Civil Society Organisations and Peacebuilding: A Functional Perspective

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Abstract

Civil society has emerged as a central force in peacebuilding and is contributing to the reframing of discourse around the concept. Despite the interest in Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) peacebuilding activities, little has been done to suggest a functional perspective to CSOs contribution to peacebuilding. What seems to exist is a largely descriptive account of civil society peacebuilding initiatives based on its forms and actors rather than its functions. It is within this context, that this paper, examines, civil society and peacebuilding. It provides an analytical framework to better understand the functions of civil society and sketches their growing involvement in peacebuilding. The thesis sponsored by this paper is that a functional analysis of CSOs in peacebuilding would enable stakeholders and funders to better analyze existing and potential forms of CSOs engagement in peacebuilding. The paper argues that civil society contributions to peacebuilding can be categorized in a variety of ways, but stakeholders and particularly donors largely employ actor-oriented perspectives which have often denied the concerned public knowledge of the contributions of CSOs to peacebuilding. It proposes to move toward a functional perspective; centered on the roles that CSOs can play in peacebuilding. The paper identifies the functional perspective of CSOs to include: protection, monitoring/early warning; advocacy/public communication; socialization, social cohesion; intermediation/facilitation and service provision. It maintains that these seven functions encompass the core roles of civil society and that taken together offer a suitable framework to better understand the potential contribution of civil society to peacebuilding.

Keywords: Civil society organisations, Peacebuilding, Functions, Civic engagement

Introduction

Civil society organisations (CSOs) and peacebuilding have assumed a prominent role in public policy debates of the last two decades. A substantial discourse and practice have emerged in establishing the link between civil society and peacebuilding. Today, no one questions that CSOs are critical actors in sustaining peacebuilding efforts as this has been reflected in the works of scholars including Obi, (2011); Skocpol (2003); Lewis (2002); Kukah (1999); Diamond, Juan and Seymour (eds) (1998); Ekeh (1998); Salamon and Anheier (1997); Hall (1995); Judge (1994); Seligman (1992); Bayart (1986); Lipnack and Jeffrey (1982) who for instance, see civil society as the vital link in the transition to, and sustainability of post-war democracy. Although research of the nexus between civil society and peacebuilding has generated huge literature, there is a growing tendency to characterise civil society organisations based on organisational form rather than their functions and activities. It is within this context that the paper examines CSOs and peacebuilding by placing less emphasis on organizational forms in order to enhance a more dedicated and broader focus on the functions and roles of informal associations, movements and collective citizen action. It is common within this context for instance, to categorise civil society according to organisational forms like human rights

groups, environmental right activists, advocacy groups, health, voice, accountability and transparency, demining, education, tax and labour. Within these categories, their roles for instance overlap. When this happens, one would not be talking about its form but its role and activities. All CSOs in the above categories for instance, carry out the role of advocacy; this does not make them any less a 'human rights, health, accountability or demining CSOs'. In reality, and according to the Social Development Department of the Sustainable Development Network (2006), actors can move among spheres (or inhabit more than one), depending on their function. For example, private firms can pursue profits in the market and act as part of civil society when lobbying to remove discriminatory tax provisions.

There are numerous typologies and ways to categorize CSO actors in peacebuilding. More important than finding the right classification, however, is to recognize the roles and peacebuilding approaches performed by various segments of civil society. The literature (Barnes 2005; van Tongerene *at al.* (2005); Douma and Klem (2004); Harpviken and Kjellman (2004), identifies the roles of civil society in peacebuilding to include: (i) promoting reconciliation; (ii) engaging in non-violent forms of conflict management and transformation; (iii) directly preventing violence; (iv) building bridges, trust and interdependence between groups; and (v) monitoring and advocating in favour of peace, and against human rights violations and social injustices. Although, CSOs are playing very important roles in peacebuilding, only a few studies have examined their forms, functions and effectiveness. Amongst these, are those who examined CSOs from an actor-oriented perspective (van Tongeren *et al.* 2005) that describes the activities implemented by different CSOs. Others have analysed the roles and functions of different actors in peacebuilding in general: Barnes (2005); Debiel and Sticht (2005); Pouligny (2005); Douma and Klem (2004); Aall (2001); while other strands have investigated the roles and functions of CSOs with reference to specific cases; Obi (2016) on the republic of Guinea; Challand (2005) on Palestine; Orjuela (2004) on Sri Lanka; Paffenholz (2003) on Somalia; Belloni (2001) on Bosnia; Patrick (2001) on Timor-Leste; and Foley, (1996) on El Salvador. Other scholars explored the effectiveness of CSOs peace work in general (Anderson and Olson 2003). Overall, a functional approach to civil society peacebuilding suggest that examining civil society from an actor-oriented perspective may not provide much clarity about the strength and comparative advantage of CSOs in peacebuilding. It is within this context therefore, that this paper examines civil society and peacebuilding.

Literature Review/Conceptual Issues
Two main issues to be conceptualised in this paper are civil society and peacebuilding. The role of CSOs in peacebuilding has gained increased recognition. Today, the main question is no longer whether CSOs has a role to play in peacebuilding, but how it can best realise its potential. Civil society has been in the forefront of conflict resolution (Ibeanu, 2006:12) yet; the concept remains elusive, complex and contested. There are different meanings and interpretations and overtime, different schools of thoughts have influenced theoretical debates and structured the philosophical roots of the concept of civil society. According to Merkel and Lauth (1998:3-12), John Locke was the first in modern times to stress that civil society is a body in its own right, separate from the state. The first task of civil society according to Locke is to *protect* the individual, his rights and property against the state and its arbitrary interventions. Charles Montesquieu in his model of separation of powers (*De l'esprit des Lois,* 1748) quoted in Merkel and Lauth (1998:114) distinguishes as Locke between political society (regulating the relations between citizens and its government) and civil society (regulating the relations between citizens); he however lent credence to Locke's position by arguing that the central authority must be monitored by independent organizations to avoid abuse of power. This coheres with the position of Ibeanu (n.d:3) where it was noted that civil society

organisations are raising issues and championing causes that challenge political authoritarianism, economic deprivation and social exclusion.

Civil society organisations and activities are found in all the continents and countries of the World, but their level of involvement in peacebuilding varies from one place to another depending on the enabling environment created by the state and international organisations. According to Lauth (2003), in Western Europe and later North America, the concept of civil society initially articulated elite demands for civil rights in the 19th and 20th century, and subsequently expanded to encompass collective action by a broader range of societal actors (women, working classes, farmers, students) and movements (civil rights, peace, environment) seeking to address social injustices and public concerns. The roles of CSOs are often structured by political developments within their environment. In Latin America, where military dictatorship, repression and denial of rights were prevalence in the 1960s, civil society activities were directed against military authoritarianism and socio-economic exclusion (Birle 2000). In Eastern Europe, the concept was shaped by collective actions to overcome authoritarian regimes and establish democratic structures (Merkel 1999). The core elements of civil society organisations are seen within this context from a social capitalist perspective to include a social network, a rich associational life and norms of reciprocity that supports the stability of the society. For the social capital theorists, the characteristics of civil society and civic life are a key determinant of democratic development and the performance of social institutions (Putnam 1993, 2002). In Africa, the years preceding independence in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the activities of CSOs where directed toward ending colonial rule and enthroning democracy. The 1990s saw proliferation of CSOs in Africa. This period coincided with political restiveness occasioned by wars and military involvement in governance. It could be glean from the foregoing, that civil society organisations were closely associated with their roles rather than forms. This functional approach enables effective assessment of the contributions of CSOs to peacebuilding right from the 19th Century and even earlier. The functional perspective is central to enhancing one's understanding of CSOs in supporting state functions where government is unable to perform certain functions due to fragility, weak or failed state syndrome. According to the World Bank (2005), lack of state capacity to control parts of its territory or to deliver public services often prompts civil society to fill the vacuum, delivering services and emergency relief or supporting displaced populations. It further notes that when CSOs are fulfilling functions usually performed by the state, care must be taken to avoid further undermining state capacity. In this context, external support should be able to determine how much and how long to rely on CSO service provision, and when to shift focus to strengthening state capacity. This again, specifically highlights a functional perspective to CSOs involvement in peacebuilding.

A functional perspective to understanding CSOs has seen civil society initiating, supporting and sustaining global efforts at strengthening peacebuilding. The United Nations (UN, 2003) declared that International CSOs and networks have placed global issues on the international agenda, successfully launched international campaigns (e.g., to ban landmines and blood diamonds, publish-what-you-pay) and partnered in key international conferences and consultative processes. It further notes that International CSOs have also made efforts to network with domestic organizations, to advocate for development issues and present alternatives to official Government positions. The involvement of civil society in the UN system has been institutionalized and continues to expand and evolve (UN 2003) even though the nature and impact of this global civil society according to Kaldor (2003) is debated. Some scholars (Cardoso, 2003; Clark 2003) see it as a reflection of globalization processes that is likely to improve global governance by promoting debate and bridging societal divides while

critics (Anderson and Rieff 2004) question their legitimacy and claims that such organizations are representative of international civil society.

This paper adapts a definition of civil society which according to CIVICUS (2011:17), refers to all the modern or traditional, non-political and non-governmental organizations, registered or informal, which aim at promoting sustainable peace and true democracy through socio-economic and cultural development, and which act as an intermediary between the state, political parties and the masses. In this context, it represents motley of organisations that have a presence in public life, expressing the interests and values of their members or others, based on ethical, cultural, political, scientific, religious or philanthropic considerations. This goes beyond formally registered organisations to include community groups, women's association, labour unions, indigenous groups, youth groups, charitable organizations, foundations, faith-based organizations, independent media, professional associations, think tanks, independent educational organizations and social movements.

This broad conceptualisation of civil society which includes the recognition of individual efforts in peacebuilding makes civic engagement an important addition to the functional perspective of civil society peacebuilding. The term civic engagement according to Putnam (2000) is commonly used by social capital theorists to refer to the participation of private actors in the public sphere, conducted through direct and indirect CSO and citizen interactions with government, business community and external agencies to influence decision making or pursue common goals. The term will therefore, be used occasionally to capture individual and informal civic activities in addition to those carried out by formal CSOs. This conceptual clarification is especially necessary in the context of peacebuilding because, most peacebuilding initiatives especially in communities depend on the resourcefulness of a few people. It is important in examining the functional perspective of CSOs to also review the place of the State in CSOs peacebuilding. The civil society exists within the confine of the State and its activities are therefore shaped by it. In this context, the functions of CSOs cannot be examined in isolation from the State as they are interdependent. Although independence from the state is a defining feature, civil society interacts closely with the state and is shaped by the enabling environment defined by the state. The state sets the legal and regulatory framework and in some cases funds civil society activities. Civil society in turn acts as a link between the state and citizens, in promoting values, accountability, voice and channelling information. While civil society initiatives and organizations often emerge when states and markets fail, they cannot fully replace state functions and formal political processes (Croissant et al. 2000; Merkel and Lauth 1998)

In the last two decades, peacebuilding has been a major policy item on the agenda of development organisations. The concept gained currency when in 1992; when the UN Secretary General (Boutros-Ghali, 1992) in his "An Agenda for Peace" identified peacebuilding as critical to conflict prevention. This informed his narrow conception of peacebuilding as activities aimed specifically at preventing large scale violence and its reoccurrence within five years. The Carnegie Commission (1997) declared that the scale of the 1994 Rwanda crisis and genocide, however, highlighted the gaps in the conception of peacebuilding as seen by Boutros-Ghali and instead posited that in addition to conflict prevention, it provides the necessary foundation for early warning. This insight culminated in the UN Secretary General's report Preventing Armed Conflict (UN 2001).

It can be deduced from the foregoing that the conception of peacebuilding seem to revolve around physical security and peacekeeping at the expense of activities that are directed at

entrenching democracy and good governance. The inherent inadequacies in this approach informed the need for a shift from the conception of peacebuilding that is based on security and peacekeeping to a perspective that sees peacebuilding as an approach to establishing the socio-economic conditions for peace. This shift according to Collier *et al* (2003) has been spurred by evidence on the linkages between poverty and conflict and increased interest in conflict-related issues by development agencies. There is a discernible trend in peacebuilding perspective – from outcome-oriented approaches to conflict management, to relationship-oriented conflict resolution, and to more comprehensive transformation approaches. Conflict management approach as a peacebuilding measure is a short-term management of conflict that revolves around identifying key representatives of conflict parties and negotiating or mediating peace accords (Paffenholz 1998, 2001). Key actors are governments and multilateral organizations, mostly the UN, sometimes supporting mediation efforts by threat of force (power mediation). By contrast, and according to Bailey (1985) and Stedman (1993), conflict resolution aims to address the underlying causes of conflict and mend the social fabric of conflict-affected societies. Peace facilitators under this approach typically hail from the civil society sector academia, and national or I-NGOs, and they aim to improve communications and inter-group relations. Conflict management and conflict resolution approaches are not without weaknesses as Hoffman (1992) maintains that outcome-oriented approaches are likely to overlook deep conflict causes that may affect the prospects for sustaining peace accords. In this vein, focusing on the leaders of conflict parties is likely to be too narrow (Lederach 1997), identifying the appropriate counterparts for successful peace negotiations can be very difficult, and mediating states are not always neutral (Ropers and Debiel 1995). All genres of peacebuilding, from outcome-oriented approaches to conflict management, to relationship-oriented conflict resolution, and to more comprehensive transformation approaches are based on functional perspective. The approaches are all driven by roles played by certain institutions and organisations to foster peace. Critical to these organisations, are civil society organisations. The civil society sector is committed to delivering peacebuilding objectives that revolves around transforming conflict issues, actors and contexts and combines short-term conflict management with long-term relationship building, and transformation of the roots of conflict (Rupesinghe 1995). The broadening of the concept of peacebuilding aims at identifying mid-level individuals and empowers them to build peace and support reconciliation (Lederach 1997). These 'mid-level individuals' are extracted from CSOs which populate the peacebuilding arena. Lederach (1997) conceptualisation of peacebuilding conflict transformation declares that peacebuilding can be pursued from three perspectives –top level leaders; mid-level leaders; and the third level leaders. Lederach maintains that the top level leaders can be engaged by Track 1 intervention and outcome-oriented approaches. The mid-level leaders can be engaged by more resolution-oriented Track 2 approaches, such as problem-solving workshops or peace-commissions with the help of prominent local individuals. The third level, where civil society tends to be most active, represents the majority of the population and can be engaged through a range of peacebuilding approaches, such as local peace commissions, community dialogue projects or trauma healing. Here, the CSOs play active roles and are recognised by their individual and collective roles in peacebuilding rather than forms. The functional perspective of CSOs is aptly captured in Utstein Peacebuilding Palette (2004) where peacebuilding is meant to intersect four broad areas namely security, socio-economic foundations, political framework and reconciliation and justice. This is diagrammatically represented below:

Figure 1: Utstein Peacebuilding Palette
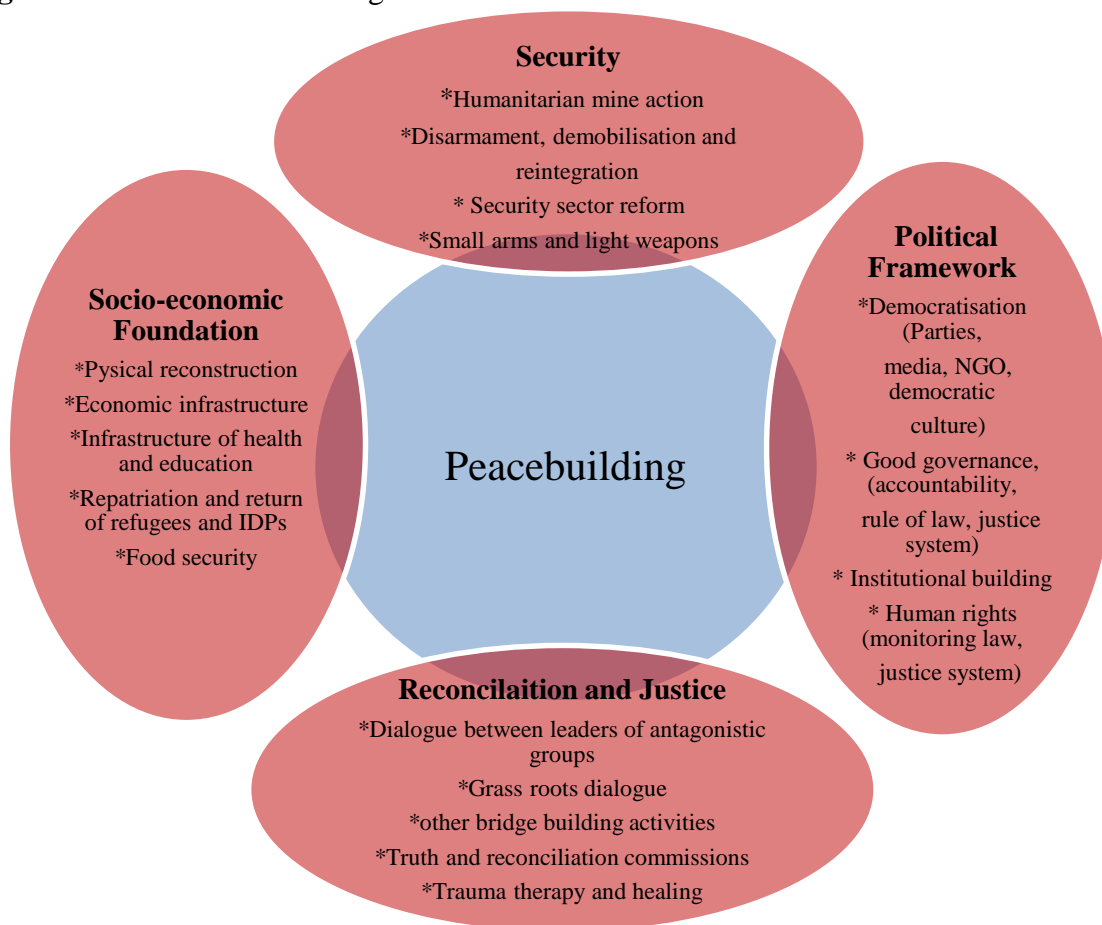
Source: Adapted from Utstein Report (2004)

The central actor in Utstein peacebuilding palette is the civil society. The four broad areas of peacebuilding as proposed by Utstein are populated by CSOs even in such critical areas as security which is largely dominated by military and paramilitary actions. Security Sector Reform (SSR) are driven by CSOs through advocacy, organisation of round-tables, security workshops and seminars to articulate ideas that will structure the reforms. The political framework is mainly managed by CSOs. Here the processes of democratisation, good governance, institutional building, human rights monitoring and rule of law are functions performed by CSOs. Socio-economic activities such as repatriation of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) as well as reconciliation and justice activities like facilitating dialogues between antagonistic groups, trauma therapy and healing are also functions carried out by CSOs. The Utstein's peacebuilding framework highlights the centrality of CSOs to peacebuilding from the perspective of their functions rather than forms. Utstein's conceptualisation outlines a framework of peacebuilding activities, where providing physical security is as important as establishing good governance and the socio-economic foundations of long-term peace. It acknowledges that development, a return to democratic governance and the guarantee of a secure environment represent the most promising approach to peacebuilding.

Theoretical Considerations
The functional perspective of CSOs peacebuilding efforts can be better explained within the context of structural functionalism as popularized by Radcliff-Brown. Structural functionalism is a theoretical understanding of society that is built on the assumption that social systems are

collective means to fill social needs (Gingrich, 1999). In order for social life to survive and develop in society, there are a number of activities that need to be carried out to ensure that certain needs are fulfilled. In the structural functionalist model, individuals produce necessary goods and services in various institutions and roles that correlate with the norms of the society. Structural-Functionalism (often paraphrased 'Functionalism') is an important offshoot of General Systems Theory (GST) popularized by Radcliff-Brown. It is a consensus theory, a theory that sees society as built upon order, interrelationship and balance among component units as a means of maintaining the smooth functioning of the whole (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952:3). It is a broad perspective in Social Sciences which addresses social structures in terms of the functions of its constituent elements. It studies society as a structure with interrelated, interdependent and mutually interacting parts. Parson (1975) declares that Herbert Spencer in his book, *Principle of Sociology* (1896), regards these interrelated parts of society as "organs" that work toward the proper functioning of the system as a whole.

The Functionalist approach explains CSOs peacebuilding functionalist perspective from the standpoint of functions performed by CSOs to support the survival of the society. According to Ibeanu (2006:3-13), when structures like CSOs perform their functions properly, there is order in society and in fact, society inherently moves in the direction of order and stability. Consequently, from a structural–functionalist perspective, peace is achieved where existing social structures including CSOs perform their functions adequately supported by the requisite culture, norms and values. For instance, if the school structure, which consists of the roles of principal, teacher, administrator and students, performs its function of educating children properly by inculcating the right values and norms such as tolerance, patience and love, then peace would prevail in society in the long run and the institutionalization of this process culminates in peace sustainable peacebuilding measures.

Almond's (1963) model of structural-functionalist theory identifies functional requirements of a political system and proceeded to explain the contributions of these functions towards the maintenance and stability of the system. He categorizes the functions into *inputs* and *outputs* functions. A system's *input* according to Almond is defined as the movement of information or matter (energy from the environment) into the system. The *output* is the movement of information or matter (energy from the system) to the environment. He identified the *input* functions to include: political socialization and recruitment, interest articulation, interest aggregation and political communication. The *output* functions include: rule making (policy making), rule application (policy implementation), and rule adjudication (policy interpretation). Utstein's peacebuilding palette (fig.1) captures Almond's inputs and outputs functions under political framework which is populated by civil society actors. This paper is anchored on the structural-functionalist theory because it highlights the place of functions (rather than actors and forms) performed by structures to support the survival of the system. In this context, the forms of structures (CSOs) performing system survival functions are not the main focus. This perspective provides a unique framework for the assessment of CSOs based on their functions.

A Functional look at CSOs in Peacebuilding
The relevance of civil society organisations to peacebuilding is gauged by the functions they play in strengthening peacebuilding efforts. An approach that focuses on CSO's functions, instead of actors and forms, can help direct attention to understanding their capacity, expertise and can help in better defining outcome indicators for CSOs engagements by partners as well as improve the planning process. An approach that is considered appropriate in mapping CSOs contributions to peacebuilding revolves around the functions they perform. This perspective is

drawn from CSOs functions derived mainly by German Political Scientists from democratization and transformation processes in Eastern Europe (Paffenholz, 2003:5; Lauth 2003; Croissant *et al.* 2000; Merkel and Lauth 1998).

Table 1: Seven Civil Society Functions in Peacebuilding

CSOS FUNCTION	ACTIVITIES
Protection	Protecting citizen life, freedom and property against attacks from state and non-state actors.
Monitoring/early warning	Observing and monitoring the activities of government, state authorities and conflict actors. Monitoring can refer to various issues (human rights, corruption), particularly those relevant for drivers of conflict and early warning.
Advocacy/public communication	Articulation of specific interests, especially of marginalized groups and bringing relevant issues to the public agenda. Creation of communication channels, awareness raising and public debate. Participation in official peace processes.
Socialization	Formation and practice of peaceful and democratic attitudes and values among citizens, including tolerance, mutual trust and non-violent conflict resolution.
Social cohesion	Strengthening links among citizens, building bridging social capital across societal cleavages.
Intermediation/facilitation	Establishing relationships (communication, negotiation) to support collaboration between interest groups, institutions and the state. Facilitating dialogue and interaction. Promoting attitudinal change for a culture of peace and reconciliation.
Service provision	Providing services to citizens or members can serve as entry points for peacebuilding, if explicitly intended.

Source: Sustainable Development Network (2006)

This functional perspective highlights seven main functions that CSOs can play in peacebuilding. While these functions cannot be said to be exhaustive, there however, lay a foundation for a broader exploration of the functions of CSOs in peacebuilding. It can be gleaned from the Table that the functions of CSOs are closely related, as a result, CSOs may be active in one or more functions, providing lead role in some and supportive roles in others. The State for instance, is mainly responsible for protection of lives and property and socialization does not only occur in voluntary associations but also in the family, classroom and political parties. The Social Development Network (2006) declares that CSOs tends to have a comparative advantage in functions related to socialization, culture of peace and social cohesion. Protection, monitoring and accountability, and advocacy and public communication functions tend to be complementary and their effectiveness depends on collaboration with other actors. In line with Utstein (2004) peacebuilding framework, CSOs takes on different functions

and roles in the transition from conflict to peace, and in different conflict phases. During conflict or its immediate aftermath, priority tends to be on protection, monitoring, and advocacy and public communication. Reconciliation, culture of peace, and peace education functions are more long term, and thus likely more relevant in the post-conflict phase. As conflicts end and public institutions gradually recover, the dynamics between citizens, CSOs, and the state tend to change. Overall, the capacity of CSOs to function properly is shaped by internal institutional factors including international partnerships and the enabling environment in which CSOs operate. This functional perspective is further given clarity by isolating them for individual discussion below.

CSOs Protection function
Although the function of protection of lives and property is the primary responsibility of government, CSOs have often been supporting government in contexts where it is unable to perform this primary function as a result of armed conflict. Civil society initiatives frequently emerge during conflict and its aftermath to protect citizen life, rights and property against threats by conflict actors or the state. Protection functions are generally performed by International Non-Governmental Organisations (I-NGOs) that support domestic civil society either indirectly, through their presence as monitoring watchdogs (Orjuela 2003), or directly through international accompaniment. Barnes (2005); Orjuela (2004); Eviota (2005) notes that Peace Brigades International, for example, sends outsiders into conflict zones to protect national peace or human rights activists. Other examples are communities in the Philippines and Colombia that have negotiated zones of peace where no arms are allowed. TRESA (2005) also declares that another aspect of protection is support to security-related interventions such as demining, small arms control, and disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of ex-combatants. In Mozambique, churches launched a follow-up demobilization campaign after the official UN demobilization process had ended. More frequently, however, CSOs collaborate with government or donor-led efforts. The capacity of CSOs to perform the protection function is limited by contexts with high level of violence and coercive state with dysfunctional rule of law institutions.

CSOs Monitoring and Early Warning Function
The primary provider of services (including health and education) in any state is government. To enhance provision of such services, CSOs have to monitor the actions and policies of government to ensure it stays faithful to government's core objective of providing the greatest happiness to the greatest number of people. In conflict contexts, CSOs observe and monitor the activities of conflict actors as a means to enhance accountability and a precondition for the protection and the advocacy/public communication functions of civil society. The main focus of monitoring during armed conflict is on human rights violations. International and local groups can monitor the conflict situation and make recommendations to decision makers, provide information to advocacy groups, and provide inputs for early warning. This civil society function is relevant in all conflict phases and its impact is maximized when all actors coordinate closely. To strengthen the early warning function, there is increasing cooperation between local, national and I-NGOs but also with regional organizations. In Nepal for instance, national human rights organizations cooperate with local groups and maintain close links to Amnesty International. These international ties provide a safer space for local groups to perform their monitoring tasks. In the Horn of Africa, early warning systems of regional organizations (CEWARN) cooperate with local civil society groups in monitoring. In West Africa, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) have signed a memorandum of understanding for joint early warning.

The major constraint against effective monitoring is the state restrictions put on CSOs or that imposed by other conflict parties as well as the extreme levels of violence.

CSOs Advocacy and Public Communication Function

Advocacy according to (Aall 2001; Paffenholz 2003) is one of the core functions in peacebuilding and primarily a role for domestic civil society. Civil society can articulate the interests of social groups, especially marginalized groups, and create communication channels to raise public awareness and facilitate the inclusion of issues in the public agenda. Most peacebuilding schools assume that the influence of civil society on conflict management is indirect and generally limited to an advocacy and communication role, as well as applying pressure on negotiating parties and advocacy for specific issues. Advocacy is not only very relevant to peacebuilding but is also mainly conducted in many instances by CSOs with high levels of effectiveness. Advocacy is relevant in all phases of conflict, but its nature will vary according to conflict phases. During conflict, civil society tends to advocate for peace agreements, against violence and human rights violations, for broad based participation in the peace process, and for specific issues. Information campaigns and opinion polls can link the public at large with official negotiation processes (Accord 2002) or official parallel civil society forums can provide a more direct link to Track 1 negotiations (Stanley and Holiday 2002; Armon *et al.* 1997). In the post-conflict phase, civil society advocacy tends to focus on implementation of the peace agreements, or specific conflict issues such as violence, gender, or the need for a culture of peace (Orjuela 2004; Jeong 2005).

Independent media play an important role in peacebuilding by reaching a broad range of the population, facilitating public communication, expanding the audience for advocacy campaigns Richmond (2006) and raising awareness on the need for and feasibility of non-violent solutions. Disseminating objective and non-partisan information (on mass killings, human rights violations, and truth and reconciliation efforts) is a critical media contribution to peacebuilding. Richmond (2006) also declares that the media, however, can also be used to perpetuate ethnic stereotypes and fuel further hostilities and violence. In Rwanda, for example, radio *Milles Collines* preached hatred and helped orchestrate the genocide. The most effective form of advocacy is mass mobilization for large scale change, such as the end of war or authoritarian rule. The main limiting factors for advocacy are linked to the shrinking space for CSOs to act and a highly restricted media.

CSOs Socialization Function

The socialization function is not exclusively performed by the civil society as leadership for socialization is provided by other institutions including the school, church, political parties and the family. The socialization function of civil society aims to inculcate a culture of peace in divided conflict societies by promoting attitude change toward peaceful conflict resolution and reconciliation. Most activities tend to adopt a conflict resolution approach and include dialogue projects, reconciliation initiatives, peace education, exchange programs and peace camps, conflict resolution training and capacity building. Research (Anderson and Olson 2003; Paffenholz 2003) suggests that civil society initiatives which support attitude change and a culture of peace are only effective when they can reach a critically large number of people. The precondition for effectiveness of socialization initiatives is low level, or the absence of, violence. The civil society in supporting the socialization process, engage with influential pre-existing institutions such as schools. The main limiting factors for socialization revolves around the shrinking of space for CSOs to act and policies against freedom of association.

CSOs Social Cohesion Function

It is logical for conflict contexts to be sharply divided between different groups that often transcend the main adversarial groups. Enhancing social cohesion is therefore, an important civil society function in peacebuilding, as conflict usually destroys bridging social capital. Restoring bridging social capital can help to curb inter-group violence, and revitalize group interactions, interdependency and solidarity (Jeong 2005; Orjuela 2004; Paffenholz 2003). Putnam (2002) maintains that engagement and participation in voluntary associations has the potential to build and strengthen social capital, but rather than building bonding ties within groups, the aim should be to build bridging ties across adversary groups i.e., a 'conflict sensitive social cohesion' function. Research by World Vision (O'Reilly 1998) confirmed the importance of bridging social capital, identifying how development projects helped increase levels of contact, interaction and communication across geographic, religious, ethnic, cultural and class divides. This in turn led to improved cooperation, unity and interdependence between groups. Although systematic evidence is lacking, it is possible that CSOs conflict sensitive social cohesion initiatives have greater potential to influence peacebuilding. Research in India (Varshney, 2002); found that ethnically mixed organizations were effective in building bridging ties across ethnic groups, leading to an institutionalized peace system that facilitated the control of violence. The precondition for the effectiveness of social cohesion initiatives is again a low level, or absence of, violence. The effectiveness of social cohesion is enhanced when initiatives are aimed at bringing people together for a common cause. The main limiting factor for social cohesion is extreme levels of violence.

CSOs Intermediation and Facilitation Function

An important civil society function is to intermediate between interest groups and the state. Local facilitation by CSOs is highly relevant during all phases of conflict peacebuilding. This is often performed by community leaders (such as traditional or religious leaders) or by Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) who facilitate dialogue between conflict parties and the community or between community and returnees. In peacebuilding, intermediation and facilitation can take place not only between the state and citizens, but also between conflict parties, within groups and on different levels of society. The main activities within this function are facilitation initiatives (formal or informal) between armed groups, and between armed groups and communities or development agencies. Intermediation can be performed by international and/or domestic civil society. Paffenholz (1998) declared that domestic civil society tends to have little involvement in direct facilitation between conflict parties, especially when it involves actual peace negotiations, as this role is primarily played by external parties, especially governments (Norway in Sri Lanka) or multilateral agencies (UN in Guatemala).

He further revealed that in some instances, this role can be taken up by international CSOs as in the case of *Comunita di Sant'Egidio* in Mozambique or the Geneva-based NGO Center for Humanitarian Dialogue which facilitated the first negotiations in Aceh (Paffenholz, 1998). Domestic CSOs can play a facilitation role at a number of levels including between civil society and conflict parties at the village or district level (e.g., civil society representatives negotiated the release of citizens by armed groups in Nepal); to bring conflict parties to the negotiation table (e.g., the Inter-Religious Council in Sierra Leone managed to get government and rebels to agree to peace talks in the late 1990s), to negotiate peace zones or violence-free days (e.g., the churches in El Salvador negotiated peace days in order to carry out a child vaccination campaign; between aid agencies and conflict parties to deliver services directly to communities (Orjuela 2004). Jeong (2005) revealed that in some conflict zones, local civil society acts as mediators or facilitators where government or foreign aid structures cannot operate (e.g., Nepal) or where national or I-NGOs need facilitation to better understand the local context.

According to Sustainable Development Network (2006), civil society can also play a role by engaging different actors in dialogue processes in preparation for formal peace negotiations. This may be especially useful in building trust before formal processes begin and in ways that would not be possible for government actors or even difficult for international facilitators or mediators (e.g., Pax Christi's past and current role in the process leading to peace negotiations in Northern Uganda). A high level of violence or intimidation from the conflict parties is the main limiting factor for CSOs facilitation initiatives though; cooperation between I-NGOs and local CSOs has in many instances enhanced facilitation effectiveness.

CSOs Service Provision Function
Service delivery is a contested function of CSOs peacebuilding initiative. It is considered CSOs peacebuilding function only when used as an entry point for other CSOs peacebuilding functions. Direct service provision to communities or their members is an important function for most CSOs, particularly in weak states and during conflict, CSOs complement or substitute the state in service provision. However, the extent to which service delivery is seen as a function of peacebuilding is contested in the literature. Some authors (SIDA, 2005) see public service delivery as a separate civil society function because it saves lives and reduces suffering, which is needed to achieve peace. CSOs can not only be more efficient than the state, but they may also be more effective in reaching excluded groups which may be at the roots of the conflict. There is no doubt that as the state weakens during conflict, service provision by CSOs is not only extremely important for war-affected population, but it is only relevant for civil society peacebuilding if peace is an explicit objective. A major limiting factor to CSOs service delivery is the intensity of violence and service delivery when heavily funded can divert energies and resources from other CSOs activities.

Concluding Remarks
Civil society has unique potential in peacebuilding, but analysing CSOs from an actor-oriented perspective denies one a deeper understanding of its contributions to peacebuilding. A functional analysis of CSOs in peacebuilding brings to focus the Utstein peacebuilding palette and demonstrates the relevance of CSOs in supporting peacebuilding initiatives from the four components of the palette which is identified to include: security, socio-economic foundations, political framework and reconciliation and justice. The civil society has proven to be a major actor in delivering the objective of peacebuilding from this perspective. The main enabling and disenabling conditions for CSOs peacebuilding functions comes from the possibility of a coercive state, the level of violence, and level of influence from strong regional actors. Thus, the engagement of the international community in initiatives that can reduce violence and enhance protection and supporting initiatives that can strengthen the creation of an enabling environment can secure the fundamental precondition for CSOs to act.

An appropriate starting point for a more effective engagement of CSOs in peacebuilding is that civil society be viewed not from an 'actor-oriented' perspective but from the perspective of their functions. In view of this, the strategy must therefore seek to build the capacity of the civil society sector as much as those of their government and must emphasize a sustained rather than ad hoc engagement. The basis for this strategy should be structured to promote mutual benefit and respect and seek to draw on their wide outreach and mobilizing capacity to support peacebuilding initiatives. Ultimately, it should be based on recognition of the fact that in order to sustain peacebuilding efforts, all available capacities in the polity need to be mobilized. The civil society sector is clearly a critical resource in this regard. In spite of the functions of CSOs in peacebuilding, its support cannot replace political actions particularly in the areas of protection, socialisation and service delivery.

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