

The Development of Civil Society in Chile in the 1990s and the Role of the NGO Sector¹
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In the last ten to fifteen years, many theorists have emphasized the potential of Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) to help create more active civil societies and responsive government in developing countries.² One reason for the emphasis on NGOs is that in recent years there has been an explosion in the number of these organizations throughout Latin America and the developing world more generally. For example, the IAF has published a guide that identified more than 20,000 NGOs in Latin America (IAF 1990). Internationally, Lester Salamon has claimed that as the size and strength of the state have decreased, we have seen a revolution in associational life throughout the developing and developed world (Salamon 1994:109).

In this paper, I address the question of what role Chilean NGOs have played in the development of civil society since the transition to democracy in 1990.³ By NGO I mean a not-for-profit organization that is involved in activities to advance the public good (as defined by the organization). With respect to promoting civil society, NGOs have been valued for strengthening the capacity of local organizations to organize collectively and express their demands to the state. Economist Thomas Carroll has labeled this activity “capacity building” (Carroll 1992). Second, NGOs have been valued for trying to influence public debate and policy making (Bebbington 1993:16) (Carroll 1992). NGOs do this through such activities as lobbying, distributing publications, networking with like-minded organizations and engaging in public debate. Third, NGOs have been valued for extending the bounds of civic debate by highlighting the needs of traditionally under represented sectors of society such as the poor, women, indigenous groups, and youth. While NGOs may engage in one or all of the roles discussed above, they may also define their role in society more narrowly and avoid such activities.

Chile provides an interesting case study to look at the role of NGOs in civil society. A large NGO community developed in Chile during the 1970s and 1980s. Many of these organizations were created in response to the political and economic policies of the military dictatorship. Collectively these organizations tend to share a culture that values citizen participation, basic human rights and social justice (Bengoa 1996:15-16). Given this history, one

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² Examples of this literature include Lehmann (1990:198-204); Reilly (1995:1-28); De Janvry and Sadoulet (1993); World Development Supplement (1987)

³ For the purposes of this paper I use the definition of civil society presented by Jean Cohen and Andrew Arato as “a sphere of social interaction between economy and state, composed above all of the intimate sphere(especially the family), the sphere of associations (especially voluntary associations), social movements, and forms of public communication (Cohen and Arato 1992:ix.”

might expect these organizations to adopt active roles in the 1990s. Second, Chile has a relatively high per capita GDP compared to many other countries in Latin America. Modernization theorists such as Seymour Lipset have traditionally argued that countries with higher levels of economic development will have a greater capacity to develop active civil societies than countries at lower levels of development (Lipset 1963:53). Finally, Chile has a less corrupt bureaucratic culture than many of its neighbors. A relatively effective bureaucracy is generally seen as beneficial for the development of an active civil society.

In investigating the role of NGOs following the transition to democracy, I analyze a survey of 28 NGOs conducted in 1997.⁴ The survey included NGOs that were working in Santiago and were concerned with issues of economic development.⁵ The traditional NGO community that opposed the military regime during the 1970s and 1980s continues to share a common set of values that emphasizes basic human rights, social justice and citizen participation.⁶ Since 1990, these NGOs have experienced a serious crisis in funding and identity that has left many of them considerably weakened. Simultaneously, new types of NGOs have formed. These new organizations tend to embrace more limited concepts of their role in society. They have strong ties to the business community and the political right and are more compatible with the neoliberal policies of the current Chilean government. To understand both the relative decline in capacity of traditional NGOs on the political center-left and the growth of NGOs on the political center and right, I focus on two variables. These are the cumulative effect of economic growth in recent years and the nature of the transition to democracy led by a coalition of center-left political parties.

Center-left NGOs

Eighteen of the thirty organizations in the survey fit within the common perception of Chilean NGOs as organizations that are politically on the center-left and whose culture and

⁴ This survey differs from most others that have looked at the work of NGOs in Chile since the transition to democracy. Most surveys have investigated what has happened to that part of the NGO sector that developed in response to the military regime. See for example Undurraga et al. (1990) and Corvalan (1996). By contrast, the goal of this survey is to investigate how the NGO sector as a whole has been influenced by the transition to democracy. Thus, a concerted effort was made to create a sample as representative as possible of the NGO population in general, not just those that developed in response to the Pinochet regime.

⁵ The decision was made to focus on NGOs working in Santiago to make the study more feasible. An estimated two-thirds of Chilean NGOs are located in Santiago. I focused on organizations concerned with issues of economic development because it is this group of organizations that has most often been the center of debate regarding democratization and the development of civil society.

⁶ Collectively, the organizations represented in this survey were engaged in a wide variety of activities and issue areas. Still, these NGOs tended to fall within three distinct subgroups that each had its own rather distinct culture and pattern of activities.

composition have largely been shaped by their opposition to the Pinochet regime. Within this group, about two-thirds of the NGOs are social action organizations.⁷ The rest are private research centers (PRC) that focus on academic research and policy debates.⁸ There is some overlap between these two groups. For example, many of the private research centers have departments dedicated to social action as well. At the time of the interviews, the average age of the center-left NGOs in the survey was 19 years old. The majority were formed between 1982 and 1991.

When asked how they see the role of their organization in society, center-left NGO leaders repeatedly emphasized that the role of their organization is to encourage participation, strengthen civil society and local organizations, give voice to the under represented in society and educate individuals about their rights and responsibilities. Many also emphasized the value of the organization in remaining autonomous of the state and providing criticism of government policies. A few directors emphasized the role of their organization as a link between the grassroots and the state.

As charts 1 and 2 illustrate, the activities these organizations conduct are consistent with the role they articulate for themselves. Of the three subgroups of NGOs identified in this survey, NGOs on the center-left are most likely to be involved in activities that tend to expand the scope of civil society. For example, these organizations are very involved in activities that focus on traditionally marginalized and under-represented sectors of the population. Fourteen of the eighteen (78%) center-left organizations surveyed have programs specifically targeting the poorest sectors of Chilean society. Seventy-eight percent of the organizations in this group have programs targeting youth. In addition, 72% of center-left NGOs have programs specifically geared toward women and women's issues.

Second, center-left NGOs are very involved in activities to build the capacity of grassroots organizations. These programs tend to have multiple purposes. First, NGO leaders are usually trying to teach technical skills such as bookkeeping, how to conserve electricity and water, how to organize meetings or apply for funding from the government. Simultaneously, these NGOs often try to create a greater solidarity among participants and an increased sense that collectively the individuals can influence the nature of their environment. Of the center-left organizations in this survey, 56% said they were involved in activities of technical assistance and 89% conducted training programs. In addition, 89% said that they work to strengthen local organizations. Seventy-two percent said they actively work to encourage participation in the communities with which they work.

Center-left NGOs are also very involved in activities to influence public debate and amplify their voice in society. Chart 3 shows an overview of ties NGOs have with various other organizations in Chilean society. NGOs on the center-left are most likely to be actively involved in networks with other NGOs. They are also most likely to join organizations devoted to specific

⁷These include El Telar, Taller Piret, Kairos, Tekhne, Las Alamedas, Celah/Decup, Serpade, Serpaj, La Viga, Las Urracas, Casa de la Paz, and Casa de la Mujer: la Morada.

⁸The organizations in the survey that fit this category include Ilades/Dial, Cide, Cesoc, Fundacion Frei, Icheh and ISIS.

issue areas or international networks of NGOs. For example, eight of the 18 center-left NGOs have rather extensive ties and memberships in umbrella organizations with other NGOs. Some of these networks focus primarily on exchange of ideas and information. Others are designed explicitly to amplify the voice of member organizations and influence public debate. Eight of the 18 organizations are members of ACCION, the main umbrella organization of Chilean NGOs.

Comparative perspective: changes in the center-left NGO sector since 1990

Having presented a general overview of the current activities of center-left NGOs, how has the work of these organizations changed since the transition? While these NGOs report little change in their core values since the transition to democracy, many have made rather dramatic shifts in the focus of their work. For most of the military dictatorship, NGOs could engage in only a narrow range of activities. As semi-clandestine actors, the majority of NGOs focused on local level programming and building the capacity of grassroots organizations.⁹ Thinktanks were able to publish and conduct elite-level seminars (Llades 1989:213-245)(Puryear 1994). However, during the military regime, there was little room for NGOs to try to influence public debate or the policy making. Following the transition to a democratically elected government, NGOs were freer to articulate their concerns and make policy recommendations. In addition, NGOs had many more points of access to try to influence public debate and policy making. As a result, among those center-left organizations included in this survey, at least four directors noted a major shift in the focus of their organization since 1990 away from grassroots activities and toward activities to influence public debate such as networking and lobbying.

In spite of the increased opportunities provided by the new democratic environment, the period of the 1990s has been a time of relative crisis and struggle for NGOs on the center-left. One reason for this crisis was that international aid to NGOs on the center-left declined greatly following the transition to democracy. During the military dictatorship, these NGOs became extremely dependent on international aid. It has been estimated that international donors channeled an average of US\$55 million dollars a year through Chilean NGOs to be used for a wide variety of programs and support for local organizations (Abalos and Egaña 1989:39). A 1993 study estimated that between 1989 and 1992, this international funding declined by 35%. They predicted that this decline could reach as high as 50% by 1993 (Miranda and Cancino 1993:10).

Besides this dramatic change in finances, center-left NGOs experienced a crisis of identity following the transition to democracy. Part of this crisis was due to the fact that these organizations experienced a weakening in their relationships with all of their major partners from the movement to restore democratic government. Even before the transition to democracy, the Catholic Church had begun to withdraw from the activist role it had adopted in the first half of the dictatorship. In addition, following the transition, participation in grassroots organizations,

⁹ NGO leaders often referred to this work as strengthening the social fabric (tejido social) of Chilean society. Whereas the military dictatorship tried to create a culture of isolation and alienation, NGOs hoped that by working with local organizations they could preserve and revitalize skills of democratic participation.

especially in poor neighborhoods decreased dramatically.¹⁰ Third, the reemergence of traditional parties on the center-left and the decision by the concertación government to adopt neoliberal economic policies created strains in the relationship between many center-left NGOs and political parties on the center-left. In addition, many NGOs suffered from a serious brain drain as a number of highly trained professionals decided to take jobs in government or the private sector.

In response to this dual crisis, the NGO leaders I interviewed reported that some organizations have disappeared since the transition to democracy. It is difficult to quantify the number of NGOs that have died since 1990. Many NGO leaders felt that the majority of NGO deaths took place in the first couple of years after the transition to democracy. At the same time, others noted that the decline has continued and will continue into the future as international aid continues to decline. In the course of my own research, I came across three organizations that had decided either to stop functioning all together or to become for-profit institutions. The majority of center-left NGOs that developed during the 1970s and 1980s continue to exist. Yet, even a number of these organizations have had to significantly downsize their staff and the scope of their activities to survive. Of the center-left organizations included in this survey, at least seven (39%) reported major downsizing since 1990.

Comparative Perspective: center-left NGOs in Chile and elsewhere

While NGOs in a number of Latin American countries have had to adjust to transitions to democracy, it appears that the degree of dislocation and crisis has been greater in Chile than in most other countries. For example, writing in 1990 Brian Smith detects no noticeable decline in the nonprofit sectors of those countries that had recently undergone transitions to democracy (Smith 1990:237).

An interesting comparison can be made by analyzing the fate of center-left NGOs in Chile since the transition to democracy compared to this same community in Brazil. The nonprofit sector in Brazil shared many of the same historical characteristics as the Chilean center-left NGO community. Both developed in response to a military dictatorship. In both countries, an active Catholic Church helped facilitate the growth of the NGO sector. In addition, in both countries the NGOs that developed during the military dictatorships were heavily dependent on foreign aid (Reilly 1995:13).

In spite of this common history, the degree of crisis of the Brazilian NGO community appears to have been considerably less than occurred in Chile. One observer of Brazilian NGOs noted that following the transition to a democratically elected government in 1985, the number and funding available to NGOs increased (Fausto 1987:11-13). Furthermore, the Brazilian NGO community has retained stronger relations than Chilean NGO sector with previous partners from the movement to restore democratic rule. As a result, it appears that in the post-transition period

¹⁰ For example, within poblaciones (urban poor communities) in Santiago, the research organization PET had catalogued the growth of OEPs (popular economic organizations) throughout the middle and late 1980s. 1991 was the last year PET conducted a city-wide survey of OEPs in Santiago. I interviewed a coordinator of that project who noted that one of the reasons PET decided to discontinue the survey was because of the dramatic decline in the presence of OEPs in the poblaciones (Interview Jaime del Pino, December 6, 1996).

the center-left Brazilian NGO community has played a much more active leadership role within civil society than have their Chilean counterparts. For example, in the early 1990s the NGO community in Brazil was active in organizing the Movement for Ethics in Politics that pushed for the investigation of then President Collor. Among other activities, the NGO community has also been actively involved in a nationwide campaign against hunger and poverty called the Citizen's Action Campaign (Garrison and Landim 1995)(de Souza 1995).

Some explanatory factors: Economic Growth and the nature of the transition to democracy

Both cumulative economic growth and the nature of the transition to democracy in Chile help explain the relative decline of NGOs on the center-left in Chile compared to Brazil. The transition to democracy in Chile was carried out by a coalition of well-established center-left political parties (the concertación) in an environment in which the former military elite continued to hold significant power. By contrast, in Brazil the transition to democracy was carried out by a coalition of not well-established parties in a situation where the military elite had been severely discredited by the poor performance of the Brazilian economy in the mid-1980s.

From a mass perspective, political scientist Patricia Hipsher has noted that where a transition to democracy is undertaken by preexisting political parties that have close ties to mass social movements, those movements are more likely to demobilize following the transition. She argues that those groups hurt by authoritarian rule are likely to calculate that it is in their interests to help maintain democratic government. Thus, these groups will tend to demobilize rather than risk threatening democratic stability (Hipsher 1994:426). Given the nature of the transitions in Chile versus Brazil, Hipsher is not surprised to find a greater demobilization of social actors in Chile compared to Brazil.

In addition, theorists who focus on the structure of political opportunities such as Sidney Tarrow have noted that where a divided elite exists, it is easier for social actors to engage in collective action (Tarrow 1996:56). Conversely, where elites are more united, it is easier for the state to shape the environment of social actors. This appears to be the case in post-transition Chile. Here, a consensus existed among political elite to continue the general framework of neoliberal economic policies that had been initiated during the Pinochet regime. For example, in the area of social policies, the Aylwin administration did not radically alter the social policies of the previous administration.

Within this framework of free market economic policies, the newly elected government did want to try to balance some of the excesses of the previous era. For this reason, the Aylwin administration created a series of new institutions such as FOSIS (Fondo de Solidaridad e inversion social) targeting the poorest sectors of society, INJ (Instituto Nacion de la Juventud), and SERNAM. The goal of these institutions was to integrate previously marginalized groups into the marketplace and the broader society. A week before Aylwin took office, the President-elite and key ministers addressed a conference of NGO leaders to discuss the role they envisioned for the NGOs sector. With a few exceptions, the main role speakers identified for NGOs was to help implement government social programs and increase legitimacy in the new social order (Cooperación y Democracia 1990).

To fund these new social programs, the concertación government created a new agency called AGCI to recruit international aid. Wanting to help fortify the new democratic regime in

Chile, international donors gave generously to AGCI. NGOs could apply to government agencies to implement projects. However, the restrictions attached to government funding were much greater than those imposed by international donors. Overall, by redirecting international aid to the state and narrowly defining the role of NGOs in Chilean society, the Chilean state has tried to control the work of the NGO sector.

Adding to the difficulties of center-left NGOs, by 1990 Chile had reached a level of economic development that made it no longer a high priority for development aid. Following the transition to a democratically elected government, many foreign donors began to dramatically downsize or phase out their aid programs to Chile all together. For example, in 1996 USAID closed its office in Chile.

Strategies for coping with the post-transition environment

Much of the center-left NGO community has been disappointed with the policies of both the Aylwin and Frei administrations. It was assumed that because the new democratic regime was made up of a coalition of center-left political parties, a number of whom had worked in NGOs during the military dictatorship, the new government would be receptive to input from the NGO community. Many within the center-left NGO community feel that their suggestions were not listened to by either the Aylwin or Frei regime. Especially among social action organizations, leaders complain about the limited role that has been designated for NGOs within the framework of the state's social policies. In interviews, NGO leaders on the center-left frequently emphasized that they fear losing their autonomy and becoming "executors of state policies" (*ejecutores de políticas públicas*) (Bengoa 1996:21). In addition, many center-left NGO leaders express serious reservations regarding the neoliberal orientation of the government's social policies.¹¹

As a result of reservations about the social policies of the concertacion government and the desire to maintain their autonomy, a number of center-left NGOs have worked hard to limit their funding from government sources. One director I interviewed said her organization was about to go out of business rather than continue to be funded by the government.

Chart 4 shows that 15 of 17 NGOs (88%) surveyed on the center-left received funding from government ministries in 1996. Four of the 17 organizations report receiving funding from municipal governments during the same period. These NGOs are moving toward greater reliance and partnership with the state. At the same time, this funding makes up 50% or more of the organizations' total funding in only three cases. This suggests a general wariness on the part of NGOs in becoming over-dependent on state funding.

Since the transition, a number of center-left NGOs have begun experimenting with strategies to become more financially self-sufficient. One such strategy is to charge fees for services that the organization provides. For example, in the spring of 1997, the organization Casa de la Paz began charging for its workshops on environmental issues. Environmental concerns are currently raising interest among the urban and rural poor, indigenous groups in the south and parts of the urban middle class that are concerned with issues of environmental degradation and air quality. The role of women in society is another area where coalitions from

¹¹Interview with sociologist and former President of ACCION, Gonzalo de la Maza, March 10, 1997 and Director of Las Alamedas, Enrique Ramirez F., April 25, 1997.

different sectors of society are being created.

While Casa de la Paz may be successful at adopting a fee for service approach without abandoning its commitment to marginalized sectors of society, this strategy can create serious dilemmas for NGOs on the center-left. Their traditional constituents tend to be poor and marginalized within society. Often these groups cannot afford to pay the full price for the services that the NGO provides. In adopting a strategy of fee for service, organizations sell their services either to government agencies, to businesses or middle class groups. The danger is that these activities may encourage the NGO to shift its orientation away from those most in need to more affluent parts of society.

A few leaders of NGOs on the center-left have also adopted initiatives to attract donations from the business community. For example, Tekhne (an organization that focuses on appropriate technology use) recently began to make contacts with businesses in the neighborhoods where the organization works. The director of the organization noted that the program was just beginning but that in general she pointed to a lack of a culture of giving within the business community as a serious obstacle to finding partners in the private sector.¹²

A significant sector of the business community in Chile at least tacitly supported and benefitted from the military dictatorship. The cultural divide is still fairly deep between those who supported the military regime and those who opposed it. In general, when I questioned NGO leaders about the potential for partnerships with the business community, their response was similar to that of the director of Las Alamedas. He noted that his organization has a long history of working with labor unions. They are known in the community for this work. Thus, the director argued it would be very difficult to try to establish partnerships with the business sector.¹³

While the character of NGOs on the political center-left is still emerging in the post-transition era, a few general trends are becoming apparent. Overall, there seems to be a growing bifurcation among center-left NGOs. On the one hand, since 1990, we see a growth in the number of organizations that have become advocacy organizations, engaged in activities of lobbying for policy reform, organizing public discussions and networking with like-minded organizations. As international aid declines, some of these organizations are being pushed to adopt charge fees for their services in order to continue to exist and maintain at least partial autonomy from the state. The danger with this approach is that they may become increasingly oriented toward more affluent sectors of society that are willing to pay for these services and gradually reduce the time they spend on advocating for the interests of more under-represented sectors of society. On the other hand, in this survey we see the continued presence of social action organizations or grassroots support organizations that work in poor communities and with the most marginalized sectors of society. These organizations are becoming increasingly dependent on funding by national and local government agencies. The danger here is that these organizations may be losing their capacity to be a critical voice of government policies.

¹²Interview Director of Tekhne, Andriana Torealba, March 5, 1997.

¹³Interview Director of Las Alamedas, Enrique Ramirez F., April 25, 1997.

NGOs in the political center

The second group of NGOs that emerges from the interviews is a collection of NGOs in the political center.¹⁴ A few of these organizations have been around since the 1950s and 1960s. Many within this grouping have come into existence since the beginning to Chile's transition to democracy. The uniting idea behind these organizations is a faith in adopting technical solutions to development problems. Many of these organizations focus on technical problems such as providing credit and teaching business skills to microenterprises in poor communities.

A number of the center NGOs have close connections to the Chilean business community (see chart 5). In all, five of the center organizations were founded either by individual business men or with significant support from groups of successful entrepreneurs. This involvement by the business community at the earliest stages of these organizations' conception is much different from the relations we saw between center-left NGOs and the business community. While center-left NGOs have little tradition of working with business partners and are now having difficulty forming such relations because of cultural and historical differences, center NGOs report good relations with the business community.¹⁵

Compared to NGOs on the center-left, center NGOs tend to define their role in society much more narrowly. For example, a number of center-left NGOs conduct activities of capacity building at the local level, working to develop the organizational strength of local organizations and the ability of local participants to organize collectively after the NGO has left. By contrast, most center NGO leaders do not emphasize a similar ethic of societal solidarity. For example, within this survey only one center NGO actively worked to create local organizations. Only two center NGOs conducted activities to fortify existing local organizations and only one organization listed encouraging participation as an important part of their work (See charts 2 and 3). Instead, to the extent that they stress a broader societal goal, it was to enhance the country's economic development.

In addition, center NGOs have relatively little interest in activities designed to influence public debate or policy making such as publishing or promoting forums for discussion. None of those interviewed said that their organization was involved in organizing public talks. Only one of organization was involved in lobbying. Two center NGOs (33%) were involved in publications and research. In Chart 4 one can see that compared to center-left NGOs, center NGOs are much less likely to have established ties with other organizations or be a part of formalized national or international issue networks. While all organizations reported some ties with like-minded NGOs and international organizations (mostly in the form of current or past donors), of the three subgroups of NGOs identified in the survey, these ties were weakest among center NGOs. Overall, these organizations tend to act in isolation.

Whereas the transition to democracy and economic growth have been difficult for NGOs on the center-left, these same factors have helped the development of NGOs on the political center. First, the nature of economic growth over the last twenty years has helped to develop a

¹⁴ These organizations include Invica/Covicoop, Cegades, CPC, Finam, Propesa, Fpd, Fundacion Millahae.

¹⁵ Interview Mauricio Feller Shleyer, Propesa, April 22, 1997.

new entrepreneurial class in Chile. Philanthropic giving has been rather weak in Chile even within the context of Latin America (Smith 1982). In comparative perspective one reason for the weak philanthropic tradition in Chile appears to be that Chile's entrepreneurial class has been closely intertwined with the landed elite and state interests (Stallings 1978) (Petras 1969: 66). This elite tended to see society as a zero-sum situation in which if benefits were given to the poor, their own class would suffer (Petras 1969:81). Over the last twenty years, the adoption of a more market-oriented approach to economic development has generated new types of entrepreneurs in Chile. For some of these new entrepreneurs, helping less privileged parts of society have greater economic resources is no longer seen as a zero-sum situation. Instead, investing in microenterprises may be seen as a way to invest in future consumers and an expanded business class.

In addition, a number of center NGO leaders noted that the transition to democracy created expectations of a more stable future. As a result, various business groups decided that the transition to democracy provided a good time to form nonprofit organizations. In this survey four organizations (Millahue, Finam, Propesa and Cegades) all were formed as part of this trend. A number of these organizations also benefitted by the growing international desire to support the development of small businesses and entrepreneurship in less developed countries. Finam and Propesa both received considerable international help from the Inter-American Development Bank and other international institutions that support the development of microenterprises. The transition to democracy in ways gave these organizations greater access to international financing because of expectations that the political situation in Chile would now be more stable.

NGOs on the Political Right

A third noteworthy but smaller group within the survey and the NGO sector overall is a grouping of nonprofit academic centers with strong links to the political center-right. Among the organizations included in the survey, three such organizations fit into this category.¹⁶ All three of the organizations on the political right in this survey are interested in cultural and social issues such as the environment, the role of religion, and women in Chilean society. A significant number are also deeply committed to market-oriented development. A few such as CEP, and the Institute of Liberty and Development were created by former ministers during the Pinochet regime in an effort to insure that neoliberal reforms initiated during the 1970s and 1980s would continue.

Similar to many of the politically active organizations on the center-left, NGOs on the political right are deeply committed to influencing public debate and amplifying their voice in society (See charts 1 and 2). They are strongly involved in publishing and research (100%) and organizing forums for debate and speaker series (100%). Leaders of these organizations are very open in saying that one of their major goals is to influence public opinion and policy makers. Some of these organizations have rather close ties to political parties on the right in a similar way

¹⁶ The center-right organizations in the survey are Centro de Estudios Publicos (CEP), Instituto de Libertad y Desarrollo (ILD), and Fundacion Guzman. Other organizations generally included in this grouping are the Fundacion Kast, the Instituto de Libertad that has close connections to the National Renovation party, and Fundacion de Desarrollo y Seguridad (Cancino 1996:50).

that a subgroup of center-left organizations such as ICHEH has close ties to political parties at the other end of the political spectrum.

Compared to organizations on the center-left that show a similar value on influencing public debate, these organizations tend to focus much more on the elite level of society and emphasize relations with decision makers. As one can see from chart 1 and 2, NGOs on the political right are not involved in activities of capacity building or local level development programs.

In terms of financing, NGOs on the political right have remained much more independent of government financing compared to NGOs on the center-left (See chart 4). Publications are an important means center-right NGOs to finance themselves. All three of these centers publish journals and books. The target markets for these publications are middle and upper class individuals, businesses and politicians. Comparatively in Chilean society, these are groups that can afford to pay for services and publications. NGOs on the political right also tend to receive considerable donations from the business community.

Like the other parts of the NGO sector, center-right NGOs have benefited from well-targeted international funding. This funding has come primarily from organizations with conservative leanings in both the U.S and Europe.¹⁷ All three of the center-right NGOs in this survey have used international support to help fund big projects such as publishing books. At the same time, center-right NGOs have remained less dependent on international funding compared to NGOs on the center-left.

As with center NGOs, the transition to democracy provided the impetus for the creation of a number of center-right NGOs. Two of the center-right NGOs in this survey were formed during the transition period by individuals with connections to the Pinochet government who wanted to continue to influence policy making (See chart 5). The founders of these organizations appear to have decided that the creation of a thinktank offered them a useful forum for influencing public debate. At the same time, founding a thinktank allowed these individuals to avoid much of the political baggage associated with political parties and greater intellectual autonomy. Political scientist Daniel Levy has noted a growth in thinktanks on the political right throughout Latin America (Levy 1996: 154-156).

Conclusion: A note on the consequence of the shifting NGO sector for Chile and beyond

Chile has a sizeable NGO community of considerable complexity and diversity. At least in the short term, strong economic growth and the transition to democracy have tended to weaken NGOs on the center-left. These organizations have seen a weakening of their relations with all of their former partners in the post-transition era. With declining international aid, these NGOs have increasingly been forced to choose between maintaining their autonomy from the state and working with those most marginalized in society. Ironically, it is these organizations that have shown the deepest commitment to activities designed to expand participation and civil society.

Simultaneously, the transition to democracy in many ways favored the development of NGOs on the political right and center that have defined for themselves more limited roles in

¹⁷These organizations include the Tinker Foundation (US), the International Republican Institute (US) and the Hanns Siedel Foundation (German).

Chilean society. These organizations are characterized by stronger connections with the Chilean business community and political parties on the center-right.

This case study of Chile raises questions about the domestic capacity of developing countries to create and sustain NGO communities valued by observers for expanding civil society. As suggested at the beginning of this paper, Chile is in many ways success case. It has experienced high levels of economic growth and has a relatively efficient bureaucracy. Yet, at least in the short term, economic growth has meant the increasing decline of international aid. In addition, because of socioeconomic divisions and the existing structure of society, domestic actors are not likely to replace the funding patterns of international actors. Instead, new organizations are developing. These organizations show a general acceptance of democracy. At the same time, these organizations are adopting more limited conceptions of their role in society. In the absence of a reevaluation of the value of NGOs by state actors or a renewal of international aid (both of which appear highly unlikely), this shift in terrain appears to be long term.

Chart 1: Issue Areas NGOs involved in

	Center-left (n=18)	Center (n=7)	Right (n=3)
Education	50%	14%	100%
Health	50%	14%	33%
Participation	72%	14%	100%
Women	72%	0	67%
Culture	39%	0	33%
Environment	39%	29%	67%
Unions	28%	0	33%
Housing	22%	29%	0
Local Development	72%	57%	0
Microenter- prises	33%	71%	0
Average # Areas	4.78	1.67	4.3

(Note: those interviewed could give more than one response).

Chart 2: Activities NGOs are involved in

	Center-left NGOs (n=18)	Center NGOs (n=6)	Right NGOs (n=3)
Credit	11%	43%	0
Technical Assistance	56%	71%	67%
Training/ Education	89%	57%	67%
Material Assistance	22%	0	0
Formation Monitors	67%	29%	0
Creation of Organizations	44%	14%	0
Strengthening Organizations	89%	29%	33%
Publications/ Research	67%	29%	100%
Organize forums for debate, talks	50% (9)	0	100%
Lobbying	28% (5)	14% (1)	33% (1)
Personal Development	50% (9)	29% (2)	33% (1)

Chart 3: Ties with other actors in society

	Center-left (n=18)	Center (n=7)	Center- Right (n=3)
Informal ties like-minded organizations	100%	100%	100%
Close ties political parties	11%	0	33%
Member national network concerned with a specific issue area	44%	0	0
Member ACCION-umbrella organization for NGOs	44%	0	0
Member ASONG-Organization of NGOs/ connected to CEPAL	16%	0	0
Ties to a University	11%	14%	33%
Informal ties to grassroots organizations	39%	0	0
Informal ties international organizations/ individuals	100%	100%	100%
Member of Formal international Network concerned with a specific issue area	28%	14%	0

Chart 4: Source of Funding

	Left/Center NGOs (n=17)*	Center NGOs (n=6)*	Right NGOs (n=3)
<u>International</u>			
Foreign Govts	47%	0	33%
INGOs	94%	17%	100%
IOs	21%	33%	0
<u>Domestic</u>			
Private Businesses	18%	17%	33%
Government Ministries	88%	83%	0
Regional govt	12%	0	0
Municipalities	24%	17%	0
Donations from Individuals	18%	17%	67%
Other	0	50%	0

*Missing data for two organizations.

Chart 5: Societal origins of Chilean NGOs

	Center-left n=18	Center n=7	Right n=3
Catholic Church	39%*	29%	0
Professionals/ Returning Exiles	22%	0	0
Political party leaders	17%	0	33%
University Students	11%	0	0
Evangelical Church	6%	0	0
International Affiliation	6%	14%	0
Private Business leaders	0	71%	66%
Former ministers during the Pinochet era	0	0	66%
State	0	0	0

* Included in this category are four organizations that originally had their origins with the Catholic Church but eventually separated from the Church to become autonomous organizations. Two of these organizations left the the Church umbrella in the mid-1980s as a result over differences with the Church on issues of reproductive rights and other issues of the role of women in Chilean society (See una puerta for more). The other two groups created independent organizations during the transition to democracy as the Church withdrew from the social activist role it had taken on during the military dictatorship.

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