

The Role of Civil Society Organizations in promoting Peace and Economic Development

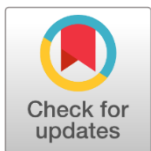
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Abstract: Change is a fundamental human right. Without apparent change, nations struggle to advance economically. Change for peace to prevail is a contemplated philosophy from reality when sectors that stir peace are misaligned. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are the relevant third sector, yet the treatment of civil society by the first sector - the public sector - is indifferent. This study justifies civil society role in promoting peace and economic development. Counting diplomatic missions and multilateral agencies part in stirring peace and development, it recommends, collaborative, harmonious exchanges and relationships within the three sectors – public, private and the civil society – for the sake of proper peace and economic development for the wellbeing of citizens and nations. The study examined 41 individuals with familiarities in civil society were sampled. One-Way ANOVA technique was employed to test the hypotheses. The test results show significant associations between: economic advancement and peace; and CSOs actions in peace promotion and economic enhancement.

Keywords: CSOs, Civil Society Organizations, Development, Economic Development, Peace, Peace Promotion.

1. Introduction

Peace and development interventions take place in a wide range of contexts in democratically free worlds. This suggests, that the level of a nation's economic advancement is inherently dependent on the level of democratic freedom. This study narrows the wider democratic freedom to development level. Should there be any relationship between peace and development, it's imperative to suggest that the level of peace mirrors the level of development experienced. Where Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) advocates, defendants, activists, employees, journalists are detained. Does this suggest that CSOs role in peace and economic development is undermined? Civil society (CS) get involve in peacebuilding and development work to improve

individuals, communities and nations wellbeing. Peace means freedom of expression, work, live and interactions. Economic development is implementation of policies, processes and actions that improve the welfare and being of individuals, communities and states (nations) as a whole. Should individuals advanced, communities would advance, the country too would. The coin is same on either side, if the country and communities advanced, individuals or citizens would advance as well. CSOs actions drive peaceful changes in areas unlooked. This is what the Overton Window is basically about. Apparent change enables countries to advanced economically. Where change is resisted, rights are violated. Peace and economic development are rights, held back in parts of the world. CSOs actions are centered on peace, environment, human and economic advancement

amongst others. CSOs advocacy to peace and economic advancement endeavours are undermined where there are conflicting interests. The assumption has been that governments support peace and development. If true, then, does the CS play role in promoting peace and economic development? [Ghaus-Pasha \(2004\)](#), among many impeters, states that authoritarian political control, rule and colonialism retarded the advancement of the third sector from developing in developing nations. Civil Society is the third sector.

2. Literature review

2.1 The Role of CSOs

According to [Ghaus-Pasha \(2004\)](#), civil society concept goes back many centuries in Western thinking, rooted in Ancient Greece. Modern era of civil society emerged in the 18th Century, under the influence of Thomas Paine and George Hegel, political theorists. The notion of civil society was developed as a domain parallel to and separate from the states ([Cerothers, 1999](#)). In the 1990s civil society interest was renewed. This was possible because of democratic opinions through democracy preachers opened the space for civil society with the unbiased opinion to cover the increasing gaps in delivering social services.

Civil society is a sphere of social interaction between the household, family and the state which is manifested in the norms of community, cooperatives, structures of voluntary association and networks of public communication... norms, values of trust, reciprocity, tolerance and inclusion, which are critical to cooperation and community problem solving, structure of association refers to the full range of informal and formal organization through which citizens pursue common interests ([Veneklasen, 1994 & 2003](#)).

[Connor \(1999\)](#) civil society is composed of autonomous associations which develop a dense, diverse and pluralistic network. As it develops, civil society will consist of a range of local groups, specialized organizations and linkages between them to amplify the corrective voices of civil society as a partner in governance and the market.

Civil society has been widely recognized as an essential 'third' sector ([Ghaus-Pasha 2004](#)).

Civil society can have a positive influence on the state and the market. Civil society organizations have significance importance as agents for promoting good governance, transparency, effectiveness, openness, accountability and responsiveness. Good governance could be fostered by; policy analysis and advocacy, regulation and monitoring of state performance, actions and behavior of government officials, documenting evidence and investigation of public opinion cases, private and public sectors, construct social capital and empowering citizens to identify and speak their values, beliefs, democratic practices and civic norms, by forming alliances to cater for the needs of the vulnerable and marginalized populations and participate in public and political affairs. Civil society get involve in peacebuilding and development work to improve individuals, communities and nations wellbeing.

The contributions of CSOs as Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have pushed for recognition by international financial institutions such as the World Bank see them as strategic partners in fighting the peaceful war against poverty. In this CSOs act as intermediaries between providers of financial and technical assistance and the poor communities unexploited by the forces of modernization and change, and abandoned by governments into the hands of both local and international development organizations. [Veltmeyer \(2008\)](#) enthused, 'Development' was conceived within the optics of a new paradigm that valorized 'popular participation' and grassroots self-development that is initiated 'from below' from within civil society.

3. Research Objective

This research has the following objectives;

- i) To attest whether CSOs actions (activities) promote peace and economic development.
- ii) To ascertain the association between economic advancement and peace.

4. Methodology

The study sampled some 41 individuals with familiarities in CSOs actions, activities or works for the purpose of primarily investigating the existence of an association of CSOs activities

with peace promotion and economic prosperity in the society. Their responses were broken-down in 5 groups and with some groups recording respondents' frequencies of less than 5. This statistical observation favoured the application of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) parametric statistical test technique for testing the hypotheses over Chi Square. With this One-Way ANOVA was used, to investigate the existence of association within the identified variables. The variables included; Economic development (advancement), Peace promotion or simply Peace and CSOs actions to including activities, actions or works of CSOs. With some frequencies of respondents below 5, Chi Square test would have not been suitable irrespective of the outcome of the test results. Thus, making whatever results of association between the variables to be irrelevant and of no significance.

ANOVA was founded by Ronald Fisher in 1918 and it is being used to determine whether the means of independent variables are different or equal between the groups of respondents. One-Way ANOVA compares the resulting F test statistics value, p-value with the significance level of 5% or 0.05 to help the researcher decides whether the results are significant or not. A p-value of below or equal to 0.05 would be interpreted that the results are significant, while a p-value of above the significance level of 0.05 would be interpreted that the results are not significant.

5. Results

This section presents the results of the three null hypotheses under examination in this study obtained via One-Way ANOVA using IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBMSPSS) to analyze the data collected for the study. The hypotheses are;

- i) Hypothesis One (H_1): Economic advancement could not be attained through CSOs Actions.
- ii) Hypothesis Two (H_2): Peace promotion could not be realized via CSOs Actions.
- iii) Hypothesis Three (H_3): Economic Advancement could not be achieved by promoting peace in the society.

5.1 Economic and Peace Advancement by CSOs Actions

To evaluate CSOs actions in economic and peace advancement the following hypotheses were stated, tested and their results obtained.

Hypothesis One (H_1): Economic advancement could not be attained through CSOs Actions

Results One (R_1): The means between and within groups of respondents' opinions were obtained and compared for the independent variable 'Economic advancement' in relation to opinions on CSOs actions and the test result shows significant with a p-value of 0.000 which is less than the significance level of 0.05. This suggests that there could be significant evidence that CSOs actions could enhance economic advancement. Thus, the null hypothesis, that economic advancement could not be attained through CSOs action is rejected.

Hypothesis Two (H_2): Peace promotion could not be realized via CSOs Actions

Results Two (R_2): In comparing the means between and within groups of respondents for the independent variable 'Peace promotion' in relation to the opinions on CSOs actions, the test result shows significant with a p-value of 0.000 which is by far less than the significance level of 0.05. This affirms that there could be significant evidence that CSOs actions could promote peace in the society. Thus, the null hypothesis, that peace promotion could not be realized via CSOs action is rejected.

The outputs of the One-Way ANOVA for the two hypotheses with CSO actions as a constant factor are shown in [table 1](#).

5.2 Economic Advancement by Peace Promotion

To assess the connection between economic advancement and peace promotion the following hypothesis was stated, verified and the results obtained.

Table 1 ONEWAY Economic Advancement, Peace Promotion BY CSO Actions

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df
On a scale of 5, How would you rate CSOs involvement in Economic Advancement?	Between Groups	39.382	4
	Within Groups	16.667	36
	Total	56.049	40
On a scale of 5, How would you rate CSOs involvement in Peace Promotion in the Nation?	Between Groups	38.454	4
	Within Groups	16.571	36
	Total	55.024	40

ANOVA

		Mean Square	F	Sig.
On a scale of 5, How would you rate CSOs involvement in Economic Advancement?	Between Groups	9.846	21.266	.000
	Within Groups	.463		
	Total			
On a scale of 5, How would you rate CSOs involvement in Peace Promotion in the Nation?	Between Groups	9.613	20.885	.000
	Within Groups	.460		
	Total			

Table 2 ONEWAY Economic Advancement BY Peace Promotion

ANOVA

On a scale of 5, How would you rate CSOs involvement in Economic Advancement?

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	32.260	4	8.065	12.205	.000
Within Groups	23.789	36	.661		
Total	56.049	40			

Hypothesis Three (H₃): Economic Advancement could not be achieved by promoting peace in the society

Results Three (R₃): By comparing the means between and within groups of respondents for the independent variable 'Economic Advancement' in relation to the opinions on peace promotion, the test result shows significant with a p-value of 0.000 which is by far less than the significance level of 0.05. This affirms that there could be significant evidence that economic advancement could be achieved by prevailing peace in the society. Therefore, the null hypothesis, that economic advancement could not be achieved by promoting peaceful living is rejected.

The result of the One-Way ANOVA for the hypothesis with peace promotion as a constant factor is shown in table 2.

6. Discussions

6.1 The Role of CSO actions in economic and peace advancement

Economic development and peace are socially valued services and if democratic opinions holders and democracy preachers value the concept of autonomy and freedom, activities of the civil society in relation to economic and peace advancement in the society would be paramount to them.

CSOs extensively recognized as providers of relief and promoter of human rights, such organizations are now increasingly viewed as critical contributors to economic growth and civic and social infrastructure essential for a minimum quality of life for the people (Salamon and Anheier 1997; Fukuyama 1995; OECD 1995). Ghaus-Pasha (2004) affirmed that civil society has been widely recognized as an essential third sector after the public and private sectors. Hermoso and Luca (2005) resolved that Social work practice in countries which have been broken by authoritarian rule runs parallel to the trajectory of broadening democratic space and building and strengthening the structures for a more substantive democracy. In this allusive mind, they cautiously affirm civil society as a sector that can aid the state and the market in pursuing local development and nation-building through peacebuilding actions. While John (2006), held that emphasis on economic initiatives

should not be seen as diminishing the importance of CSOs who are primarily concerned with governance and administrative capacity-building. Their role is in all respects complementary. Economic development benefits from government transparency and accountability and as such CSOs who enhance government technical expertise may contribute both to democracy-building, peacebuilding and economic development. Veltmeyer (2008) acknowledged that the idea of civil society has achieved prominence in political and development discourse and agreed that the civil society enhance local development. This would be evident in communities that peaceful activities and peacefully living together are being promoted.

Robin Edward Poulton is in the opinion that CSOs have key roles in peace, disarmament and demobilization, destruction of weapons stocks and rehabilitation (DDR). CSOs together with community-based organizations (CBOs) can also play a significant role in disarmament and in disarmament, demobilization and destruction of weapons (DDR). The general processes of their role have prompted experts to crave the connotation 3D4R. 3D4R refers to: Disarmament, Demobilization, Destruction of weapons, Reinsertion, Reintegration, Rehabilitation and Reconciliation. All these CSOs could do to ensure a peaceful living society. Peace refers to freedom of speech, movement, work, live, ceasefire and equality and right of participation in actions of welfare. Peacebuilding or peace promotion relates all those activities and actions that enhance freedom of speech, movement, work, live, ceasefire, equality and rights of participation in the wellbeing of individuals and citizens of a state.

World Economic Forum (2013), agreed to the changing roles of CSOs in that civil society actors are demonstrating their value as facilitators, conveyors, conveners and innovators as well as service providers and advocates, while the private sector is playing an increasingly visible and effective role in tackling societal challenges. Renewed interest in the role of faith is identifying powerful sources of social capital. In the light of discussions, it is obvious that civil society roles in preventing war and building peace have made them agents for change concluded (Barnes, 2006).

6.2 Economic Advancement and Peace

Pope Paul VI, speaking to the United Nations in 1964, affirmed that development is the new name for peace. Economic development is the collective, effective implementation and realisation of policies, processes and actions that improve the welfare of the citizens of the country and make individuals, communities and the country economy prosperous. This means that a peaceful environment would help facilitate the prosperity of individuals, communities and the country economic systems as a whole. CSOs are strategic partners in fighting the peaceful war against poverty and inequalities. CSOs actions in alleviating poverty and inequalities stir improvement in standards of living which in turns enhance development of the individuals and the economy.

Peace advancement should not be seen as the only factor to enhance economic advancement. Equal and proportionate inclusion of the activities of the public, private and civil society should be applied. The government and private sector should be willing to provide and invest the much-needed capital to inspire economic development. Though peace is fundamental, economic freedom entails more than just peace. [Alesina and Perotti \(1996\)](#) resolved that income inequality causes to socio-political instability and it has negative relationship with investment. While, political instability negatively effects the growth in Africa by migration of skilled humans and reduction of investment ([Fosu, 1992](#)). Political instability has significant negative effects with growth ([Alesina and Alberto, 1996](#)). Sociopolitical instability negatively affects physical capital accumulation hence economic performances (growth) ([Fielding, 2003](#)). In a study that, evaluated the impact of peace on economic growth in developing countries, [Santhirasegarm, \(2008\)](#), found out that, peacebuilding capacity is correlated positively with all measure of physical and human accumulation. Per capita physical capital accumulation is highly correlated with peace building capacity positively. Higher degree of peace building capacity increases the physical capital accumulation and concluded that fundamental determinants of economic growth such as conflict for self-determination, various types of discriminations, regime types, durability of regime, social capacity for building peace and conflict with neighborhood are playing important

role through the peace building capacity in determination of economic growth in developing countries rather than proximate determinants of growth such as capital, labour, technology and liberal market economic policies.

7. Conclusion

CSOs are spirited for development, disarmament, ceasefire works, conflict resolution, good governance, speaking, monitoring, whistleblowing and settling agreement peacefully. The notion has been that governments support peace and development. If this is true, then, do CSOs have roles in promoting peace and economic development? If CSOs actually do as the test results exemplify, why the indifference in behaviours between government officials and civil society activists? Had the hypotheses test results not shown meaningful relationships between CSOs actions, economic and peace advancement, it would have not surprised the world of development researchers, peace studies, builders and advocates and sociologists. This is obvious, in some countries in the world and mostly African countries, there have been peace for a long period; 15, 20 years or more, with CSOs presence, yet with insignificant economic advancement and majority of them are still developing nations under the World Bank classification of rich and poor countries. While on the hand, Republic of South Africa, stands out with tremendous progress in economic prosperity despite the long periods of historical unsteadiness. As observed it means there should just be more that peace and peaceful leadership are required to stir development.

As the test results show; one would love to think that, CSOs activities could collectively influence economic prosperity and promote peace in the society where, there is advancement in public development policies, processes and actions supported by equal private sector involvement in economic development policies, processes and actions assuming that there is the will for peace and development in the society. In this case CSOs actions and activities would complement the missing third link to advance economic prosperity and peace in the country. This would be possible through the existence of collective and harmonious exchanges and relationships within the public, private and the civil society sectors of the country.

The would-be genuine respect and compliance with the rule of law of and on the opinions, intentions and actions of all parties in the different sectors, human rights would be respected, untouched and unviolated in the constant changing society and world.

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