

# Knowledge Sharing Between Foundations Engaged in Youth Development in Muslim-Majority Countries: Jordan and Palestine

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**SUMMARY REPORT**  
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**Part 1 of a 2 part study on Knowledge Sharing,  
Muslim Philanthropy and the Wider State of Data**

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## Introduction

This report documents the work of the first of the two research enterprises which comprised this project, entitled '*Knowledge Sharing between Foundations Engaged in Youth Development in Muslim- Majority Communities - the Wider State of Data*'. It presents findings from qualitative case study research with twelve foundations, purposively identified, operating in Jordan and in Palestine. Working in youth development, each of them are either Jordanian or Palestinian foundations, rather than externally-based foundations or international philanthropic institutions.

The research addresses the research puzzle that surrounds increasing global calls for philanthropic foundations to share their knowledge and learning across the foundation and philanthropy spectrum. Such knowledge-sharing is promoted as enhancing foundations' performance and demonstrating their impact in tackling social problems and meeting missions. Yet little is known about the 'what' and 'how' of foundations' knowledge sharing, internal or external, its realities and practicalities, in regional settings, such as the Middle East.

This exploratory study seeks to redress the imbalances of this research puzzle, by discovering foundations' experiences in knowledge sharing in two Middle Eastern countries, Jordan and Palestine. It concentrates on philanthropic action in youth development, since both countries face significant pressures, from demographic, employment, education, conflict and post conflict perspectives, for youth and for young people.

The research aims are, firstly to discover the extent of and approaches to knowledge sharing with peers, collaborators and beneficiaries demonstrated by selected foundations working in the field of youth development, in the Muslim-majority countries of Jordan and Palestine. Secondly, to identify the potential for furthering knowledge sharing and learning opportunities among such foundations working in these contexts, which emerge from this study.

The objectives are firstly to provide opportunities for the voices , experiences and practices of foundations, operating in Jordan and Palestine to be represented in the global debates on foundations' knowledge sharing and learning activities and opportunities; and secondly to deepen understanding of and further support these foundations' approaches to knowledge sharing and learning among relevant stakeholders, including peer foundations and externally based (international and regional) foundations, NGOs, users and beneficiaries.

## Literature Review

This review considered the literature's directions, including rationales for foundations' knowledge and information sharing, including showing progress on objectives, ensuring dialogue with constituencies and beneficiaries; and learning from one's own and other organisations, to improve practice (Brouard and Glass, 2017). Among challenges were lack of donor-recipient interaction, barriers to sharing that were sectorally and contextually dependent; also the difficulties of adapting to new circumstances while simultaneously evaluating what is working and deciding time and resources allocation for knowledge sharing, that is, situations of continuous transition. (IVAR, 2015, 2017).

Scholars assess that foundations' capacity to produce knowledge and foster learning becomes central to their creativity; and also critical over time, when lack of solutions to problems may often be as related to lack of knowledge, as to lack of political will or money (Anheier and Leat, 2006, 2019). As foundations' knowledge-creation and knowledge-carrying capacity comes to the fore, as both asset and process, increasing interest has also developed regarding foundations' knowledge sources, gathering and applications. Orr and Jung (2016) recognise foundations variously as knowledge patrons, providers, mediators and stimulators of knowledge. Other examples include studies of knowledge transfer between Italian for-profit corporations and their corporate foundations (Minciullo and Pedrini, 2015); and of implementing community-based knowledge as a leadership tool by Canadian community foundations (Phillips et al, 2016). Accepting that foundations exist to promote public good, with many states offering tax advantages for so doing, the question arises as to whether foundations' knowledge, internal and external, is public knowledge (Jung and Harrow, 2016).

Where researchers use 'knowledge' and 'information' interchangeably, knowledge is information processed by individuals including ideas, facts, expertise, and judgments relevant for individual, team, and organisational performance (Wang and Noe, 2010, following Alavi and Leidner, 2001). Lee and Al-Hawamdeh (2002) provide an illuminating definition of knowledge sharing as a thoughtful act that creates value to be used by others. Partly underpinning the realities of knowledge sharing are the factors sustaining or limiting collaboration, within and between organisations. (Sveiby and Simon, 2002).

In business literatures, knowledge sharing is understood as the basis for achieving and sustaining competitive advantage, whereas in the non-profit literature, knowledge sharing helps to enhance the sharing organisations' performance, in meeting their social purposes (Rathi et al 2014). Noor et al (2015) for example, in a quantitative study, explore knowledge sharing, collaborative culture, and beneficiary participation as determinants of nonprofit effectiveness, in the context of Malaysian nonprofits. Context therefore is all-important. Sergeeva and Andreeva (2016) stress its centrality to knowledge sharing research; and argue that much empirical research on knowledge sharing tends to downplay context. They draw attention to the 'who' (who shares knowledge) 'where' (in 'what settings does this occur?) 'why' (the 'organisational reasons for knowledge sharing) and 'what' (what knowledge is being shared) questions; questions which are drawn on in this research.

Concerns about the extent and nature of knowledge flows, within and across foundations are longstanding. Ostrander's (2007) attention to philanthropy's social relations, emphasising the lack of knowledge transfer when donors and recipients do not interact, is reiterated by Webb Farley (2018) a decade later. The latter stresses that there remains lack of clarity as to whether recipients and donors share knowledge that would allow informed decisions about giving to the betterment of society. This is especially so regarding failures in foundations' activities as well as successes, long regarded as an untapped foundation resource (Giloith and Gerwitz, 2009).

Advocacy for using foundations' knowledge for practice improvement and development continues to be marked among leading philanthropic foundation networks and in practice literatures generally. (IVAR 2015, 2017, AFG, 2018, Buteau and Glickman, 2018; Poortvliet, Heady and Brick, 2012). Scholarly or scholar-practice analyses of foundations' knowledge sharing rationales and experiences are nevertheless relatively few in number. (See for example, Janson and Handy, 2016).

Attesting that a knowledge/practice problem or challenge exists begs the question as to approaches to the problem's resolution; and the nature of the learning that results. A threefold typology of approaches is provided by Tooman et al (2016): linear models, involving direct transfer of knowledge, from creators to users, where a knowledge deficit occurs and is resolved; relational models, where linkages and interactions between people are central to knowledge creation and sharing, and systems models, where knowledge is socially embedded among myriad and interdependent actors and groups, where people shape and are shaped by the system; and knowing in practice is a continual work in progress. The practice-advocacy literature may be interpreted as encompassing all three models; but for some, may represent as much foundation rhetoric as foundation reality. Alternatively, this practice-advocacy literature may underestimate the nature of the challenges of introducing and achieving knowledge-sharing goals, supporting the directions of short-term programmes and projects, to the detriment of long term work; and running the risk of imposing a sense of knowledge deficits among those foundations whose sharing is limited or difficult across the range of contexts and pressures under which foundations work.

## **Working Definitions for the Project**

The philanthropy studied is limited to that undertaken by the institutions known as foundations. Table 1 below sets out the working definitions for the research.

Table 1: working definitions for the research

Philanthropic foundations	Characterised as having::founders with charitable or philanthropic intentions (individuals, families, companies or communities) ; income and funds, privately raised; public benefit roles and purposes (through grant funding other organisations’ projects and programmes or through direct operational project organisation); and independent governance structures. (Pratt, et al, 2012).
knowledge	Broadly :justified personal belief that increases an individual’s capacity to take effective action (Alavi and Leidner 2001); Specifically: knowledge is information processed by individuals including ideas, facts, expertise, and judgments relevant for individual, team, and organizational performance (Wang and Noe, 2010).
Learning, in the organisational context	A change in the organisation that occurs as a function of experience, occurring over time; being cyclical, as task performance experience is converted into knowledge, that in turn changes the organisation’s future experiences (Argote and Miron Spektor, 2011) .
Youth development	an umbrella term for those philanthropic purposes favouring support and provision for young people, between the ages of fifteen and thirty, whether in individual, group, community or national settings. Its ambit ranges from formal to informal education and training support, through community work, volunteering, other forms of social action and support for public and civic participation, to employment and economic opportunity programmes , including enterprise and innovation initiatives and seeding entrepreneurship, both social and commercial.

## Researching in Muslim-Majority Countries

As an overall guide, we used El Taraboulsi’s work (op. cit), which considers Muslim philanthropy as developing through its encounters with other philanthropic cultures; while locating our research in two Muslim-majority countries. Her work uses the notion of space to open conversations about Muslim philanthropy, so that philanthropic practices in the Muslim world are the result of an interface between Islam and the cultures encountered. Her exposition, (originally for the development of the Muslim Philanthropy Digital Library) regards Muslim philanthropy as geographical and cultural and not limited to faith-based philanthropy; its contents spanning the range of philanthropic practices in Muslim-majority countries and Muslim communities worldwide.

Original discussions proposing research collaboration on this topic had leant towards exploring foundations exemplifying Muslim philanthropy; with the standing of the WCMP and its Academy of Philanthropy as central to engaging respondents’ support in the demanding contexts of Jordan and Palestine .The project began immediately following the WCMP’s ‘Global Donors Forum’, in London, 2018. Increasingly however, the complexities of assessing what would count as a Muslim philanthropy -based foundation in these countries became evident. The extent to which faith adherence provided a basis for philanthropic action would rest on judgments open to interpretation and change over time. (Tadros 2011). Moreover, the

religions and development literature highlighted the difficulties of disentangling religion from its interactions with the social, economic and political context in which it is lived, revealing the complexity of religious landscapes and of the relationships between religion, values and behaviour. (Rakodi, 2011). In some settings, 'faith-based' terminology was itself problematic (See for example Policy Briefing, 2011, regarding development in Karachi and Sindh.)

Siddiqui's (2018) all-embracing view of the nature of Muslim philanthropy, as giving of any kind which involves self-identifying Muslim individuals, institutions, communities, and societies as key agents, provided an inclusive approach. However, this went beyond the scope of our study and its institutional (foundation -only) frame. It also raised questions as to how self-identification would occur and be recognised. We decided instead therefore to frame our research in the context of two Muslim-majority countries<sup>1</sup>. These were settings where foundations as institutions would not be sought for research purposes as either specifically faith-based or otherwise; but would be invited to indicate their faith positions, for example, as Muslim faith-expressive, if not specifically faith-based, or as reflecting no one faith-philanthropic stance. In this, we were also guided by work including Khader (2018), reflecting that it might be more apt to refer to 'Muslim philanthropies', suggesting that how Islam is interpreted by self-identifying Muslims will change not only in time, but also across different locales. Singer (2018), further, suggests that it seems an incomplete undertaking to isolate religious belief from the dynamics of society and culture, politics, and economics; all critical features in the two countries we were studying. She goes on suggest that the Muslim character of any philanthropic act is, ultimately, only one of the act's identifying features, including size, location, and beneficiaries, any of which may be determined by where the donor lives, her or his financial situation, or personal experiences that prioritise particular concerns.

## **Research Design and Methods**

The research design was exploratory and illustrative, rather than evaluative, using a purposive case study method, seeking information-rich cases. Research questions were developed, to align with research objectives, shown in Table 2.

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<sup>1</sup> Hasan (2015, 3) records that 1.1 billion Muslims (of the 1,6 billion worldwide) live in 47 Muslim majority countries in Africa and Asia. Proportions vary from just over 50% to nearly 100%. Jordan is reported with a 93% Muslim population; figures compiled from UNDP records. No figure is given for Palestine.

Table 2 The Alignment of Research Objectives and Research Questions

Research Objectives	Research Questions
1. To provide opportunities for the voices, experiences and practices of foundations, operating in Jordan and Palestine to be represented in the global debates on foundations' knowledge sharing and learning activities and opportunities	<p>1. How do (selected) foundations gather, use and value knowledge of their youth development programmes, to support their organisations' internal learning?</p> <p>2. What are the directions of the knowledge, knowledge exchanges and learning flows taking place in the work of these foundations?</p> <p>3. To what extent, why and with whom do foundations share their knowledge and learning from their youth development programmes externally with other foundations and institutions; and learn from external knowledge sources?</p>
2. To deepen understanding of and facilitate these foundations' approaches to knowledge sharing and learning among relevant stakeholders, including peer foundations and externally based ('international') foundations, NGOs, users and beneficiaries.	4. What are the consequences of the state of knowledge sharing and learning flows found in foundations in Jordan and Palestine, for these foundations' continuing philanthropy development?

Although resources and time constraints precluded an extensive review of the development and civil society literatures relating to Jordan and Palestine, these literatures were considered briefly from the perspective of their research focus and research methods choices. This literature concentrated on two aspects. Firstly, its focus was either on organisational aid from donors outside these countries, (Ibrahim and Beudet, 2012; Wildeman and Tartir 2014, Natil 2016, Wildeman, 2018, Zureik, 2018) located internationally or regionally; or on NGOs, both international and local as recipients of donors' support (for example, Parigi, 2016, and 2018, Atia and Herrold, 2018). Secondly, the research methods employed were predominantly qualitative, with particular use of purposeful, case study research (for example, Atia and Herrold, *ibid*; also Akela and Eid, 2018.)

We found minimal literature on foundations based within these countries with one paper citing a single Palestinian example in comparison with Northern Ireland (Kilmurray 2015), and one examining aspects of civil society in Jordan (Jung and Juul Petersen, 2014), but concentrating on charitable (rather than philanthropic ) development. With this literature in mind, together with the research questions, we chose a purposive case approach among selected foundations in Jordan and Palestine, West Bank, for which descriptive, qualitative data would be gathered.

Formal written approaches were made to introduce the project and explain its approach, explaining its collaborative purposes, and undertaking to share case accounts from the interviews with interviewee , for validation purposes ; and help secure foundations' confidence in the research process and findings. We hoped it would be possible to identify the foundations, to contextualise their practices and experiences and support knowledge sharing connections, following the research. We were also very aware of the challenges that this might pose (Mohmand et al 2017). A sense of shared language and understanding of youth

development trends and difficulties we hoped would also be provided through the specialist expertise of our field interviewer (AoP Director)<sup>2</sup>.

One to one and face-to-face semi-structured interviews by the Director of WCMP’s Academy of Philanthropy were sought with foundations’ senior managers; and supplemented, also where feasible by organisations’ documentation. Thematic analysis of the case transcripts was planned , as a “method for systematically identifying, organising and offering insights into patterns of meaning (themes) across a data set....identifying what is common to way a topic is talked about and written about and of making sense of those commonalities” (Braun and Clarke, 2012, 57).

Initially 21 potential foundations Jordan and Palestine, were identified: 2 inter-governmental; 1 European, based elsewhere in the Middle East, 1 locally based, funded by a US foundation; 3 based elsewhere in the Middle East, 2 local corporate foundations; 2 government –directed ; 10 locally based. However, given the gap we identified in research interest in locally-based and rooted foundations, we concentrated wholly on this latter grouping, as organisations that would exemplify the ‘philanthropy of place’, local foundations that were internally rather than externally based, “embedded by long term engagement” (with communities) and “place targeting (with comprehensive community initiatives)” (Pill, 2019, 185.) With 12 such organisations identified, the standing of each proposed case, was confirmed, as shown in table 3.

Table 3 Invitations to Participate in Field Research; Numbers, Location and Foundation Type

Country	Founded by individuals and/or family members	Founded by members of (Jordanian) Royal Family	Founded as CSD arm of a business corporation	Community Foundation	Founded as an arm of a bank Foundation	Total of case invitations
Jordan	2	2	2			6 foundations
Based in Jordan and operating exclusively in Palestine	1					1 foundation
Palestine	3 founded by individuals and /or family members		1 founded by business corporation	1 community foundation		5 foundations
Total Organisations						12

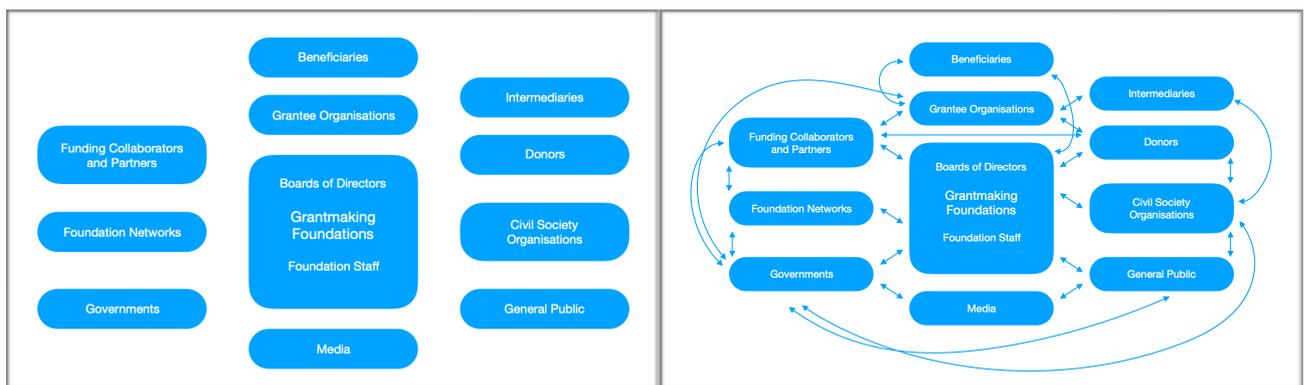
Criteria for a pilot case study to test interview preparation and delivery, and our approach to analysis of findings required a foundation with extensive experience in youth development philanthropy, with work that included grantmaking or programme operations in Jordan and/or Palestine. We accessed a major Italian foundation, in October 2018, where expertise included working with UN partners on youth social entrepreneurship in Euro-Med countries, including Jordan and Palestine. Following the interviews, the case

<sup>2</sup> Dr Yunus Sola

account was subsequently written up, its content analysed, using thematic analysis and the case shared with the foundation, which chose to remain anonymous in the study.

Learning from the pilot led firstly to amend and re-direct the content and running order of the interview framework and questions, sharpening questions and ensure that knowledge /learning examples (in this case engagement with youth alumni networks) were sufficiently highlighted. Secondly, to the development of a succinct, summary framework, depicting a foundation’s knowledge flow directions and sources study, done diagrammatically . For this, we took inspiration from the diagrammatic analysis of information sharing mechanisms and flow lines among Canadian foundations, developed by Brouard and Glass (op. cit). We initially considered a new opening approach/’warm up’ for the interview, in which interviewees “look at and then ‘locate’ their foundation, within the given pictorial framework which we would provide.. Two proposed visualisations, drawing on Brouard and Glass, were devised., first to identify stakeholders without knowledge flows and secondly to suggest directions of those flows between stakeholders (Figure 1)

Figure 1 Identifying Stakeholders and Potential Directions of Information Sharing and Knowledge Flows in Philanthropic Foundations



This approach was rejected as likely to imply a model of good practice, and then revised again for a third time. Its final iteration was not used in the interviews, but instead used as a means of recording and summarising the interviews, after the event. Thus, visual ‘portraits’ of each of the cases could be drawn up, in addition to the detailed interview transcripts, as sources for thematic analysis.

All twelve foundations agreed to participate in the research, and to be identified by name, organizational characteristics and the role of the interviewee in each case. Some felt that it was essential for this research for the organisations to be identified. The foundations are shown in tables 4, and 5.

Table 4 Philanthropic Organisation Case Study Profiles - Jordan

Ref	Foundation/ Philanthropic Organisation	Organisation model	Structure: Implementing/ Fundraising/ Grantmaking Organisation	Founded By	Funded by	Focus Areas	Years of operation
J1	Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation (AHSF)	Bank CSR	Implementing/ Grantmaking Organisation	Arab Bank	Arab Bank	General	41
J2	Generations For Peace	NGO	Fundraising/ Implementing Organisation	HRH Prince Feisal Al Hussein of Jordan	Partners/ Donors/ Grants	Youth	12
J3	Ruwad, Jordan	NGO	Implementing/ Community Association	Fadi Ghandour	Fadi Ghandour /Partners	Community	14
J4/ P6	Khutwa HQSF	Foundation Operating in Palestine	Implementing/ Advocacy Organisation	Hani Qaddumi Family Foundation	Qaddumi Family	Education	19
J5	Zain Telecom (CSR/CER)	Telecom CSR	Implementing Organisation	Zain Telecom	Zain Telecom	General	15
J6	Crown Prince Foundation	Foundation	Implementing Organisation	His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II	Partners/ Donors	Youth	1
J7	Elia Nuqul Foundation (ENF)	Foundation	Implementing Organisation	Elia Nuqul Family	Elia Nuqul Family	Youth	11

Table 5 Philanthropic Organisation Case Study Profiles - Palestine

	Foundation/ Philanthropic Organisation	Organisation model	Structure -Implementing/ Fundraising/ Grantmaking Organisation	Founded By	Funded by	Focus Areas	Years of operatio n
P1	Dalia Association	Community Foundation	Grantmaking/Advocacy	Local Community	Donors/ Grants	Community	12
P2	A.M. Qattan Foundation (AMQF)	Local foundation, separate from 'parent foundation', registered in UK	Grantmaking/ Sponsorships/ Implementing Organisation	Qattan Family	Qattan Family	General (Arts and Culture)	26
P3	Taawon	NGO	Grantmaking/ Fundraising/ Regranting/ Implementing	Palestinian Diaspora	Donors	General	36
P4	Palestine for Development Foundation (PsDF)	Not for profit Organisation CSR (company)	Grantmaking	Palestine Investment Fund (as a subsidiary)	Palestine Investment Fund CSR	Community	5
P5	Ruwwad, Palestine	NGO	Implementing/ Community Association	Community	Fadi Ghandour (founder)	Community	8
J4/ P6	Khutwa HQSF	Foundation registered in Jordan	Implementing/Advocacy Organisation	Hani Qaddumi Family Foundation	Qaddumi Family	Education	19

Of the twelve interviews, seven were conducted with the CEOs, three with CEOs and senior management team members ; and one with the CEO and management team, where two beneficiaries had also been invited to attend, and one with the founder. Since our formal consent protocol related only to foundation representatives, oral consent for the beneficiaries' participation was obtained and anonymity guaranteed, both personally and organisationally. Interviews were organised as a mix of conversational and structured exchanges, with schedules not shared beforehand, and notes taken by hand. Recordings were made if permission was asked and granted at the beginning of the interview, with confirmation that when permission was granted, the recordings were for the researcher's sole use, and solely for the purpose of revisiting the interview if and when needed during note taking. This required deletion of the recordings immediately following the interviews in every case. Notes were transcribed for analysis by the interviewer, with all materials kept on a secure laptop. The availability of published materials, such as annual reports, varied considerably (in contrast to the pilot) so review of the content of these was not included in that analysis.

While the interviews were conducted and transcribed by one individual, the analysis was undertaken by the two of us collectively, first working independently from transcripts and then sharing and agreeing collectively. We followed Braun and Clarke's phases of analysis (ibid, 60-68) , beginning with data familiarisation, reading and re-reading transcripts; developing initial codes (identifying interesting features of the data and bringing together data relevant to each code), searching for themes (collating the codes into possible themes, and bringing together all the data relevant to each theme proposed), reviewing the themes (whether these themes told something useful about the data set and the research questions, and were coherent ); and naming the themes, as the basis for reporting research findings. (Examples are included in the Main Report).

We found the shift from codes to themes complex and time-consuming, because of the amount of data on key aspects of knowledge sharing that the interviews had generated, and our interest in what we saw as the revealing nature of the minutiae of the data . Given our research objective to report our respondents' "voices", as previously unresearched institutions in understanding foundations' knowledge sharing development, the reduction from codes to themes found us initially trying to incorporate 'everything'. We finally developed a series of final themes, each with sub themes, discussed in the analysis section.

### **Findings (i): Visualisations for the Knowledge and Learning Flows in Participating Organisations and Organisational Profiles; and Visualisation Examples**

For each foundation case, visualisation of the overall direction of knowledge and learning flows , as derived from the interview transcripts, was developed, using the overall model framework depicted in figure 1. To each of these , a brief descriptive profile, drawn from the interviews, to provide the context for the particular visualisation depicted.

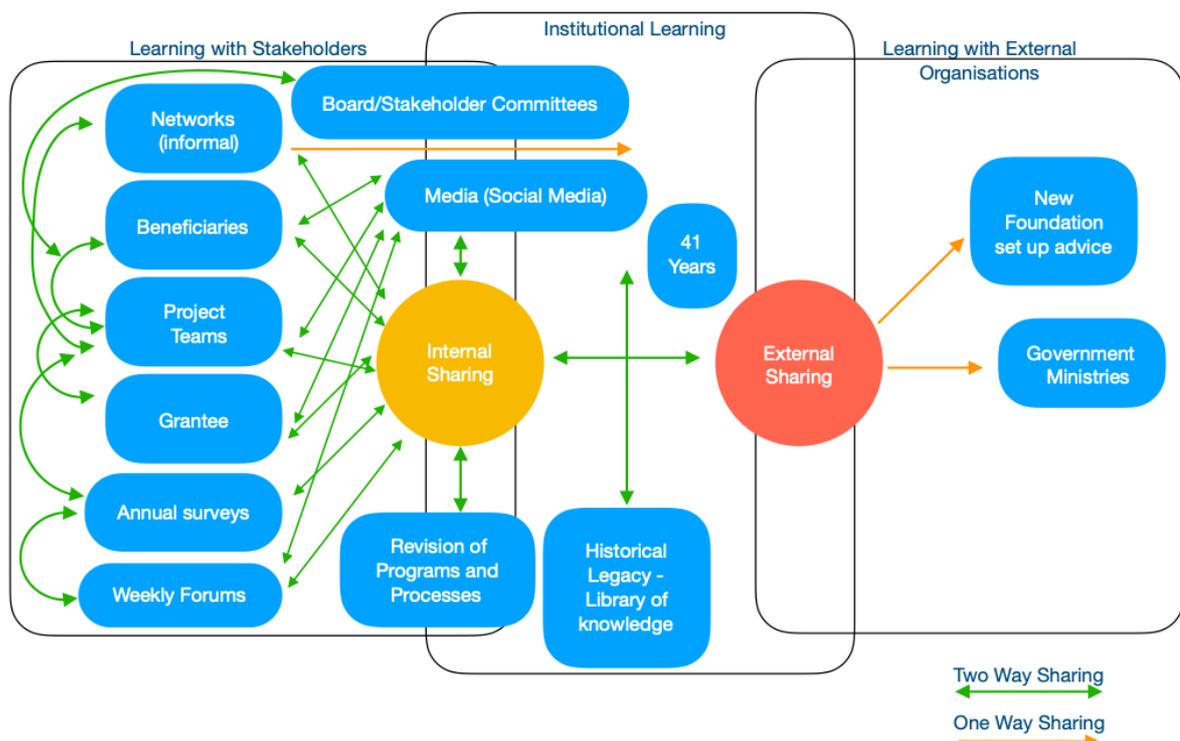
In this section, four examples are presented, two each from Jordan and Palestine(West Bank). All twelve are provided in the Main report.

Organisation characteristics and knowledge and learning flows: Example 1 Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation (AHSF), Jordan

Table 6 Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation (AHSF) Data Summary

Name	Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation (AHSF)
Organisation Model	Bank CSR
Structure: Implementing/Fundraising/Grantmaking Organisation	Implementing/ Grantmaking Organisation
Founded By	Arab Bank
Funded by	Arab Bank
Focus Areas	Culture, Scientific research, Innovation
Years of operation	41
Country	Jordan
Comments (if any)	None
Website	www.shoman.org
Annual Report:	2017 (Arab Bank) <a href="https://www.arabbank.com/docs/default-source/annual-reports/arab-bank-annual-report-2017">https://www.arabbank.com/docs/default-source/annual-reports/arab-bank-annual-report-2017</a> (accessed 19 June 2019)
Most recent annual operational funding:	(2017) 7.5 million euros (estimate based on 2019 exchange rate)
Research Interview :	CEO and Senior Management Team
Permissions:	The organisation's name may be used for the purpose of this research.

Figure 2 Knowledge Sharing and Learning Flows - Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation (AHSF)

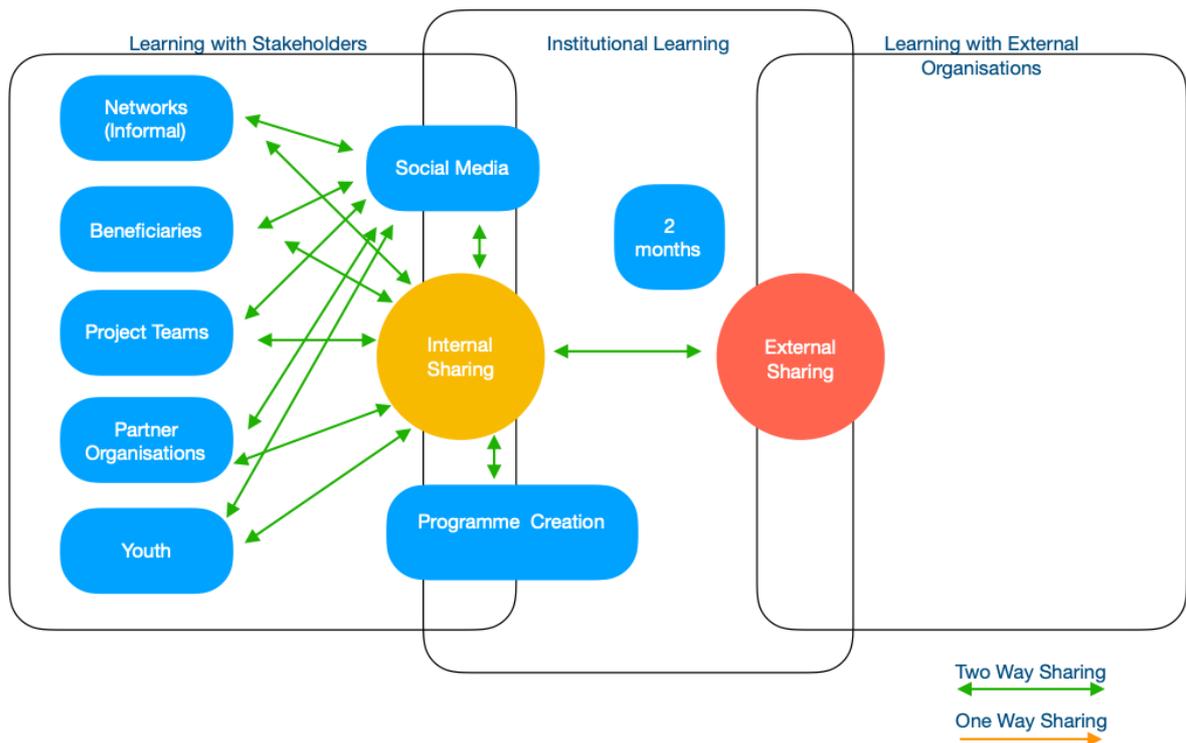


Organisation characteristics and knowledge and learning flows: Example 2 Crown Prince Foundation, Jordan

Table 7 Crown Prince Foundation Data Summary

Name	Crown Prince Foundation
Organisation Model	Foundation
Structure: Implementing/Fundraising/Grantmaking Organisation	Implementing Organisation
Founded By	His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II
Funded by	Partners/Donors
Focus Areas	Youth
Years of operation	Less than one year
Country	Jordan
Comments (if any)	None
Website	www.cpf.jo
Annual Report:	Not Available
Most recent annual operational funding:	Not Available
Research Interview :	CEO
Permissions:	The organisation’s name may be used for the purpose of this research.

Figure 3 Knowledge Sharing and Learning Flows - Crown Prince Foundation

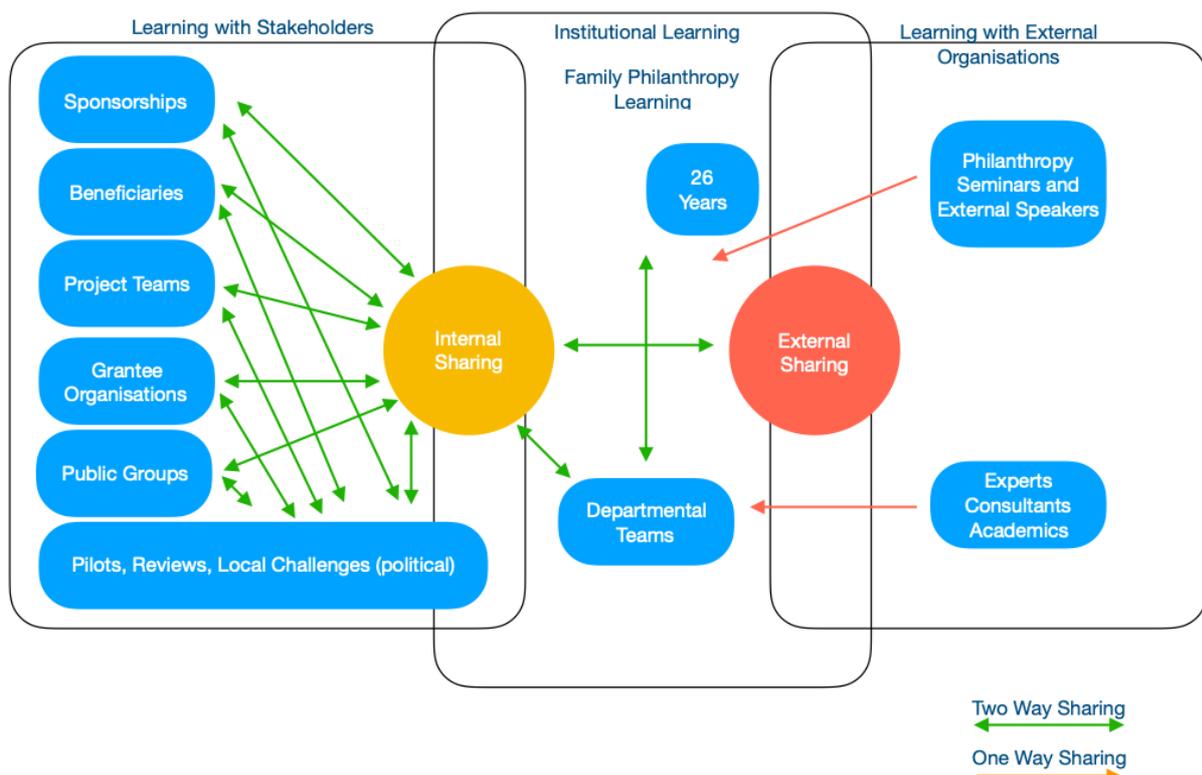


Organisation characteristics and knowledge and learning flows: Example 3 A.M. Qattan Foundation, Palestine

Table 8 A.M. Qattan Foundation (AMQF) Data Summary

Name	A.M. Qattan Foundation (AMQF)
Organisation Model	Local foundation, separate from 'parent foundation', registered in UK
Structure: Implementing/Fundraising/Grantmaking Organisation	Grantmaking/Sponsorships/Implementing Organisation
Founded By	Qattan Family
Funded by	Qattan Family
Focus Areas	General (Arts and Culture)
Years of operation	26
Country	UK (Palestine)
Comments (if any)	Parent organisation registered in UK, with a registered branch in Palestine as a non-profit organisation operating independently of the UK registration
Website	qattanfoundation.org
Annual Report:	<a href="http://qattanfoundation.org/en/qattan/resources/annual-reports">http://qattanfoundation.org/en/qattan/resources/annual-reports</a>
Most recent annual operational funding:	2016-2017 GBP 9 Million (approximate)
Research Interview :	DG
Permissions:	The organisation's name may be used for the purpose of this research.

Figure 4 Knowledge Sharing and Learning Flows - A.M. Qattan Foundation (AMQF)

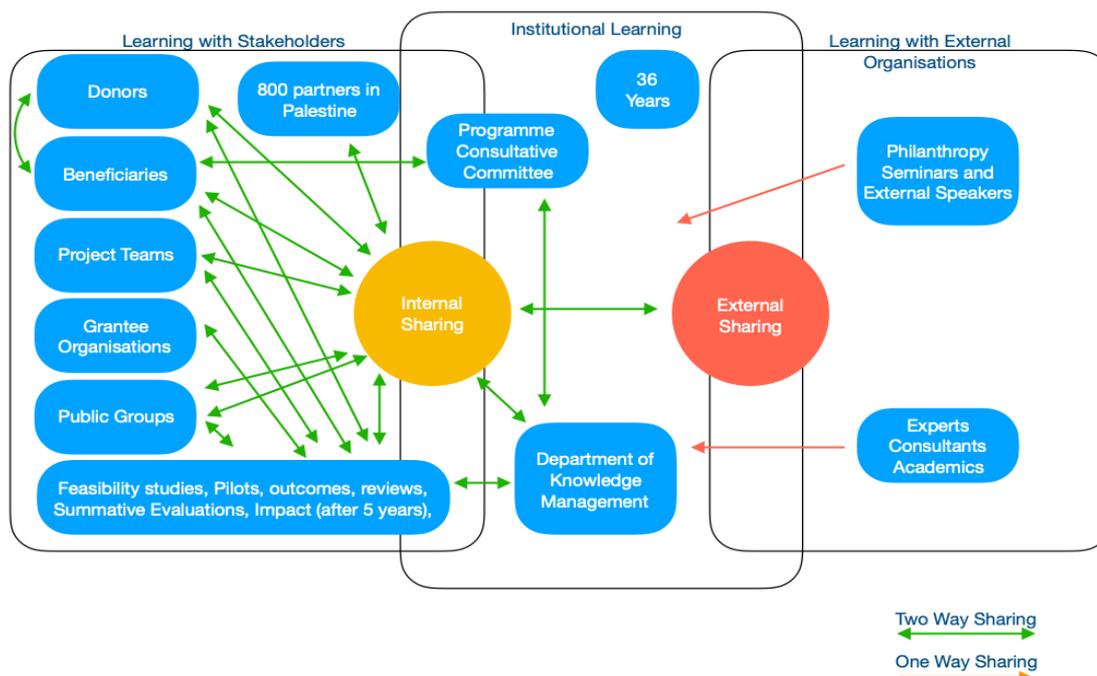


Organisation characteristics and knowledge and learning flows: Example 4 Taawon, Palestine

Table 9 Taawon Data Summary

Name	Taawon
Organisation Model	NGO
Structure: Implementing/ Fundraising/ Grantmaking Organisation	Grantmaking/Fundraising/ Regranting/Implementing
Founded By	Palestinian Diaspora
Funded by	Donors, professionals and intellectuals
Focus Areas	Education, Community Development, Orphan Care, Old Cities Rehabilitation, Culture, Youth and Women Empowerment, and the Palestinian Museum.
Years of operation	36
Country	Palestine and Palestinian Refugee camps in Lebanon
Comments (if any)	None
Website	www.taawon.org
Annual Report:	<a href="https://www.taawon.org/en/publications/en-annual-reports">https://www.taawon.org/en/publications/en-annual-reports</a>
Most recent annual operational funding:	2018 USD53 Million
Research Interview :	CEO, Management Team, Two Beneficiaries
Permissions:	The organisation’s name may be used for the purpose of this research.

Figure 5 Knowledge Sharing and Learning Flows - Taawon



## Findings (ii) : The Narrative Case Accounts: Examples

For each foundation case, narrative case accounts were developed, from the interview transcripts and their contents confirmed in each case before publication. In this section, two examples are presented, one each from Jordan and from Palestine (West Bank). All twelve case narratives are provided in the Main report.

### Example 1 Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation (AHSF)

The Foundation is 41 years old, unique in this region, set up by the Arab Bank and named after the original founder of the Arab Bank; having an annual income from the Arab Bank, (3% of their annual profits, plus its own endowment. A non-profit Foundation that has “no external influence. We do not need fundraising.”

AHSF emphasises its considerable internal learning experience, given that 41 years ago “everything was self-learned”; and having now “gathered and inherited a lot of wisdom and with it, an internal knowledge learning process.” Assessing that “internal learning is ingrained in our culture”, the Foundation sees its innovations as having never been reliant on “the west and western research” which it does not consider relevant or applicable to Jordan. But, for example, (AHSF) will look at international models and then “create our own model to suit our own country”. The Foundation emphasises its care or “strictness” in adhering to and implementing its overall mission, found on its website, while reflecting “our own culture and context”; and concludes that “at the end of the day, we have to create our own method”. That method takes account of the country’s continuing change, creating awareness of “always improving” in the Foundation, since “we cannot afford to be stagnant, holding on to our older ways”. Accompanying that internal sense of change, the Foundation does nevertheless “sometimes, pause and take reflection time “for a project or programme”. It was not unusual for the Foundation to pause for a year and then return to a project, with an example of a project paused for one year, during which time staff training was undertaken.

The board’s sense of care extends to its approach to due diligence in its grant making – “our diligence is very strict. We have our network and ask about organisations and individuals through our network”. It is also aware that its own behaviour and practice is always in “the spotlight”. The Foundation is emphatic that “We do not fund anything to do with religion or politics or any organisation where we perceive a bias, a prejudice.”

The Shoman Library is seen as one of its most successful and powerful long-term projects, together with its young innovation lab for young social entrepreneurs. The former, a now well-established “beautiful library in one of the most underprivileged areas of Amman “is open to everyone, organises workshops on creative topics (“Today we have creative writing workshop”); and links in to other related activities, such as film screenings, weekly discussion forums, winter and summer youth camps, and youth entrepreneurial training.

The open access from the Library provides, along with other projects, a strong capacity for interaction with the Foundation’s beneficiaries; for example, gauging their and notably youth satisfaction through the weekly forums and yearly surveys (from the latter, for example, extended the library opening hours, opened a coffee shop inside the library, purchased more books that addresses current knowledge needs including eBooks and audio books) while creating the Library as a community and family cultural and knowledge hub. In recognizing that the beneficiaries are “all stakeholders”, the Foundation goes beyond largely informal recognition by beneficiary inclusion in its stakeholder-focused board. Again, the learning achieved with and from beneficiaries – “learning is essential for us! This is how we operate” – is for internal purposes, to propel the Foundation as “always improving”. Similarly, the board, split into committees that include stakeholders, report to a main board, shows “engagement in learning” and “want to be informed”.

The Foundation distinguishes between contact and collaboration with governments and other foundations, for example in workshops or conferences; and sharing their knowledge externally, albeit with some regional involvement. Nevertheless, their responsiveness to requests for advice and support – “a few Foundations (from Sudan, UAE and Palestine) have approached us and asked that we guide them on how to run the Foundation. We trained them for free”- indicated their important, reactive role in external learning and knowledge exchange.

## Example 2 Dalia Association, Palestine

The complexities, opportunities and disappointments which characterise civil society experiences in Palestine are evident in the pressures and progress presented by **Dalia Association**. Beginning operations in 2007, on the community foundation model of multiple donors funding multiple projects that reflect community needs but are articulated and identified by those communities, Dalia has weathered critical periods. With the Oslo Accords, and fundings' arrival, for example, with *"each wanting the other to sort things out"*, external donors' agendas dominated, and *"donors told us what to do, what our needs were and how we were to do it."* In critical contrast, Dalia, while itself a grant-maker, is a community mobiliser, where its grantmaking is embedded in and arises from community empowerment processes.

From its initial use of communications experts to 'spread the word', Dalia is fully engaged in community outreach, and dialogue. That dialogue is not easy. Communities approaching Dalia that are 'aid-dependent' approach, are initially deflated when *"they realise that we are not just going to give them money"* but recognise after dialogue that *"the community should be doing things their own way"*. Moreover, they admit the (top down) aid (model of) funding *"did not make much change."* Dalia's method is to enable communities to work and learn themselves, starting with one activity and going on to build others *with* the community. Communications remains key, using Palestine's well-supported internet, holding events, and convening meetings, to ensure that *"Only the community can choose how to spend money, what to develop, and decide where to make grants."*

That level and extent of outreach however makes heavy demands, needing to be long term and over time, as well as openness on Dalia's part. *"We see what emerges.... we have no idea what they will come up with"* (for example, drug problems, waste management or not being able to manage their live animals.) Staff, too, need community visibility, not least to ensure that community leaders are not in fact taking advantage of their communities. For people who have seen a problem and mobilised a group, Dalia will *"work with them, invest in them, support them."* One example has been a grant for a woman, who had already set up a women's group, found an abandoned mobile home *"left behind by an NGO who came and went"*, and proposed to create a mobile kitchen..

While Palestine has *"so many donor avenues"*, Dalia *"does not accept political or religious money"*, and is continually seeking sustainable income sources for its mission covering the whole of Palestine. Its Board, which decides where funds are to be distributed and approve policies, are advisory only and not formally involved in funding or fundraising. With many of its outreach and activities run with volunteers therefore, Dalia faces that familiar feature in civil society organisations, *"always worrying about overheads"*. Part of that diversification is to bring in income from less wealthy donors, needing to show that *"regular people can make a difference."* Despite wanting *"big money"*, local people's involvement and mobilisation *"makes for better communities"* This is a perspective that younger people rather than older people *"get"*, although *"they do not have the money to give us"*, but rather to volunteer.

Dalia thus values donors from abroad and there is much external donor attraction to their closeness and understanding of communities, as there is globally for the community foundation operating model embedded in communities. It is paradoxical though that a number of such donors' perceptions and enthusiasms are not matched by an equivalent understanding of the implications of that method and set of values. Dalia finds that such donors want 'a community project first' and then to decide whether or not to fund; neither wishing to fund the processes by which it was arrived at; nor seeing strong communities in civil society as itself a need. At best such donors *"find it hard to delegate funding to the community"*; with its parallel where some communities also are focussed on 'what donors want' rather than on what communities need. Nevertheless, Dalia now has its first long term partner-donors, from Switzerland. While they need more, this multi-year support will enable the essential focus on project work.

As part of the global foundation movement, Dalia are members of global networks, where some are active and supportive. However, locally there are no networks through which Dalia's learning and methods can be shared; a situation compounded by difficulties accessing young people's ideas and feedback throughout Palestine, with travel restrictions between the West Bank and Gaza. Larger networks, in which to share and learn from foundations would be welcome, but regionally these are also as costly and with an uncertain value. Dalia's own thoughts are themselves to set up a learning circle for foundations.

## The Thematic Analysis of Findings

Thematic analysis entailed initial coding of themes and coding definitions drawn from the case interview transcripts, moving to a final set of nine major themes, with associated sub-themes. These are set out in Table 6.

Table 9 Major Themes Identified Through Thematic Analysis

THEME	Sub themes	Sub themes	Sub themes	Sub themes	Sub themes	Sub themes
<b>1 - Strong sense of identity and purpose</b>	National/ international legitimacy	Confidence to change (programmes, focus)	Demonstrating philanthropy leadership	Formal knowledge management processes	Responding to needs provides a learning burden	Collaboration equated with leadership
<b>2 - Intricate relations with donors</b>	Donor responsiveness to complex needs and roles in review and evaluation	Limitations in donor understanding of national & communities' needs;	Critical perceptions of 'foreign aid' and external funding models and expectations	Donors there for the 'long term'	Donors do not talk to one another	Refusing donors stepping over religious/ political red lines
<b>3 - Selectivity/ care in partnerships</b>	Leverage of resources through partnership	Creating allies and partners is very important	Exclusion of overt religious and political support/ identification	Political and religious money is not acceptable	We must support every sector of the community - All religions are our heritage	Network welcome
<b>4 - Governance challenges</b>	Wanting to report to everyone	External foundation partnership (UK) to demonstrate new forms of scrutiny	Due diligence a new discussion	Addressing the gender challenge within a conservative culture		
<b>5 - Prominence of self-directed and informal learning</b>	Gathering and inheriting accumulated wisdom	Knowledge retention and volunteer retention equated	We guide others when asked	Internal learning culturally ingrained	Responding to needs provides a learning burden	Pro-active knowledge seeking from selected countries (Finland, Norway)
<b>6 - Beyond grantmaking</b>	Direct operations and provision	Giving through Microfinance or through an implementing partner, not grants	Shifting from grantmaking because nothing left behind	Beneficiaries coming from perceived challenged backgrounds; need to learn more about their experiences	Awareness of limitations. Trying and failing at many things.	Future challenge of exit strategy

<b>7 - Tenacity in community engagement and participation</b>	Communities' self organising and learning	Listening without judgment. Institutionalising listening and dialogue	Finding / empowering (young) community leadership -Dialogue critical by as well as with youth	programme designs guided by beneficiaries, and the learning on that level is very strong.	Community exhaustion - losing young people abroad	Staying with community beneficiaries – nothing is short term
<b>8 - Importance of the long term</b>	No hit and run programmes/ projects	Evaluation after five years	Community, not the organisation, identifies and assesses KPIs	Patience with social investments		
<b>9 - Absence of external knowledge sharing</b>	Not invited to share knowledge externally	Do and want to share (externally) but do not do so formally	Stagnation in culture of philanthropy, despite conference facilitation etc	Lack of local networks through which to share methods and learning	Trust issues (with NGOs, partners, foreign NGOs and donors....	

In further reviewing these themes, we positioned them into three overarching thematic categories, as shown in table 7 .

Table 10 Positioning the Themes within Overarching Thematic Categories

Overarching thematic categories	The nine themes
Institutional Identity and internal knowledge and learning flows	1 - Strong sense of identity and purpose 2 - Intricate relations with donors 3 - Selectivity/care in partnerships 4 - Governance challenges 5 - Prominence of self-directed and informal learning
Institutional - Stakeholder knowledge and learning flows	6 - Beyond grantmaking 7 - Tenacity in community engagement and participation 8 - importance of the long term
Institutional - External knowledge and learning flows	9 - Absence of external knowledge sharing

Figure 6 Positioning the Themes

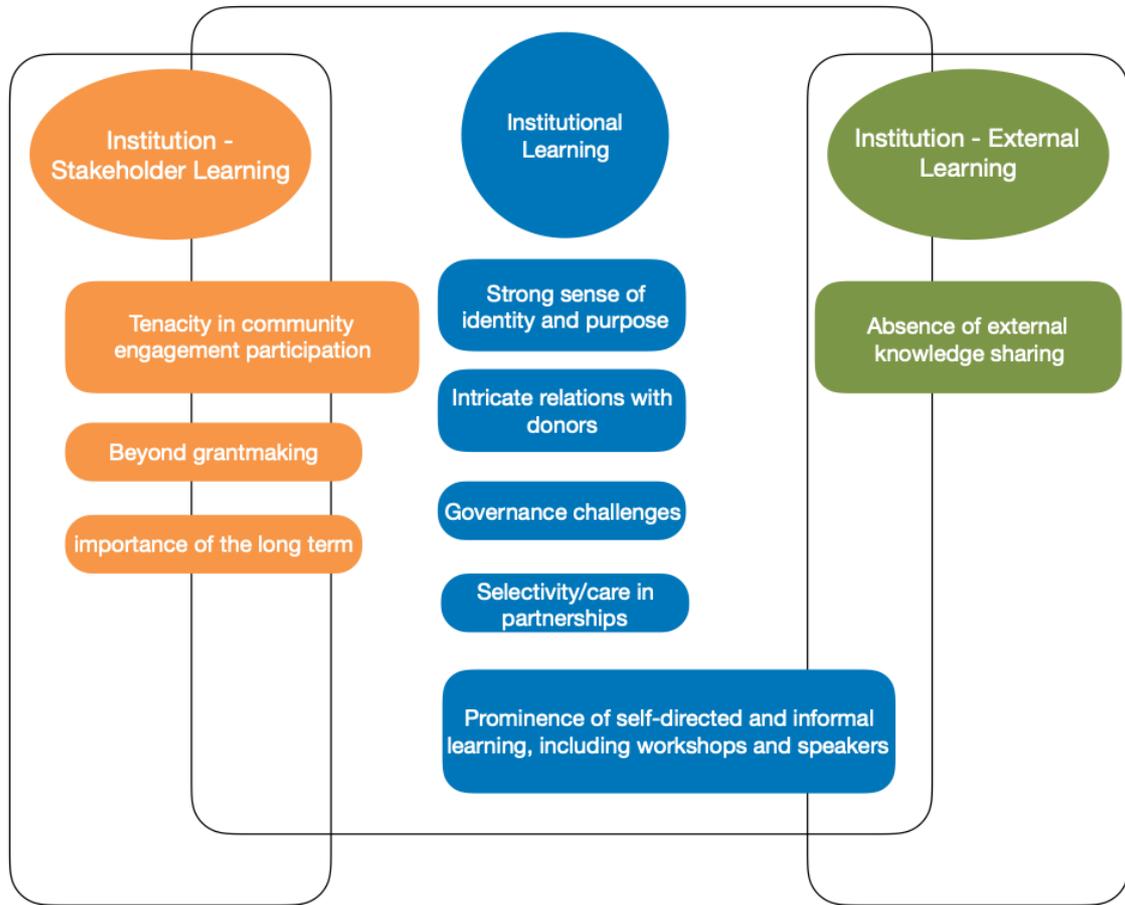
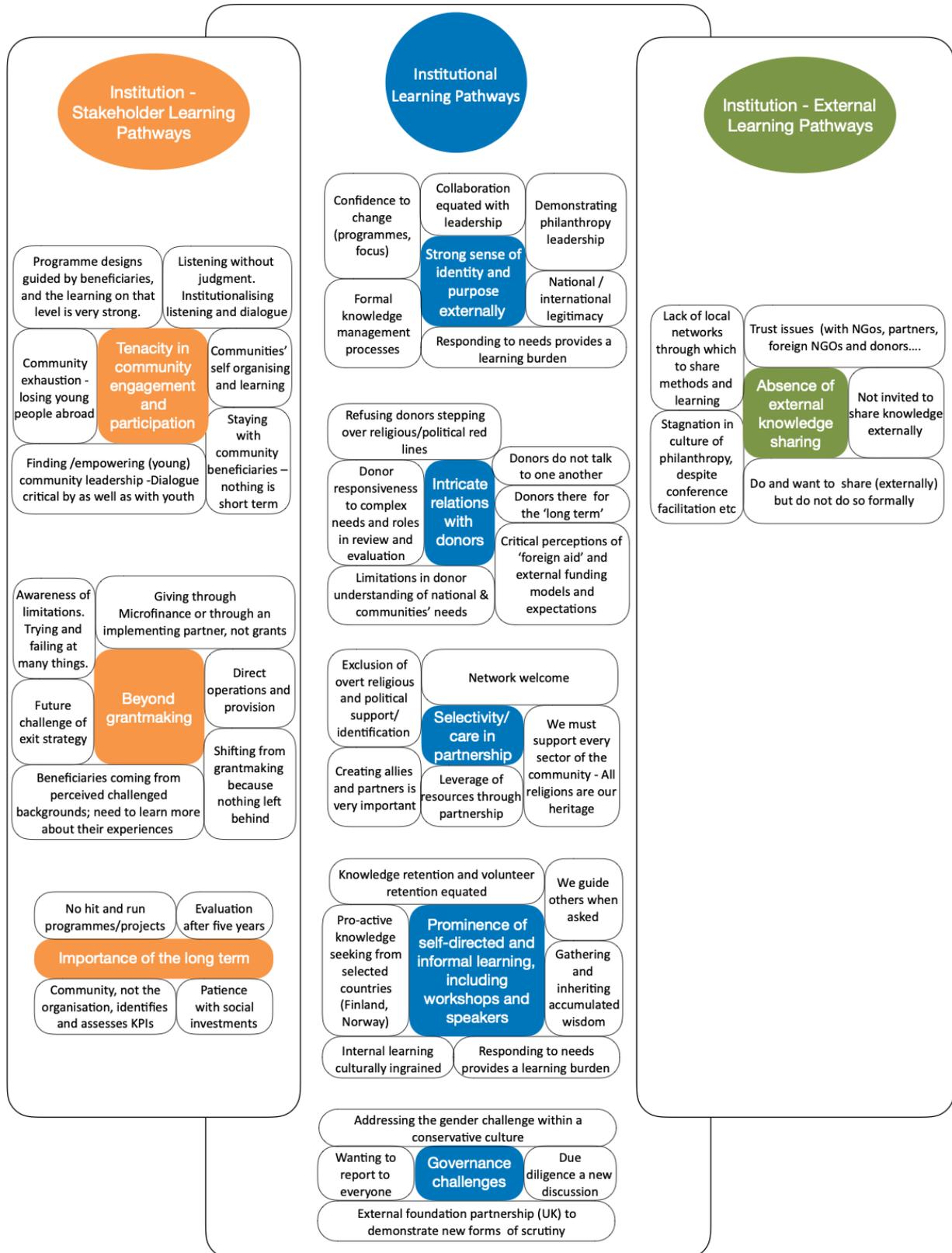


Figure 7 Visualising the Themes with Sub Themes



### **In thematic category 1,' Institutional Identity and internal knowledge and learning flows'**

findings indicated foundations' strong sense of identity, as part of nation-sustaining; as programmes became the identity of the organization and national legitimacy was asserted. The youth development roles gave the foundations activist personas, but with various means of fulfilling that activism, from gap filling' (e.g health provision) and landmark projects (e.g. major library provision) to continuous embedded programmes (e.g. higher education scholarships, linked to community volunteering.) Advocacy was implicit rather than explicit – *"we do not create press releases"*.

Case narratives documented foundations' confidence in the purposes and progress of their work, including willingness to re-direct work or start again, with 'instilling confidence' in turn a core part of the youth-focused programmes. Further confidence grew from donors' willingness to be there for the long term. However donor relations were intricate, densely woven, with many donors willing to enter and meet regularly with beneficiary communities; in remarked contrast to foreign donors, wanting intermediaries on the ground to ensure local contact. (Where international donors joined a local project, they tended not to interact with each other but contributed independently).

Community-based and community-led decision-making provided governance challenges. The reality for one foundation of opening -up to communities placed pressures on resources, where problems were highlighted – *"we cannot say no to youth"*. It further emphasized the disappointments and frustrations of foreign donors' and foreign NGOs' approach: *"parachuting in with quick fixes is not our skill. Not what we need."*

Nevertheless, foundations stressed the extent of their due diligence among potential donors; with uniform, emphatic stress on refusing donors who *"cross red lines on religion or politics"*, on the exceptional importance of equitable treatment of and sensitivity towards all faiths, (as part of both countries' national heritage) and in declining too to *"fund anything to do with religion or politics or any organisation where we perceive a bias, a prejudice."* . Alongside the issue of societal bias against young people was that of gender bias, with widespread acknowledgement of women's roles in entrepreneurship and the difficulties this posed where men in some communities were unsupportive. (Alongside male prominence in foundations' donor bases, the majority of CEOs interviewed were women.)

Internal and often informal organisational learning and knowledge sharing found *within* each of the foundations was very evident . Where programme design was influenced by beneficiaries , *"the learning on that level is very strong"*. While foundations also sought and observed new knowledge from philanthropy elsewhere, a marked propensity to self-challenge, based on their accumulated internal learning was found. *"We have been around 35 years. We start any project by looking at ourselves"*. At the same time, the growth in the volume and extent of communications between foundations and young people, especially young entrepreneurs was creating *"a learning burden"* to which foundations had to respond.

**In thematic category 2,' Institution - Stakeholder Learning'**, findings emphasised the major extent to which beneficiaries were fully stakeholders in the foundations' work; with 'learning with stakeholders' dominating every single case visualisation; and predominantly as two-way occurrences. Limited direct contributions

from beneficiaries stressed foundations' respectful relations with them, with linkage to their reported personal preferences for support from nationally-based organisations, rather than from those that were foreign-based.

Movement 'beyond grantmaking', to direct programme operation and provision was based largely on internal learning where grantmaking-only approaches had left evidence of minimal noticeable change and created opportunities for beneficiary and , over the longer term, "programme alumni" inputs. Nevertheless, such stakeholders also reported wishing that particular project had gone further. In the case of an entrepreneurship-focused project for example, for one beneficiary *"this gives us a real partnership. But also, I wish this had gone all the way - and not just an accelerator."*

Foundations' practice exemplified the importance of not dis-engaging from communities and already-disadvantaged groups; once supported, noting that swift incoming and departure by foundations ('hit and run' philanthropy) could be doubly damaging. Here the complexities of these foundations' roles in attaining their youth empowerment goals in estranged or declining communities, when initial top-down interventions would be required was very evident. Whether as community 'mobilisers' or 'champions', both roles required foundations' patience with their social investments' productiveness. Foundations' sense of realism and 'staying on', as some communities were exhausted rather than energised, and were losing young people abroad, was recorded. For one foundation this was part of the inevitable price to be paid for working in youth development.

**In thematic category three. 'Institution - External Learning'**, the finding of the absence of external knowledge sharing' by foundations was striking. The individual case visualisations of knowledge and learning flows showed this as the very largely 'empty box', despite the extensive and accumulated learning over time within these foundations,. Explanatory factors included the philanthropy climate, the demanding nature of each foundations' programmes and efforts that absorbed time and energy for their own programmes' improvement, and lack of local or regional sharing routes. The most commonly reported accounts for this absence of external knowledge sharing was however that foundations simply lacked invitations to share their knowledge. One foundation respondent made this very plain: *"Why I do not share my learning. Nobody asks me. People look at us as part of the problem.They are implementing in South America and then try and implement here."*

Alongside a concern that some would-be learners (e.g incoming , foreign aid-funded foundations and similar institutions) were unwilling to value the likely learning and knowledge held by the in-country foundations, dismissive of them, or , worse, lacked knowledge of their existence, was a sense of disappointment , since so much internal knowledge was accumulating and affecting their practice- *"Next year, we will learn new things and we will have new information to work on the following year"*.

Although ideas for external sharing had appeared, such as a learning circle for funders, they had not (or not yet) been acted upon. Among those for whom such networks would be welcome, significant (i.e. limiting)

trust issues (among foundations, NGOs and foreign donors, amongst others) existed. Expressions of frustration – *“We are not working together as we should. We have a conspiracy theory mentality which makes it harder to share knowledge”*- reflected longer term concerns, such as the risk of ossification or stagnation of foundation practices and the evidence that the regional or local philanthropy was *“not mature”*.

At the same time, the majority of foundations declared their general openness to sharing , and to do so in ways more pro-active than just *“attending other people’s conferences*. Some individual foundations indicated their willingness to take up what they saw as the knowledge sharing challenge which the research itself had posed – *“If this research can be a catalyst for a gathering around the region, let’s do it. Leave the follow up to us - we will do what’s needed to remain connected”*. As important was the need for visibility: *“There is a need to stand up and listen to one another*.

## **Discussion of the Findings**

These began by exploring whether the extensive but internal knowledge sharing and learning reported was bound intrinsically to senses of national identity (even national survival), and wholly produced by national contexts; or this was an unusual development, that contrasts strongly with, for example, European foundations, where alignment with national identity is most often absent.

It was important to recognise that the depth of unfavourable contrasts between ‘home based/long term’ committed foundations’ understanding of their working environments and those of foreign –based and international foundations and NGOs in youth development were not new. Paradoxically beneficiaries’ reported senses of security, satisfaction and preference for working with nationally and community-based organisations rather than with foreign -based donors, may itself be feeding in to the latter organisations’ (presumed) difficulties in understanding the national fields were they are or are seeking to work.

The profound sense of accumulating and making good use of internal learning, supported by case visualisations , was expressed across foundations regardless of age. The resulting drive for continual improvement may also be seen as an element the drive to do one’s best for one’s country. Though the depth and breadth of the drive to self-learning, was impressive, it was difficult to avoid entirely the sense of foundations’ doing so because of isolation in the field, of loneliness, as community-oriented pioneers, so making strong the link between self-learning and self-worth. (Only one of all the foundations studied reported systematisation of the learning and knowledge acquisition ,through a knowledge management department; the majority of cases were reliant on informal sharing , some of which might be intermittent, related to particular projects’ development milestones, or fragile on departure of key personnel.)

The concentration of effort to exchange knowledge within the individual parameters of each of the foundations' work appeared a key element in the confidence that these foundations expressed. It enabled recognition of failures as well as successes. Critiques of foundations' confidence turning to arrogance, found in the philanthropy and civil society literatures, were not supported in this research, which rather, recorded a clear sense of philanthropy, virtually tailor-made for or self-designed by the communities, rooted in humility as well as some degrees of anger about top-down styles of donorship, and its inappropriateness especially for youth development.

Findings concerning the lack of external knowledge-sharing because of the lack of invitations so to do, appeared to the researchers almost shocking in its straightforwardness. 'Waiting to be asked' and self-effacement do not appear on the face of things to be noted traits of philanthropic foundations. This may have been a function of philanthropic isolation that has propelled self-learning to particular depths. A further paradoxical possibility was that case foundations' very tenacity in sustaining deep contact with their beneficiary communities was either seen as too daunting to external donors; or an inappropriate model for their own plans, so that associated knowledge sharing and learning was not sought or not valued. Uncertainty about or absence of knowledge sharing networks locally or regionally, as well as broad comments concerning the need for trust were cited in case interviews. However, the question remains as to why incoming foreign donors and or foreign NGOs, as well as donor governments working or seeking to work in Jordan and /or Palestine do not make those invitations.

In studying philanthropic foundations in two Muslim-majority countries, both in the global public policy spotlight, the researchers had expected though not formally hypothesised that at least a number of the case examples would reflect and acknowledge, informally if not formally, a Muslim faith underpinning. That none did so directly, and that all were at pains to emphasise their all-faiths openness, and their governance positions that scrutinised and rejected overt religious or political overtones relating to gifts, was striking and is worthy of discussion, beyond this report.

This is not to ignore the Muslim faith inspiration or basis of the individual and family foundations' founders, especially, nor individual interviewees' personal perspectives, which were not explored. Nor did this response speak to a particular secular or secularising agenda, or to research in other Muslim majority countries, where faith based terminology is deemed problematic. Broadly this finding reflects El Taraboulsi's work, discussing the 'philanthropic space', where Muslim philanthropy in its encounters with other philanthropic cultures, is central. In this study, these findings suggest the critical importance of national identity as part of the foundations' identities, not over-riding but endorsing *all* the faiths and beliefs held by the citizens of Jordan and Palestine.

## **Limitations of the Study**

These included: the case profiles' development at a single point in time and place (Spring 2019), with particular pressures on the fieldwork timetable, the restriction of the Palestine -based study to foundations in the West Bank only, and the inability to enhance case research by further techniques, such as observation. Also, the purposive sampling approach introducing the possibility of selection bias; the non-inclusion of external (foreign) foundations from the study; the use of English in interviews; the lack of documentation availability with which to supplement the cases (excluding the pilot); as well as the respondents drawn largely from senior foundation managers only.

Of these, three were especially important. The purposive sampling choice, largely a function of time and resource pressures, was mitigated to an extent by the different types of philanthropic organisations studied , including conventional, endowed foundations, CSR –led foundations, as 'arms' of business enterprises , and operating foundations choosing NGO status. The narrowing of the case field produced insights into knowledge sharing in a hitherto neglected and unique dataset of 'home country' foundations but meant that other knowledge sharing dispositions in philanthropy were left unexamined . The inability to supplement case interviews with organisations' reports, websites and other documentation meant that data transparency was not consistent regarding annual reports and financial statements across the cases. These data absences may however also reflect local cultures of philanthropy, which does not seek to proclaim itself as particularly a matter for public attention, and if not fully anonymous, then partially so.

## **Suggestions for the further development of the research**

These followed from the discussion on limitations. They included::incorporating a wholly beneficiary-led perspective; tracking the original cases over time, to begin the basis of longitudinal work; examining the governance challenges of foundations' external knowledge sharing by concentration on the board members' (including donors') perspectives ; and /or the perspectives of less senior staff and volunteers; undertaking a parallel study of foreign foundations' knowledge sharing and learning experiences, relating these, or otherwise to those in the 'home' foundation sector; and focusing on mapping and analysing the extent of foundation reporting data that does exist in the Jordanian and Palestinian public domains, to respond the 'wider state of data' question from another direction.

## **Conclusions**

These emphasised that the study of Jordanian and Palestinian-based foundations' organisations' knowledge sharing and learning discovered a wealth of activities and learning growth; previously and largely hidden

from view. Three leading threads of evidence were noted: the lack of external knowledge sharing of foundations' own knowledge; the development of these foundations' internal reflection and improvement; and the philanthropy being undertaken in these Muslim majority countries.

The lack of external sharing of these foundations' own knowledge permeated every part of the study and was an unexpected finding of the research. Cycles of lack of trust had occurred, again and again, reinforced by lack of recognition by external bodies of local foundation knowledge gathering and learning, a parallel or consequential lack of trust in foreign foundations and NGOs, and absence of prior academic study, not even from local academic institutions. In these contexts, it was understandable that Jordanian and Palestinian Foundations would choose to create what they variously saw as their "own method". While appearing isolated from externally-based foundations, they had not been solitary, but pioneering, in their depth of community-based youth empowerment work.

This internally – driven learning contrasts with prominent arguments in the literature, advocating *external* knowledge-sharing, as the route which compels subsequent internal reflection and learning. Here, engagement in external networks for knowledge sharing and learning creates a good guide for foundations' own internal reflection. Among these studied cases, the contrary picture emerged, with foundations' reflection and internal change stemming largely from the experiences of their relative isolation, as well as from (one-way) external sources; driving internal learning in new and confident directions. It follows that both leadership models in internal learning–directed foundations, and the relative primacy of external learning drivers to ensure internal organisation reflection, as set out in the literature, deserve further attention, empirically and theoretically.

When the external networks are ready, such detail could provide a new resource for international foundation learning, not least for those working in the Middle East. Hence the views of foreign foundations in response to our findings are therefore very much needed. For now, it appears that trust is lacking. Against a background of due diligence and transparency dialogues and the imperatives of cross border giving legislation, external foundations have appeared to keep their distance from local foundations. However, this may arise from fear of the unknown on the part of foreign foundations, especially in relation to the clear demands of the nature of the youth development work being undertaken, in which 'learning burdens' were also articulated.

From the faith perspective, the provisional conclusions from the research are that the philanthropy studied represents a form of one type of Muslim philanthropy, that is, one where the specifics of a 'lead' faith identity are not stated; but cannot at the same time be said to be wholly absent. Thus the care taken in emphasising inclusiveness of support for all communities and heritage backgrounds, and examples of declining donorship with overt religious associations appeared as a means of asserting the importance of

the national community or nationhood rather than standing back from religious influences on philanthropy *per se*.

These developments suggest a type of Muslim philanthropy, apparently previously unrecognised and un-researched. It identifies a new form of anonymity in Muslim Philanthropy, as a key characteristic. Neither anonymity in the sense of being deliberately concealed, or detached from giving's results. It occurs where and when the religious identities and rationales among donors, communities and beneficiaries are recognised for their value in contributing to the 'wider or macro' goals of philanthropy through youth empowerment, of nation and community building, but are *not* a required or defining characteristic of that work. Drawing on El Taraboulsi's work (op.cit.), it is suggested that a form of Muslim philanthropy may occur through three intersecting influence sources: faith, heritage and anonymity. Also that this holistic approach may be applied to the Muslim-majority countries in this study, where nation-building and community change are all-important. Further considerations of this aspect of the study is however are beyond the scope of this report.

From the 'long list' of possible research directions, priorities are indicated. They include an equivalent study of foreign-based foundations in working in Jordan and Palestine, to discover their own knowledge sharing and learning experiences, and their responses to the findings from this 'home' foundation sector study; and mapping and analysis of the extent of foundation reporting data in Jordanian and Palestinian public domains.

## **'Next Steps'**

Our own learning from this study makes clear that any such next steps are best developed by and facilitated from within the active foundation landscape that was found. These steps would be sustainable only if the organisations and actors in that landscape lead an agenda that creates value through knowledge sharing, contributes to knowledge building and acting, and supports doing things differently

Next steps, to incorporate direct knowledge exchanges arising could include

a Round Table meeting or meetings with participating foundations to consider subsequent directions ; a joint research and practice led conference on knowledge sharing and learning with an open invitation to civil society members in Jordan and Palestine; and/or events(s) exploring particular aspect(s) of the report, for example beneficiaries as co-learners with foundations. From these, subsequent possibilities could include the establishment of a learning alliance (an informal grouping) among the participating foundations; and/or beginning a more formal foundation learning and research network in Jordan and Palestine, whether broadly, or specifically related to youth engagement and empowerment..

- From the researchers' perspectives, two further 'next steps' are identifiable, beyond those concerning further research in its own right. These are, firstly to link to the complementary study to this report, on 'Muslim philanthropy in the UK foundation context – the wider state of data', by Professor Cathy Pharoah. This points to the potential for possible interactions between interested Muslim foundations in the UK and Jordanian and Palestinian foundation respondents, to consider the 'how', and 'how far' knowledge is shared in their own settings, with a possible view to shared working. Secondly, to explore exploring governmental-level (DfID) perspectives on the implications of the research findings, and where feasible seeking appropriate governmental representatives at or contributions towards the practice-led next steps that are discussed above.

- **Our personal research reflections.** This research uncovered impressive amounts of 'good news', in the Jordanian and Palestinian contexts, as case foundations demonstrated the extent of their capacity and capability for internal knowledge sharing and learning. However, it is critical to recognise the likely consequences if the external knowledge sharing gap is not addressed. If the internally-directed reflections and development of the foundations continue as before, external philanthropic organisations currently operating in the region, or who are planning to do so in the future, are likely to remain wholly unaware about the wealth of local knowledge and experience these foundations hold. This may then reinforce the issues of lack of trust and lack of impact so feeding cycles that, finally, will not support the beneficiaries that all foundations operating in these countries wish to serve.

During this research, respondents have already offered to take its findings forward, for example – *"If this research can be a catalyst for a gathering around the region, let's do it. Leave the follow up to us... we will do what's needed to remain connected."* We would be pleased and privileged to be able to play an active part in these continuing developments.

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