian discourse such that the new generation thinks and plans with the nation in mind, rather than their own respective communities. Again, any proposed change needs to come through faith-based organization for it to be accepted by the majority of the people who are religious and are likely to take offense to changes proposed by non-religious entities, the outcome of which is perceived to affect one way or the other the religious identity or affiliation of the people concerned.

Religion and faith are meant to bring the good in people. However, they're being hijacked by manipulative politicians and extremists who have rendered religion a tool for division and suffering. This research seeks to challenge FBOs who have the wellbeing of the general public in mind, and have earned the trust of the communities they serve, to take a more positive and proactive stand in addressing higher level issues, rather than striving to respond to the growing needs that are in effect just symptoms of the larger issues of identity, separation, injustice, and weak state.

Khalaf notes that in Lebanon today, "even competitive sports, normally the most transcending and neutral human encounter, have been factionalized by sectarian rivalries," adding that such efforts "must be recognized for what they are: strategies for the empowerment of threatened groups and their incorporation into the torrent of public life" (Khalaf, 2012, p. 44). Indeed so! However, during the 2006 war on Lebanon one third of the Lebanese population, majority Shiite Muslims, were internally displaced from their hometowns and villages and sought shelter in the majority Christian part of the country. For many, that was the first time that they had encountered a fellow Lebanese from another religious tradition. The impact was astounding on both as they realized that they were people of the same nation, with same concerns and aspirations. Countless Christian organizations were involved in addressing the needs of their fellow

internally displaced Lebanese, and relationships were built between individuals who until then were isolated in their own majority same-faith areas. Yet as soon as 34-day war came to an end, those who were displaced went back to their original homeland, and that was that. Though, not quite. The reality is that the "coming together" experience was transformational for many. And, given the opportunity, people of different faith traditions can come together again. This is the space that FBOs in Lebanon can create through their joint programs and activities. Through collaborating together they can give rise to a wider and more encompassing national identity that respects and cherishes the religious one in its diverse forms.

The focus of the efforts should be on the younger impressionable generation. The geographic segregation can be a hindrance particularly for those schools whose students are mainly of same-faith. But still, through opportunities as the ones created by Adyan Foundation, there is room for healthy interaction. Another challenge would be the cadre of politicians who stir religious differences to reinforce their positions.

5.4 Suggested areas for future study

As mentioned earlier, the scope of this research focused on standing on the point of view or perspective of a selection of faith-based organizations without seeking the input of relevant stakeholders and constituents who may have shed additional light particularly on the practices of faith-based organizations in Lebanon. Accordingly, one suggestion for a future relevant study would be to include interviews with members of the communities served by the selected FBOs to examine their perception of the objectives and practices of these organizations, as well as the organizations' image in the eyes of the community, not only as they themselves perceive it. It would be equally interesting to seek the feedback of those communities that are being served by non-same-faith organizations to stand on their view of these organizations. For instance, one of the interviewed FBOs in this research noted that they do not have in any of their centers any form of religious display nor do they use any religious terminology. Yet, at the same time the community was quick to figure out their religious identity. And this in no way undermined the organization's value to the community, to the contrary.

Another future study that may contribute to the field of development organizations in a multi-faith context is a comparative in-depth view of secular vs. faith based organizations' understanding and/or intended meaning of human rights and humanitarian aid and development terms and discourse used by both, particularly in the Arab World where humanitarianism "has undergone multiple modifications, adapting with time, place and circumstance" (Moussa, 2014, p. 1).

5.5 Significance of research

The research which looked at *Faith-based organizations in Lebanon: Objectives and Practices* highlighted the influence of context on the founding of FBOs, their mission and the relevance of their expression of faith to the community(ies) where they operate. It particularly shed light on the extent to which FBOs that serve in non-same-faith communities are likely to adapt their expression of faith. And last but not least, in a highly religious and sectarian context such as Lebanon, FBOs can seek to not only be influenced by context, but to serve as agents of change positively influencing the context. And here there's a huge potential opportunity to start working towards moving away from sectarianism.

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Appendix "A"

Interview Schedule

1	When was the organization founded?
2	What are the factors that led to its founding? Can you share a brief about its history in Lebanon?
3	How would you describe your organization: an NGO? INGO? FBO? Other?
3A	National vs. International: • What does it mean to be international and national at the same time? • How does the community perceive you? As local? Or international?
4	What is your organization's vision and mission today? i. Has there been a change from the initial vision and mission? ii. If so, how and in what way(s) has that impacted the work of your organization in Lebanon today? iii. Was the change, if any, gradual? If so, what led to it?
5	Where is your organization present in Lebanon today? All Lebanon? Which parts of Lebanon? Do you serve same-faith communities? Multi-faith communities? [% if available?]
6	Some say that in Lebanon people's religion is very much part of their identity and culture. Would you agree with that? What about your organization? In other words, in a multi-faith country like Lebanon, what does it mean to be an organization of a particular faith? How does that impact your work, programs, areas of focus …
7	Would you say that your organization's identity in Lebanon is a product of this culture? If yes, in what terms. If not, why not?
8	How do you communicate your faith?
9	How is *your communication* of your faith perceived by i. The community you serve ii. Other FBOs iii. The secular NGO community iv. Others…

10	What do you see as the difference between your organization and any other secular organization doing similar work in Lebanon? What is your organization's niche?
10A	How do you differentiate between an FBO and a Secular NGO? What is your definition of "secular"?
11	Where do you see the role of faith at its highest in your organization? Mission & Vision? Values? Objectives? Programs?
12	How do you present yourself as an organization? I.e. your Image.
13	In a context such as Lebanon, do you perceive a faith-based identity as an asset or a liability? Does it facilitate or hinder your work? Why so?
14	Major sources of funding: i. Same faith individuals [small & major donors] ii. Same faith organizations iii. Individuals of different faith groups iv. Other faith organizations v. Secular sources vi. Government funds vii. Other…
15	As an FBO, what are the major challenges that you face i. Funding ii. Networking iii. Inclusiveness iv. Image-related v. Other…
16	How do your sources of funding impact the way i. you do your work? ii. you present yourself as an FBO in the community? iii. You pursue your vision and mission? iv. …
17	Given the opportunity to establish your NGO from anew, what would you do differently in terms of i. Identity ii. Vision

iii. Mission

iv. Other