The Role of Civil Society inPeace Building in Somalia

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ABSTRACT

The role of civil society organizations in peacebuilding and reconstruction has gained significant attention over the last fifty years. Today, the main question is whether civil society organizations have an impact on peacebuilding efforts in the world, especially in third world countries or not. It is within this context, that this paper examines the role of civil society in peacebuilding in Somalia. It provides a better understanding of the roles of civil society, its functions, and its involvement in peacebuilding and reconstruction. The study argued that civil society in Somalia contributes to supporting peacebuilding process in a variety of ways, including advocacy, facilitation, conflict resolution, protection, human rights, service provision, and implementing an awareness campaign to promote a culture of peace. This study employs a qualitative data research method and official document analysis from government institutions, international organizations, and scholarly publications. The study further discusses the important role that civil society plays in conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts in Somalia.

Keywords: *Somali, civil society, democracy, election, development, civil war, peacebuilding.*

INTRODUCTION

In past centuries, the world has experienced civil wars and enormous violence against human being and the intensity of these civil wars and conflicts have often been very dramatic (Kayamibwa, samul 1998). Also, the last fifty years of 20 centuries an estimated 86 million people have been killed in conflicts and civil wars (Bassioni, 1994) Moreover, a review of the literature shows that at the beginning of the 20th centuries, nearly 60 countries are either in conflict or have recently come out of conflicts. Many of these countries are under the category of "developing or third world countries". Somalia, for example, is one of the countries in the world that recently come out a civil war that destroyed all the necessary institutions, the basic infrastructure and caused the loss of public property. Thus, states fail when they cannot be able to provide basic services to their citizens and lose legitimacy. (Bizimana, 2013)

Despite these challenges civil society has been contributing to the peacebuilding process, reconstruction efforts in Somalia for the last 20 years. Today, civil society is a crucial actor in peacebuilding efforts in the world, especially in post-conflict societies. This has been reflected in the scholarly work by Lewis (2002), Seligman

(1992) Linack and Jefrey (1982) Salamon and Anheier (1997) and many other scholars who view civil society organizations as a critical actor in peacebuilding, human rights promotion, and enforcing democracy in post-conflict societies. It's is within this context that, this study examines the role of civil society organizations in peacebuilding and reconstruction in Somalia by giving attention to how civil society's involvement in peacebuilding, human rights, protection, service provision, accountability, transparency, participation, education, women empowerment, democracy and promoting good governance practices, are crucial for Somalia's willing to archive peace and stability. Likewise, the study pays attention to civil society's activities and the result they have achieved for the last 20 years.

According to Harpviken and Kjellman 2004 and Barnes 2005 stated that promoting peace, reconciliation, organizing conflict management forums, building bridges, trust and interdependence between conflict groups and promoting human rights and social justice are the basic identities and contribution of civil society towards building peace.

According to World Bank when states lost its control and were unable to provide basic service

to their societies it promotes civil society organizations to fill that space and to support their societies most effectively and efficiently. (World Bank, 2005) Nonetheless, civil society has grown to become a prominent global practice and research theme and has widely been admitted in boosting accountability and transparency of governments, strengthening public engagement towards the development of effective institutions. Moreover, civil society continues to risk their lives in sustaining peacebuilding in post-conflict societies including Somalia. According to (Ibeanu, 2006) stated that civil society has been in the frontline in searching for peace and conflict resolution. Few studies have examined the role of civil society organization and peacebuilding these include: the literature work by Douma and Klem (2004), Arbind K. Chaudhary (2016) David M. last (2008) and others. This paper finds that promoting peace culture, reconciliation, mediation, conflict management, promoting human rights and state-society relations are the most important contributions of civil society in peacebuilding in Somalia. Accordingly, this paper tries to discover the involvement of civil society organization in peacebuilding in Somalia by addresses two main issues (1) to examine the concept of civil society organization in Somalia. (2) Discusses the role of civil society organizations in peacebuilding since the collapse of the central government of Somalia in the early 1990s.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The Purpose of the study was therefore to examine the role of civil society organizations in fostering peacebuilding in Somalia.

The study is guided by three main questions:

1. What is the concept of civil society? How it's defined from practitioner perspectives.

2. What is peacebuilding? How it's defined from different perspectives.

3. What is the role of civil society organizations in peacebuilding in Somalia?

Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework is a system of concepts and assumptions that supports scientific studies. This study therefore, conceptualizes that civil society organizationsplays a key role in peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts in Somalia. The conceptual framework in this study also hypothesizes that, civil society's activities such as facilitation, intermediation, promoting peace culture and monitoring and evaluation in conflict management efforts have a positive impact on peacebuilding and Somalia reconstruction. These relations are therefore, illustrated in the below Figure 1.
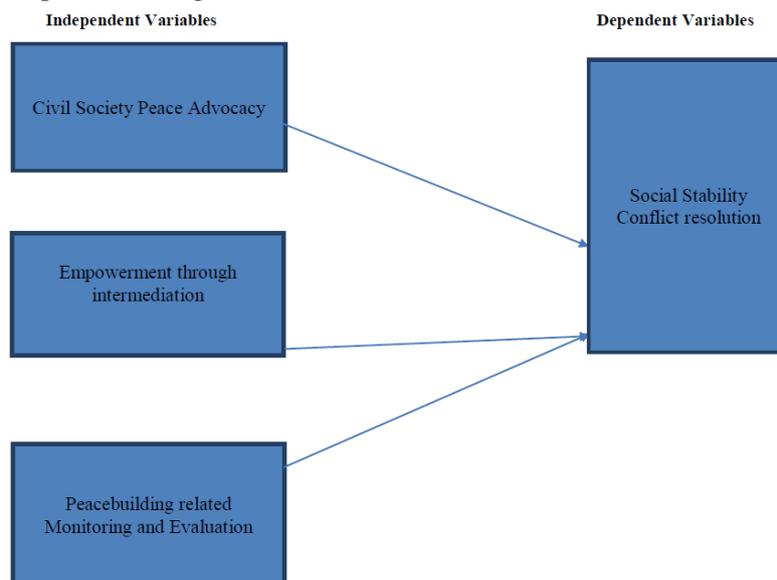

Figure1.*Paradigm showing the relationship among the variables in the study*

The Concept of Civil Society

Civil society is a concept with a long history dating back to the scholarly work by John Locke (1632-1704), Charles Montesquieu (1689-1755), Alexander de Tocqueville (1805-1859), Antonio-Gramsci (1891-1937), Jurgen Haberman (1929) and most recently World bank (2006), Markel and Lauth (1998). The concept is still under researchable topic however, it's a recent strong resurgence in political circles that has been tied to the tumultuous political events beginning in the late 1980s that witnessed the

rise of political and social revolutions in Eastern Europe spreading to Africa and other regions of the Third World. (Bebbington, A. and Riddell 1997) For instance, in Europe and North America, the concept of civil society come to present due to the high demand for civil rights in the late 19th and 20th century. This has also led the creation of societal based actors including student unions, women, farmers and working classes, social movements, and civil rights. All these social unions have been addressing public opinions against the injustice and human rights conditions. Thus, the development of civil society is structured by political development in Europe. Whereas in Latin America, military and denial of basic rights pushed people to develop unions to search their rights jointly. Additionally, to establish a democratic culture where all people can enjoy their basic rights and to overcome authoritarian regimes shaped the emergence of civil society organizations In Eastern Europe (Markel, 1999) Thus, civil society has been against the military and socio-economic exclusion. (Birle, 200) and they managed to have a diversity of actors made up of all types of unions independent from the state.

In the case of Somali is not an exception meaning, there are different arguments and debates about the emergence and the development of civil society in Somalia. Historical taking into account the role of civil society has been there since 1925 (Badiyo, 2008). Civil society was not encouraged by the colonial power, Italy and Britain in 19th centuries, the Somalia Youth League emerged in the 1950s when the time of national consciousness was increasing. Thus, civil society in Somalia has a long history. However, there are different arguments on the emergence of civil society in Somalia. The first argument is based on that civil society in Somalia has been introduced by the British and Italy colonies during the early 1940th. Some various clubs for sports, women, student unions, elders, has been formed aimed at searching the Somali independence. Therefore, the development of the concept of civil society organization in Somalia was motivated by ruling out the colonial rules and establishing a nation with a democratic structure. The second argument claims that after the military takeover in 1969, only state-sponsored civil organizations have been allowed to operate and many others had been created by the regime. Nevertheless, after the fall of the regime and the collapse of the

state, civil society was left to play a major role in the search of peace and service provision in Somalia, and they continue to play now. Civil society offered valuable lessons to Somalia and contributed the socio-economic development in the country. Additionally, Shuke claims that civil society has played an important role in local governance through mobilizing community ownership and enhancing the responsiveness and accountability of local government to community needs. Nonetheless, the role of civil society in peacebuilding in Somalia has been important since the colonial period. Today, civil society engagement in peace advocacy towards the areas of conflict brought a positive impact across Somalia, their involvement in peacebuilding, negotiation, mediation has received recognition.

Meaning of Civil Society

The definition of civil society remains elusive, complex and contested. This studyconceives the definition of civil society as the "arena of un-coerced collective action around shared interests, purpose and values (Markel and Lauth, 1998).According to Paffenholz and Spurk (2010) defined civil society as associations that operates the space between the state, family and the business groups. It characterized by a modern organization which is registered for the purpose of promoting peace, democracy, culture, and development. (Civicus, 2011)Other scholars like Salamon and Anheir (1996) consider civil society as the "third sector" meaning, an independent structure that differ from the state and other profit-making sectors. Moreover, civil society can further be given a broader definitionsto includeall organizations that have a presence in public live and development-oriented organizations such as: Non-Governmental Organizations, (NGOs) sports claps, community based organizations, women groups, disability associations, labor and business unions, journal and media group unions, youth groups, charitable organizations, and other associations that interact with people so as to express the interest of the public and their membersis considered as a civil society. The next section of this paper looks at the concept of civil society and its role in peacebuilding efforts.

The Concept of Peacebuilding

The concept of peacebuilding has grown over time to assume different meanings from different organizations and policy practitioners in different situations. According to (Galtung,

1976) peace is the absence of widespread physical violence. It became popularized during the work of J. Galtung in 1975, where he studies "three approaches to peacebuilding such as: peace keeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding" Galtung, argued that root the causes of all conflicts is linked to the nature of social and economic structure. He uses the term "social structure" to further explain the conflict that rises due to social, and institutional structure. Thus, peacebuilding is a set of programs to promote and sustain a peaceful society characterized by structures that promotes justice and diversity. (National steering committee on peacebuilding, 2009) According to paffenholz defined peacebuilding as the process of achieving peace. Likewise, peacebuilding aims to respond to the continued injustice and armed conflicts in the world and to promote peace through peacebuilding activities. (Schrich, 2014)

It was 1992 whenthe United Nations first discussed an agenda called "the agenda for peace" this also makes the first time that the concept of peacebuilding was writtenin to the United Nations language. The secretary General Boutros Ghalip presented the need of peacebuilding strategies so as to enhance the United Nations peacekeeping and peacemaking efforts. (UN Secretery-General, 1992) Today, peacebuilding effort is essential about the process of achieving sustainable peace in the world. In this paper, peacebuilding refers to activities aimed at dealing with crisis and/or conflict management in order to mobilize the state institutions to achieve peace at national level. According to Stephen J. Stedman and Donald Rothchild defined peacebuilding as "a strategy designed to promote and secure and stable lasting peace in which the basics of people's needs are met and violent conflicts do not recur" (Stedman et al 200) Moreover, Waldman defined peacebuilding as an approach that primely focuses on post-conflict settings that recognizes the need for reconciliation, developing a capacity for conflict resolution, and working towards a sustainable peace. (Waldman, 2009)

The definitions of peacebuilding by some scholars and practitioners emphasize addressing root causes of conflict and then adopting approaches and strategies to peacebuilding. Considering the definition of International alertprovidesa meaningful why people fight in the first place, and approaches to peacebuilding.

"Peacebuilding is about dealing with the reasons why people fight in the first place and supporting societies to manage their differences and conflicts without resorting to violence.It aims to prevent the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of violence, so can take place before, during and after conflicts. It is a long-term and collaborative process, as it involves changes in attitudes, behaviours and norms". (International Alert)

Nevertheless, due to the impacts of the any conflicts civil society organizations play a critical role during rebuilding and reconstruction process in post-conflict societies. However, during peacebuilding efforts effective institutions for conflict resolution must be established so as to enhance culture of peace and economic development.

According to (Elmi, Barise 2006) where he studied the root causes of the Somali conflict argued that competition for natural resources, political power and the colonial legacywere the main causes of the prolonged conflicts in Somalia. Other root causes might include: apoliticized clan identity, availability of weapons, large numbers of unemployed youth, and certain aspects of the Somali culture that sanctions the use of violence in terms of defending their resources (Elmi, Barise 2006) thus, the conflict in Somalia has deep political and socio-economic roots that go back decades. Thus, most peacebuilding activities has been focusingfrom top-level approached. Meaning, little attention has been given in addressing the root causes of the conflict mentioned earlier. Therefore, peacebuilding in Somalia is understood within the context of top-leveled based approach and/or political agreements and therefore not yet fully institutionalized. What is needed is bottom up approach to peacebuilding such as: creating institutions, organizations or social groups dedicated to promoting peace and stability in the country, and making employment creation a priority in the peacebuilding agenda.

Table1: *Somali: Peace Index*

Somalia – Global Peace Index		
Date	Global Peace Index	Global Peace Ranking
2020	3.302	158º
2019	3.300	158º

2018	3.367	159º
2017	3.387	158º
2016	3.414	159º
2015	3.307	157º

Source: Global Peace Index (2020 - 2015, 2015)

The abovetable shows Somalia's poor position at the global peace index. It also shows, that Somalia to be considered one of the most dangerous countries in the world to live in. Lack of peace, corruption, weak institutions, lack of capacity to enforce peace are among the hinders of creating save environment. The next section of this paper discusses the role of civil society organization and their contribution towards peacebuilding efforts in a country with such crisis.

The Role of civil society in Peacebuilding

Civil society is widely understood to play an important role in reducing violence, promoting peace and stability, and in facilitating the conditions necessary for building a sustainable peace. (Paffenholz, 2008) Also, civil society played a key in ensuring the resolutions of conflict and strengthening good governance practices, civil society organization in Somalia continue to hold the government and state institutions accountable to the people. Thus, the week democratic practices, such as holding elections, respecting freedom of speech and human rights achievements in Somalia have been largely due to pressure from the civil society organizations towards the government and federal member states. For example, in 2004, Somalia's old historical unitary system is to be replaced federal system of government.

The civil society engaged government institutions, international donners in demanding reforms, organizing platforms to discuss the new federal system can be adopted and put in to effective. This pressure followed an important step to peacebuilding, and aided reforms necessary in building culture of peace and political pluralism. Thus, civil society actively involved in peacebuilding and reconstruction in Somalia. A review of literature has shown that, civil society in peacebuilding process has taken to functions. One focus is the actors and the other being the performance of the actors and their functions. The following are some functions that civil society in Somalia has operated towards advocacy for peace and human rights as well as service provision to make access for peacebuilding.

Protection: The Somali state is weakened by armed conflict, terrorism, civil war, banditry and famine in the last 30 years. In the civil society discourse protection of citizens against the absolute power and/or autarchy of the state is one of the core functions of civil society. Another aspect of protection is linked to provision of basic services such as shelter, food and water. States tends to provide in general, but civil society become active in this role. Accordingly, this role has been considered as an important contribution to peacebuilding. This paper argues that civil society protected and defended the rights of Somali people against the attacks from "war lords" andother conflicting groups by addressing the root cause of the conflict, especially those motivated by clan and clannism. Thus, civil society provided facilitations in solving the crisis. Nevertheless, during conflictsbetween armed groups and/or between two clans civil society not just facilitate conflict resolution and management, but also provides humanitarian and social assistances. In this regard, civil society takes some responsibilities over the state in supporting the population especially those who are in need by providing basic services. Civil society services in Somalia also addresses the root causes of conflict, challenges to god governance, and promoting people's participation in decision making process.

Monitoring: Monitoring peacebuilding efforts is a prerequisite for peacebuilding and precondition for the protection of the public. Consequently, holding state accountable, advocating democratization, human rights monitoring and early warningis essential in creating peaceful environment. According to Paffenholz and Spurk stated that monitoring is crucial during conflict situation and human rights violations. (Paffenholz&Spurk, 2013) So, monitoring in peacebuilding efforts remains a key input to peacebuilding as well as holding governments accountable. In Somalia, civil society cooperate with the local institutions, and other international organizations for creating an environment where local people can discuss policies that affects their lives and to fulfil their participation, motoring, and evaluation tasks.

Advocacy: Advocacy is very important and a core function within the civil society discourse as well as peacebuilding efforts. Civil society in Somalia advocacy issues include (clan conflict, land, civil war, child soldiers, women empowerment, elections. and promoting shared interest. Civil society also contribute for national agenda sitting, public awareness, and participating in peacebuilding negotiations in the country. Additionally, they can effectively put pressure on the negations parties to reach a mutual beneficial agreement and also advocate including specific concerns on the agreements. (Paffenholz, 2013) thus, advocacy is the central function for civil society in Somalia. For example, civil society have been successful in advocating specific challenges that Somalia faces including, the recent local elections in some federal member state, such as Jubbaland, Galmdug, and the continues disagreement between the central government and the federal member states on like national elections, constitution, and natural resource sharing. Therefore, civil society in Somalia advocated with the objective of making people aware of the need for peaceful environment where people can discuss countries national agenda from bottom-up solutions.

Social Cohesion: Enhancing social cohesion is a centralpartof civil society organization in Somalia since peacebuilding efforts requires social cohesion. In this context, civil society organizations strengthen bonds among citizens of Somalia, building social capital and refreshed trust between and among Somali people. Considering North Somalia (Somaliland) have successfully escaped civil war and instability. This is the result of national reconciliation between and among the clan members of Somaliland who build peace from the bottom up approach. Moreover, many state institutions have been createdfrom the scratch aimed at promoting peace and unity of the people. In addition, civil society become an important factor in Somaliland peacebuilding project while promoting people to participate development, human rights and political participation. Thus, promoting peace culture, reconciliation, mediation, conflict management, promoting human rights and state-society relations are the most important contributions of civil society in peacebuilding in Somalia.

Intermediation and facilitation

In a peacebuilding context facilitation and intermediation is an important function that takes place between different groups, between states and organizations and on different levels of the society. Thus, intermediation on peacebuilding effort is one of the original functions of civil society in democratic societies. In this context the activities that civil society contribute during mediation and intermediation is formal facilitation initiatives between armed groups and development organizations. However, the contribution of civil society to diplomatic conflict mediation activities are limited (Aall, 2001) since conflict management is more government related functions. However, civil society organizations in Somalia facilitate disagreement between conflicting groups through research and warning to the society. Civil society representatives have successfully attended and contributed 1996 and 1997 mediation and peace efforts aimed at creating an interim government of Somalia. Civil society also alarmed to the international communities when needing humanitarian assistance and service delivery.

Service Delivery

Service delivery is an important and precondition for peacebuilding. According to (Paffeholz 20110) argued, that provision of services to the society is one of the most important activities of civil society organizations, especially when the state institutions is unable to provide basic services. Somalia government for instance, has been unable to provide basic services such as, health, education, security, and employment creation to people for the last 30 years. Thus, service provision as a basic function of civil society organization becomes an effective contribution to strengthening of stability in the country. Furthermore, civil society has given priority to health and educational infrastructure to train local communities, women and government officials. Also, civil society continue to support local communities by offering educational peace programs, civic education and women empowerment as part of their yearly activities. Thus, the service delivery of civil society organizations in Somalia supports local communities to realize dreams and/or reduces suffering, which is needed to achieve during peace efforts. There is no doubt these efforts are important step to development and a vehicle for peace.

Demobilization of Armed conflicts

The term armed conflict has different meanings in the literature. This paper perceives the definition of Upsala Conflict Data Program

(UCDP) which defines armed conflict an incompatibility that concerns government where the use of armed force between two parties lead into a battle which results in at least 25 death. Thus, armed conflict is one of the biggestchallenges to development (Paffenholz, Spurk 2006) and leads to forced immigration, long term refugee problems and the destruction of infrastructure. For instance, the number of internal displaced person in Somalia increased from 1.1. million in 2016, to 2.6 million 2019, almost two third of whom were children. (UN, 2020) The main causes of the internal displacement were insecurity, armed conflicts, national disasters and fear of violence. Furthermore, In Somalia the militant group Al-Shabaab remains the main threat to security and the stability of the country. The group continue to exert effective control over large parts of Somalia and continuously attacks military installations, government buildings, and hotels, leading to many civilian causalities.International community has witnessedthe crisis of Somalia which brought numerous civil wars and conflicts demanded peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts to Somalia. This led to a huge rise in civil society adopting peacebuilding programs and initiatives. To date, civil society are involving in all aspects of conflict resolution, peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts in the conflict hit-country. Organizations such as SOSCENSA, brings together the conflicting parties to hold broad-based consolations which form the basis of policy recommendations aimed at sorting out of their differences. SOSCENSA, also provides Somalia situational analysis on issues such as human rights, children and armed conflicts, humanitarian crisis, and disasters. Additionally, this organizations brings women and youth activists to discuss how to promote women's political participation and decision making in Somalia. Furthermore, SOSCENSA, advocates minimum of 30% quota to be allowed to Somalia women under the new electoral bill. The 2021 elections women will be allowed to have a quota system in the parliament elections. Hence, the role of civil society organizations towards peacebuilding, reconstruction and demobilization of armed groups in southern Somalia has received the support and attention both in Somalia and in the neighboring countries.

CONCLUSION

This study presented the analysis of the role of civil society organizations in peacebuilding in Somalia. The study examined the historical background of the concept of civil society in general and Somalia in particular. The study found out thatcivil society organizations in Somalia have an important role in peacebuilding on local levels. This role includes the struggle for demilitarization as well as promotion rule of law, peace advocacy, monitoring peacebuilding efforts, and facilitating conflict resolution and management tools. The study also found that while the Somali government approaches conflicting parties and sign the peace agreement, it is the civil society organizations that undertake the implementation of such peace agreement. Thus, this study argued that civil society organizations in Somalia is the leading structure to alarming national disasters, raising the voice of the people, and advocating a zero-tolerance of corruption and nepotism. The study also argued that civil society meets a constructive role in peacebuilding in Somalia to create a peaceful environment.

RECOMMENDATION

1. The recommendations given are that Somalia should focus on creating an environment that enables civil society to operate smoothly and thus promote peace and stability.

2. Civil society organizations ought to work and devolve their activities and programs to cover a wider geographical stretch to contribute to newly established federal member states in sharing knowledge, providing vital experiences through seminars, workshops, and events.

3. Civil society organizations need to create an online platform that enables university students to easily access documents relating to civil society's engagement in peacebuilding, their activities, the challenges they face, and the policy recommendations provided by civil society.

4. Civil society actors need to be included from the very beginning and all phases of conflict to peace transition, and implementation of the agreement to post-conflict peacebuilding.

5. The study also recommends that internal support for civil society organization need to be improved. It can strengthen civil society and create local capacity.

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