



KUWAIT CIVIL SOCIETY
Needs Assessment Research Study





Summary

This booklet summarizes and visualizes the key findings of the comprehensive civil society sector mapping and needs assessment that was conducted by en.v in the summer of 2018 as part of its ongoing Promoting and Advocating for Civic sector Enhancement (PACE) program in partnership with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), and with the support of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) and Burgan Bank. The research study was designed and conducted by an external team of independent consultants, Honey Al Sayed and Iyad Kallas (from Honey & LLC), in an effort to analyze data around the collaborative challenges, needs, opportunities and best practices across the Kuwaiti civil society sector.



Key Findings

- Procedures for measuring impact and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are quite scarce due to the lack of knowledge and/or awareness about how and why civil society organizations and groups (CSGs) should measure impact. This comes hand in hand with a noticeable underutilization of technological tools to create better operational models within CSGs and cross-sectorally.
- Collaboration and coordination amongst CSGs, the public and the state are insufficient due to limited financing, logistics and platforms. Additionally, there is a clear generational gap and cultural divide driven by gender bias, societal conservatism, language, and diversity of experience.
- Funding is a prevailing issue for CSGs across the sector. Whilst most organizations are self-funded and/or supported by individual donors, family members and sponsorships, funding distribution and utilization could be made more efficient, through effective coordination, collective strategizing and more agile management.
- Licensing and registration are a common issue among CSGs due to bureaucratic policies and/or lack of long-term commitment, and/or opting out as a personal preference. Only 15% of participating sampled CSGs are registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MOSAL).
- There is an absence of strategic communication by CSGs to the public, which currently consists of an unstructured, one-way flow of dialogue and limited engagement. Moreover, misperceptions and prior common assumptions seem to be an issue when it comes to how the CSGs regard each other; how they perceive their beneficiaries, and how they are perceived by the public.
- The civic sector in Kuwait shows very healthy signs of diversity relative to scope of work, but is less healthy in terms of equitable representation and inclusiveness across demographic groups. Marginalized locations such as Jahra and Ahmadi are also under-served. This appears to be primarily due to the lack of two-way communication and multiple barriers to understanding beneficiaries' needs in these regions.
- There is great potential for development and growth in the sector on many levels, especially by enhancing the "3 Cs" (Collaboration, Coordination and Cooperation) amongst CSGs themselves, as well as with non-CSG actors such as the state, the private sector and the wider public.

Key Data Collected

The following are visual representations of the data gathered on sampled CSGs:

CSGs Seniority



34%
created before 2010

66%
created after 2010

"One of the reasons why we get the support is because of our name."

Age Representation



58%
Over 30 years

42%
Under 30 years

"Older generations are more committed and personally involved [in civic work] but the younger generations are more energetic and effective."

Scope of Work - Focus Areas



Gender Representation



Female 68%

Male 32%

"Another reason [why we have a] high female ratio [within our team] is because of the local culture, because of which our work appeals more to women."

Nationality Representation

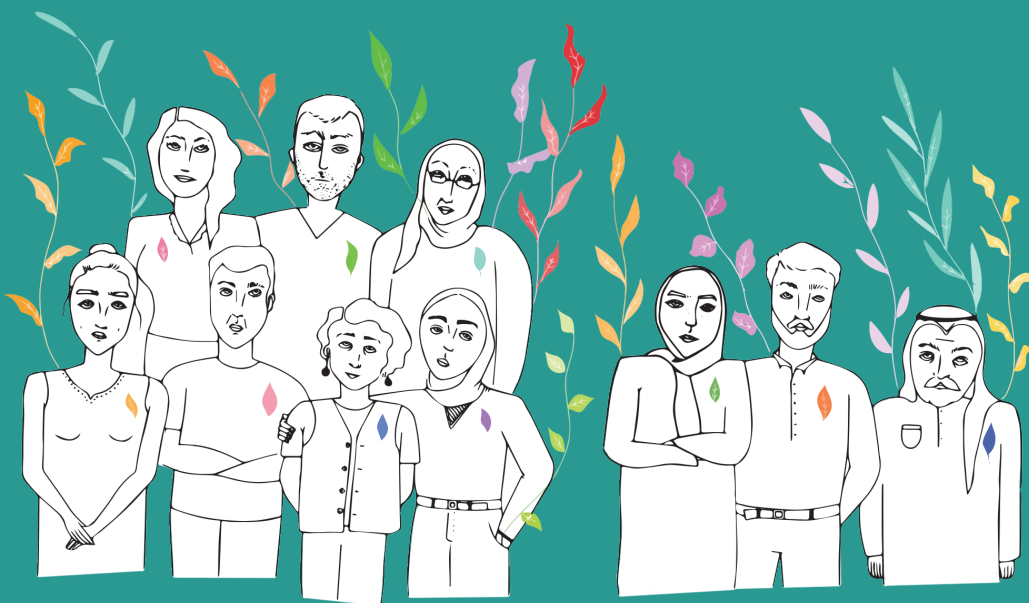


33%
Non Kuwaiti

67%
Kuwaiti

"Non-Kuwaitis are working at administrative posts."

Human Resources Representation

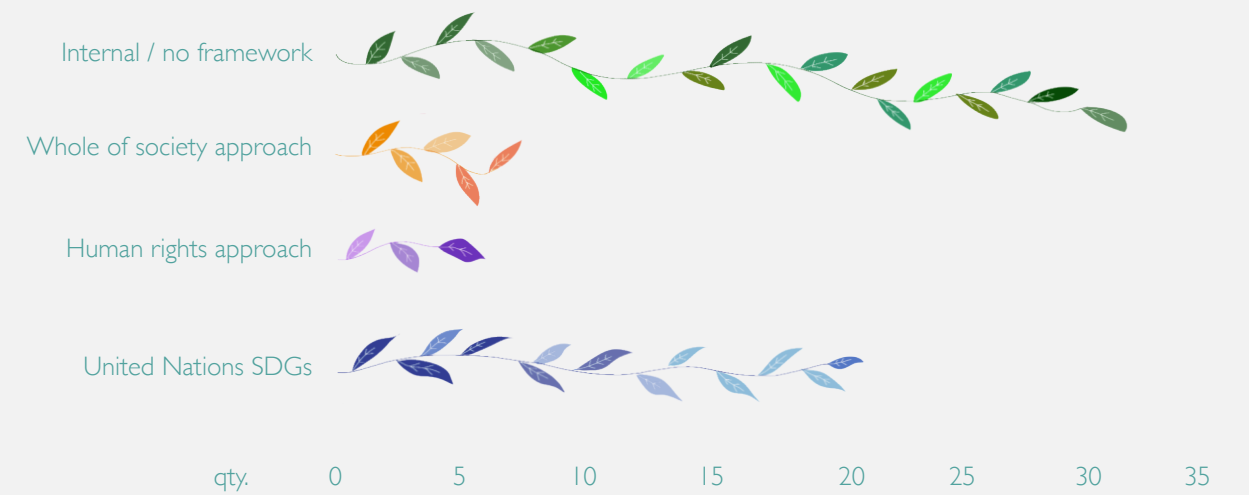


Volunteer 74%

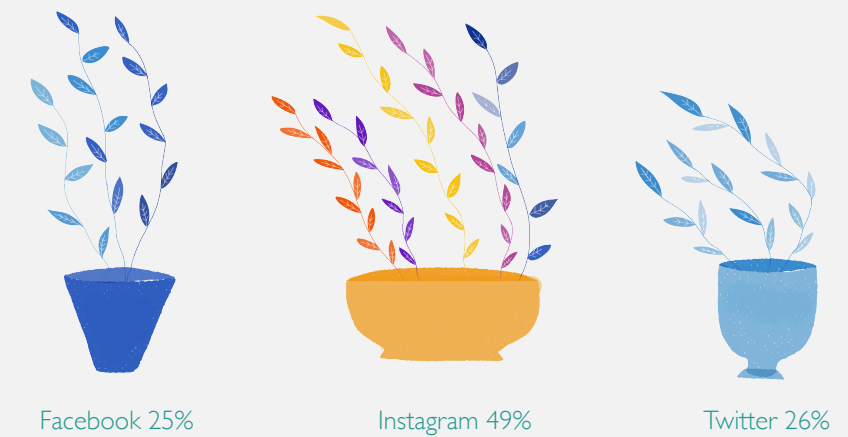
Staff 26%

"We have 700 volunteers running our entire operations."

Mandates and Frameworks Guiding CSG Activities



Social Media Channels Distribution



Social Media Following



General Insights

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

Strengths

Human capital
Multidisciplinary sector
Youth engagement
Striving for inclusiveness

Weaknesses

Lack of M&E tools & data
Public policies
Little collaboration
Convenience over responsiveness to needs

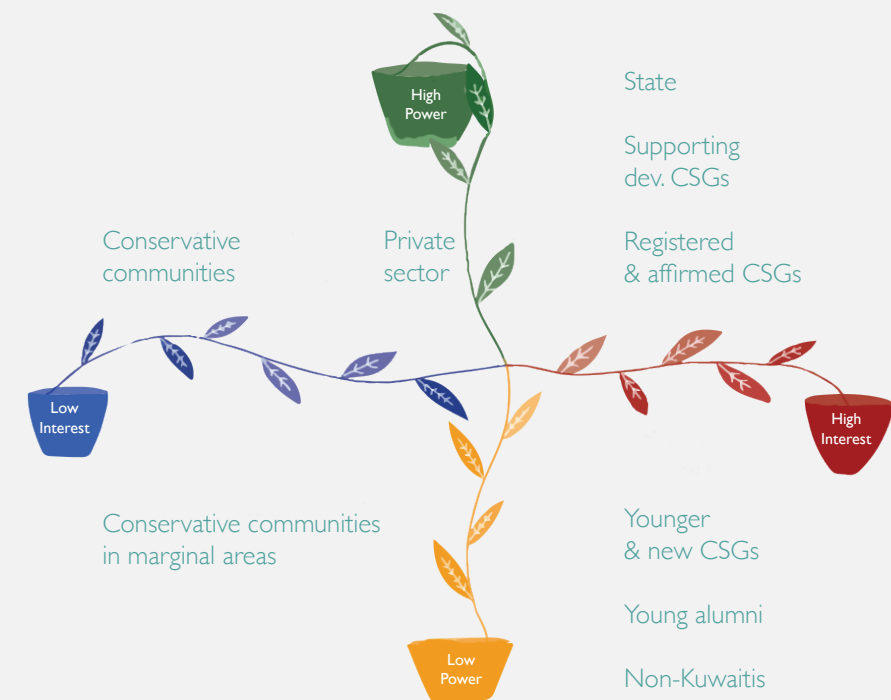
Opportunities

Shareable best practices
Common resources
Supportive private sector
Supporting developing CSGs
Organic network
Attention to SDGs

Threats

Finding resources
Communication with public
Lack of public awareness
Prejudiced misperceptions
Resistance to change

Power Map






Stakeholders as defined in the above power map

-  State: Refers to the Kuwaiti government, its institutions, ministries and officials, who regulate and apply policies that influence either the general operational context of CSGs (registration and fundraising policies, for example) or the general policies that are linked to a specific scope of work (such as education and environment).
-  Private Sector: Refers to private business structures, enterprises and corporations that contribute to the development of Kuwaiti civil society, either in donations or through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).
-  CSGs which consists of:
 -  Supporting Development CSGs (SCSGs): Refers to prominent civil society groups whose main objective is to help and support the development of other civil society groups and projects in Kuwait. SCSGs help other CSGs directly through capacity building programs, or by integrating them in support programs.
 -  Registered and Affirmed CSGs: Refers to well-established CSGs that are registered according to the Kuwaiti Law, with a license from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MOSAL) or the Ministry of Youth Affairs (MOY).
 -  Younger and Newer CSGs: Refers to volunteer groups or newly founded CSGs, which are mostly not licensed, and based on personal resources.

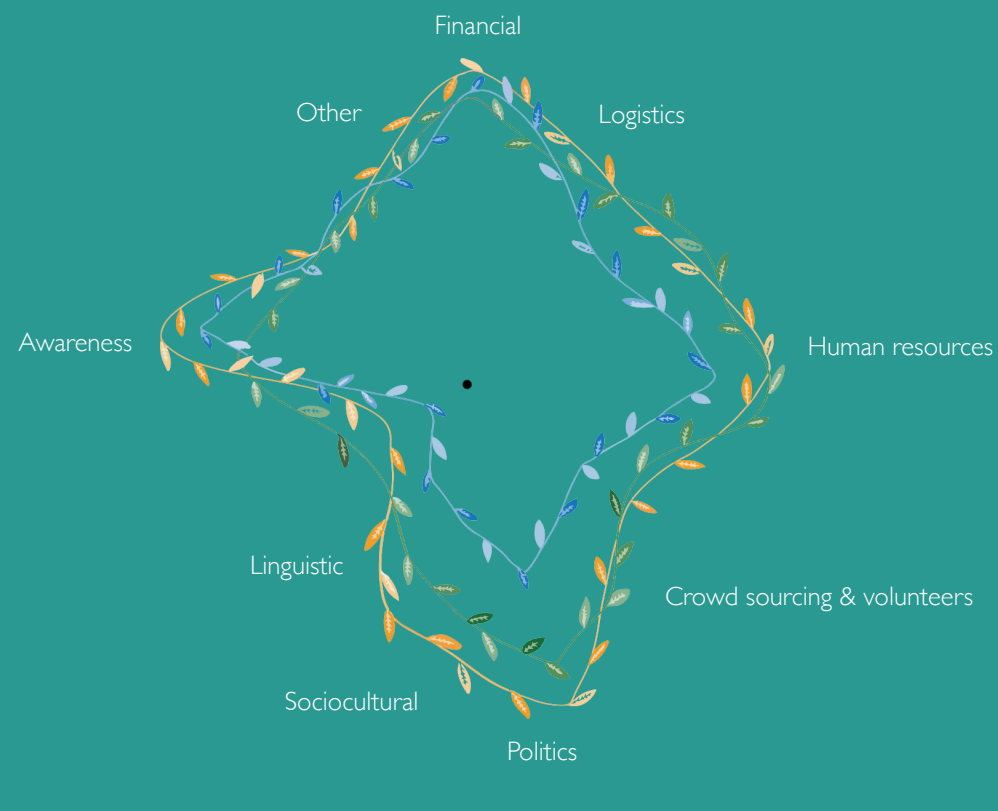


Cont.

-  Young Alumni: Refers to the individuals who manage to pass training programs or workshops with SCSGs and are now active participants, volunteers and ambassadors of civil society projects. They are considered the intermediary beneficiaries of SCSGs.
-  Non-Kuwaitis: Refers to foreign residents in Kuwait, be they staff members, volunteers or beneficiaries of Kuwaiti civil society projects.
-  General Public: refers to the wider public that has no clear or firm stand on civil society's activities and projects (which makes it difficult to place on the power map), in addition to conservative communities in Kuwait which, according to sampled CSGs, show some resistance to change. These communities are listed in two places on the power map, as their level of influence changes according to their geographical location.

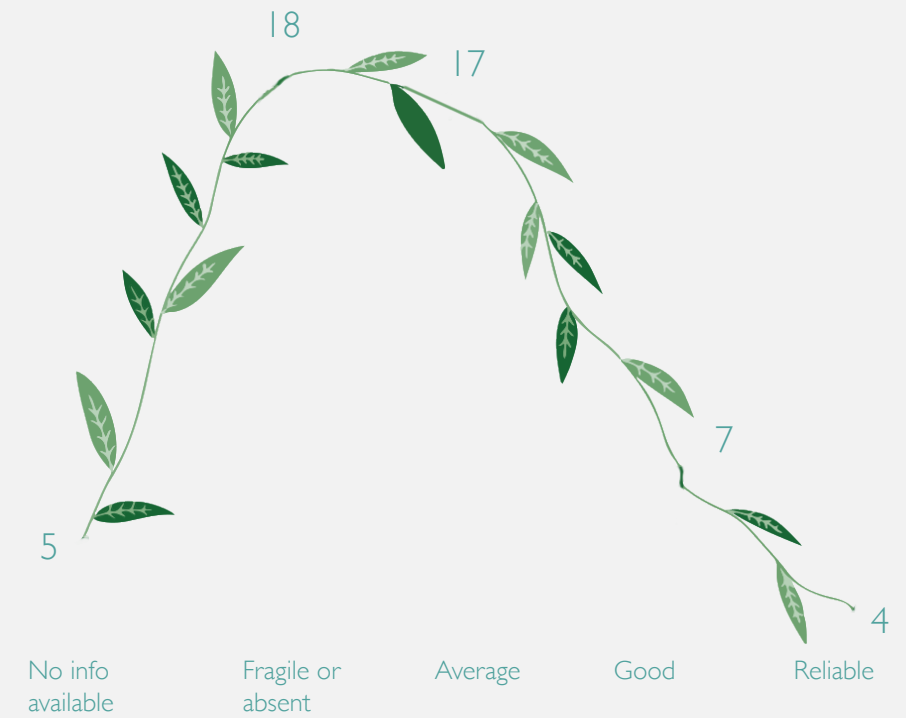
Capacities, Needs and Challenges

Main Challenges Identified by CSGs

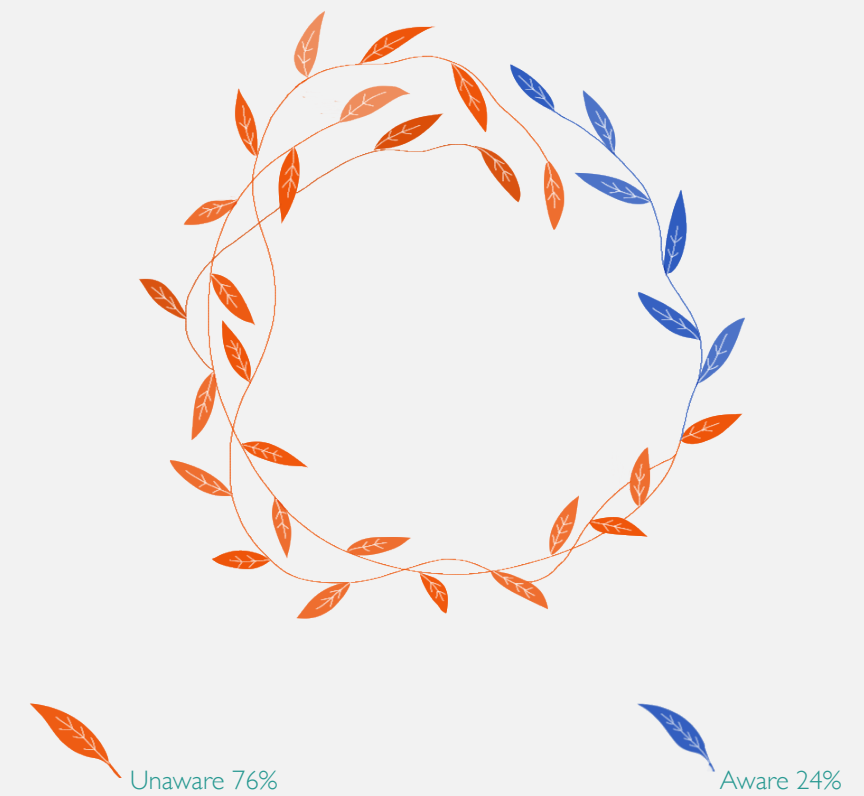


Monitoring and Evaluation

Only 8% (4 out of 51) of sampled CSGs have reliable monitoring and evaluation strategies / mechanisms.



Awareness of Importance of Data Management



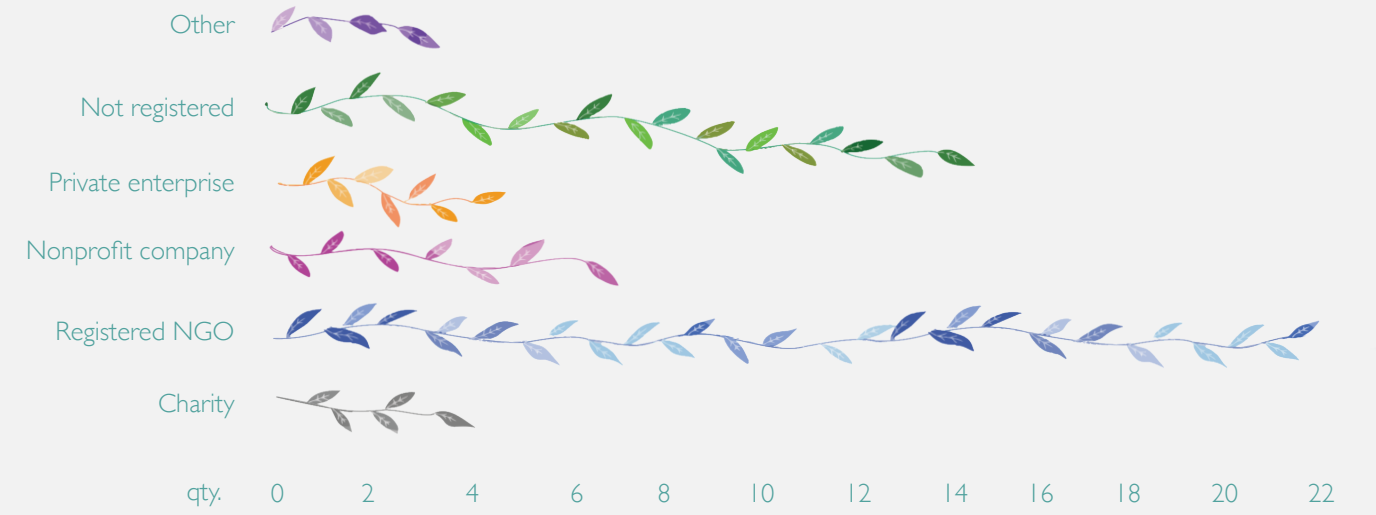
Geographical Distribution of Activities



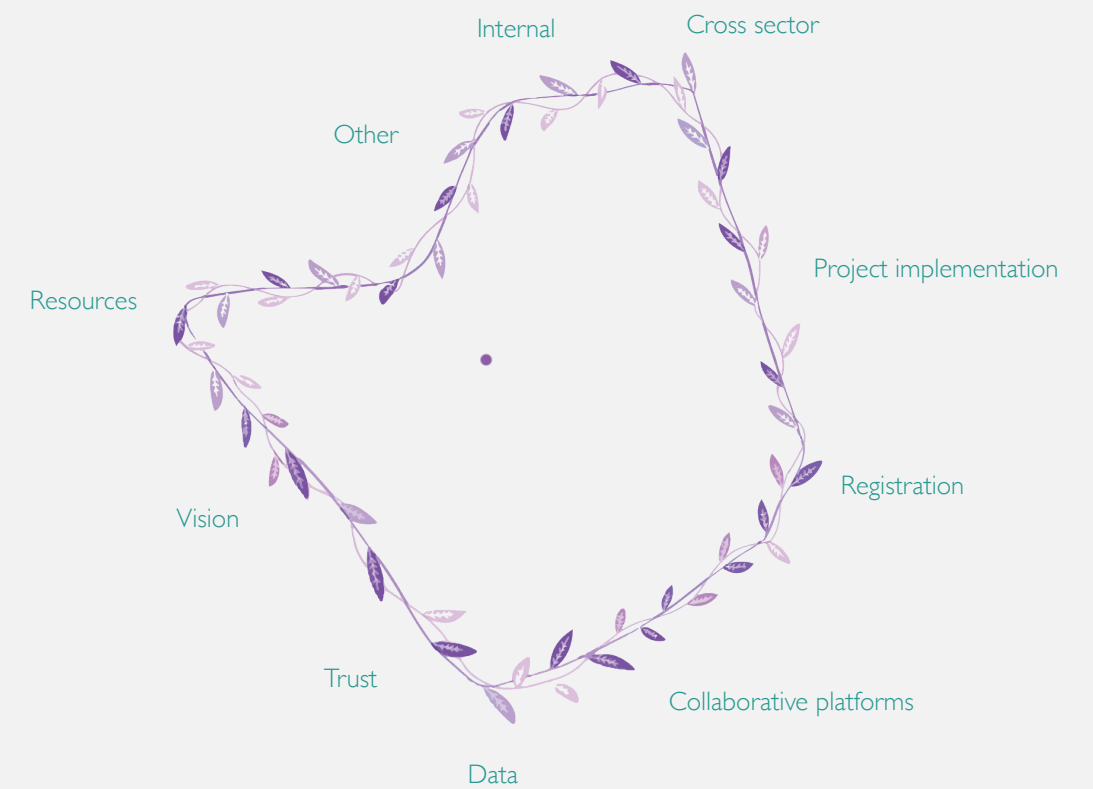
- Capital
- Farwaniya
- Ahmadi
- Jahra
- Mubarak Al-Kabeer
- Hawalli

Respondents were asked to rate their level of activity in these districts on a scale from 1 to 10. These are the average levels.

Registration Status

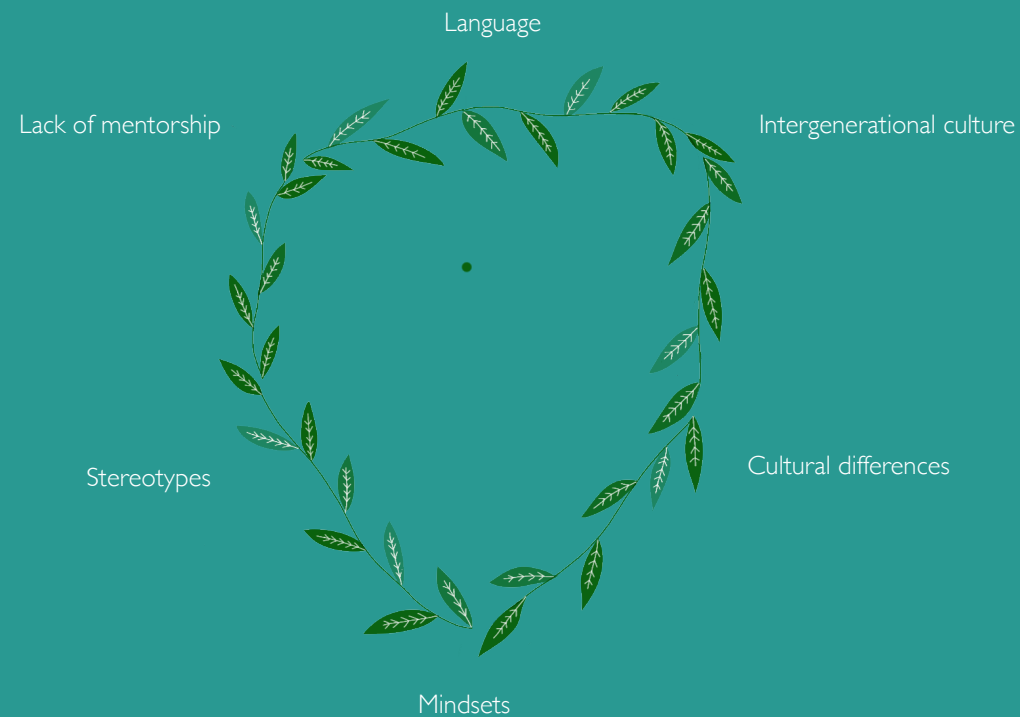


Identified Priorities for Improving Collaboration



"We are not influencing policy directly. We are influencing attitudes & behaviors"

Reasons for the Intergenerational Gap



Key Challenges

The following key challenges were identified in the study:

- Missing or lack of information and data related to M&E and measuring impact within the civic sector. Important decisions are made by CSO leaders based on personal views, standards, values and relations, rather than by using an informed process of decision making.
- Lack of awareness and perception amongst the general public about civil society's active role, vital importance and professional nature.
- CSOs favor or neutralize activities, on specific axes and /or in certain regions across the Kuwait, based on convenience rather than the public interest and needs. Most CSGs only operate effectively in the Capital and its surroundings, in spite of acknowledging the need for CSGs' work within other communities, especially Jahra and Ahmadi.
- State policies appear to be hindering the development of CSGs in Kuwait. Whilst registered structures have difficulty operating due to state restrictions (such as access to international funding), unregistered structures have difficulties accessing communities, utilities and platforms.
- There is little collaboration and coordinated efforts amongst CSGs, as a result of unshared resources, data mines, visions and a lack of collaborative platforms. There also appears to be a marked generational gap between the older and newer CSGs, which creates barriers between them and hinders their ability to communicate and collaborate effectively.



Key Opportunities Identified

- In spite of the challenges related to crowdsourcing sustainability, Kuwaiti CSGs manage to operate with the efforts of volunteers, especially the youth, who do not seem to lack the motivation nor the human capital investment needed to implement projects.
- Sampled CSGs seem to cover all shades and scopes of civil work and the various disciplines, including the majority of the list of United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.
- Sampled CSGs showed by example and proof that they possess useful data, resourceful best practices, specialized knowledge and common resources that could be shared across the sector for a greater collaborative impact.
- A majority of the sampled CSGs emerged after 2010, indicating increased interest in the sector as well as opportunities for engagement.

Conclusion

The research study for Kuwaiti CSGs is the first step in a long process towards overcoming weaknesses, addressing threats, leveraging strengths and capitalizing on opportunities. The key will be to tackle challenges one by one, relying on strategic methods, partnering and collaborating with colleagues and stakeholders, engaging the public, building trust and credibility, and achieving small wins that build into big value.

The research was purposefully focused on addressing the challenges and obstacles that CSGs face, in order to explore potential solutions and possible improvement. Nevertheless, amidst all the challenges, the collected testimonies have also illustrated many success stories, inspiring practices and zeal for constructive change in Kuwait.

**All text in quotation marks has been extracted from interviews with sampled CSGs.*

Disclaimer: The views, thoughts and opinions expressed in this report are a result of the analysis undertaken by the research consultants and do not reflect the opinion of en.v or its partners the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) and Burgan Bank.



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