

CONFERENCE REPORT



ISTR Africa Regional Network Conference

“Civil Society and a Renascent Africa: A Stock Taking”

Mensvic Hotel – Accra, Ghana

19 – 20 April 2016

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AWDF	The African Women's Development Fund
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
IAS	The Institute of African Studies
ISSER	Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research
ISTR	International Society of Third Sector Research
ISTRAN	ISTR Africa Network
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
WACSI	West Africa Civil Society Institute

INTRODUCTION

The International Society for Third-Sector Research (ISTR) is a global membership association of scholars, researchers and practitioners. The Society's goal is to keep its constituency updated and engaged on issues related to civil society, philanthropy and the non-profit sector, otherwise known as Third Sector. It was founded in 1992 and is recognised and valued for its special role as a convenor of scholars and policy makers on the Third Sector from around the world.

The Society's mission is to promote the development of high quality research and education internationally on Third Sector related issues, theories and policies, and to enhance the dissemination and application of knowledge about the Third Sector as widely as possible throughout the world. ISTR strives to broaden the participation of researchers in all parts of the world and in all disciplines.

The ISTR Africa Network (ISTRAN) is one of the regional arteries of the global network. ISTRAN is a community of over 130 scholars and researchers of civil society working and living in African countries. It also includes members of the African diaspora who work in the USA and Europe. The network forms part of a larger global network of scholars with over 750 members. ISTRAN remains true to the global network's core mission. The specific goals and objectives are to develop a critical mass of African scholars dedicated to the field of Third Sector research. The aim is to help advance knowledge of the sector in Africa in all its ramifications through cutting edge research with a view of contributing to a better understanding of the economic, sociological, historical, cultural, legal and political implications of civil society in African societies.

ISTR organises conferences that provide a dynamic forum for the exchange of research findings in the field of Third Sector Studies. The ISTRAN conference takes place biennially. The last conference, themed "Faith, Civil Society and Development in Africa" was organised in Nairobi, Kenya from 11–13 July 2013 with the support of Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development (ACORD), University of Nairobi's Institute for Development Studies (IDS), University of Nairobi and the Ford Foundation.

Besides conferences, ISTRAN publishes papers presented in such conferences through its journal 'Voluntas', the International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organisations. Its regular newsletter publication also provides its constituents with another platform for engagement.

2016 Accra Conference

The 2016 ISTR Africa Regional Network conference, themed "Civil Society and Renascent Africa: A stocktaking" was held from April 19-20, 2016 in Accra, Ghana. It was organised in collaboration with the West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI), which hosted the conference and the Institute of African Studies (IAS) of the University of Ghana.

Civil society has been heralded as a key, theoretically and practically to a renascent Africa. The conference sought to examine the extent to which civil society has lived up to the expectations. Specifically, the conference took a stock of two decades of civil society praxis and its contributions to the imperatives of a renascent Africa. Researchers presented papers that addressed topics such as the historical antecedents of civil society in Africa, civil society's contributions to strengthening governance, civil society's role in the African integration agenda, civil society and neoliberalism, civil society and donor relations, African philanthropy and sustaining civil society's robustness and influence.

There were 56 participants made up of practitioners mainly from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) as well as coalitions, faith and community-based organisations, among others. Academics and scholars were also present at the conference. The conference boasted participants from 12 different countries including Kenya, South Africa, UK and the Netherlands, while the majority came from West Africa.

1.0 OPENING REMARKS

1.1 Nana Asantewa Afadzinu (Ms.) – Executive Director, WACSI

The Executive Director of WACSI, Ms. Nana Asantewa Afadzinu opened the 2016 ISTR Africa Regional Network conference by acknowledging that the days ahead offered a significant opportunity to engage issues that are usually not tackled, interrogate and discuss terms such as civil society and more broadly, its contributions to the necessities of a renascent Africa.

Ms. Afadzinu stated that although civil society is constantly evolving, it has in recent years gone through new transformations facilitated by the advent of social media platforms. Concretely, civil society in various parts of the African continent has found new and innovative ways to engage, complement or even advise governments. Nonetheless, there remain aversions to such engagements in various contexts.

Ms. Afadzinu pointed out the various issues to be addressed during the conference, including civil society's own sustainability as well as its relevance and impact, in the face of dependency on external donor funding. She further highlighted that with regards to the conference theme "Civil Society and a Renascent Africa: A Stock Taking" some participants might question the term 'renascent Africa' and debate its viability.

Ms. Afadzinu ended her opening address by expressing gratitude to the partners: The African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) and Ford Foundation for supporting the ISTRAN Conference and IAS for their partnership. She also thanked the participants for their presence.

1.2 Paul Dekker (Prof.) – Former ISTR Board Member

Prof. Paul Dekker, a professor of civil society at Tilburg University in the Netherlands expressed gratitude to the ISTR board for having him be their representative at the conference. He started by briefly presenting the understanding of the term 'civil society' in the Netherlands, and which he said was applicable in most Western European countries. He informed that in Western Europe, the meaning of civil society is evolving as in Africa. There are tensions in the usage of the term 'civil society', and Prof. Dekker expressed interest in learning about this matter during the course of the conference.

Prof. Dekker ended his opening remarks by expressing gratitude to WACSI, the ISTR, Prof. Francis Doodoo of IAS and Dr. Bhengkosi Moyo, an ISTR Board Member. He also thanked both Ms. Theo Sowa of AWDF and the Ford Foundation for funding the conference. He mentioned that Ms. Margery Daniels, the Executive Director of ISTR asked him to show appreciation to WACSI,

especially Ms. Nana Asantewa Afadzinu, Mr. Isaac Hubert Arthur and Mr. Charles Vandyck. On behalf of Ms. Daniels, Prof. Dekker presented to them gifts for their immense contributions and dedication to the 3rd ISTR Africa Regional Network Conference.

1.3 Francis Dodoo (Prof.) – Director, IAS (University of Ghana)

In his opening remarks, the Director of IAS, Prof. Francis Dodoo highlighted that Africa has seen in the past decades, the formation of groups recognised as civil society and which prospectively herald a renascent continent. He further mentioned that Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are expected to become groupings that will be powerful in reconstituting the state and developing democratisation objectives. He emphasized that the potential of civil society lies in its ability to significantly contribute to initiatives that sustain political reform, growth of legitimate states and governments, and viable state and economic relationships – all of which would inhibit the political decay that has undermined the African development paradigm.

Prof. Dodoo explained that the conference is organised against the aforementioned background in order to provide an opportunity for third sector scholars and practitioners to interrogate the growth and evolution of the civil society sector in Africa. With regards to IAS, he also stated his belief that the students' learning as well as professional and personal postures should be infused with a spirit of civil society engagement. He ended his remarks by urging participants to gain knowledge from the conference and to identify ways forward.

2.0 KEYNOTE ADDRESS: “CIVIL SOCIETY AND A RENASCENT AFRICA: A STOCK TAKING”

2.1 Theo Sowa (Ms.) – Chief Executive Officer, AWDF

Ms. Theo Sowa expressed her gratitude to WACSI and ISTR for inviting her to deliver the key note address. She urged participants to discuss the issues that are usually kept hidden. The meeting, she said, presented an opportunity to build on each other's knowledge, passions and concerns. She further hoped that much would be made out of the conference and that knowledge would be shared with actors equally interested in changing paradigms.

Speaking from her experience as an experienced development practitioner who had worked within the civil society sector at global and local levels, she mentioned that there were achievements to celebrate in relation to the work of civil society. Fully aware of the complexities of the term 'civil society', she requested pardon for her generalisation. On achievements, Ms. Sowa presented that civil society has been at the forefront of change in women's rights, with the example that many types of legislation (e.g. Maputo Protocol) on the continent are progressive around the promotion and implementation of women's rights. She mentioned that women's rights activists have been able to raise issues that hitherto had remained underground such as sexual violence/ violence against women. She presented and commended feats in child rights promotion and protection, spanning the areas of education and many others. She also mentioned the

commendable role civil society has played in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Ms. Sowa stated that presently, civil society is even advocating on more issues related to the extractive industries, tax justice and unequal power relations, although she admitted there remains a lot to be done.

Ms. Sowa identified the need to question the meaning of a renascent Africa and with CSOs also leading such dialogue. She hoped that civil society will envision a renascent Africa beyond economic growth and that it would include a redefinition of power relations, across the thematic areas of gender, social status and the like, in the hope that rights of all citizens will be achieved; especially the marginalised. According to Ms. Sowa, civil society ought to equally question values and principles that underlie the vision of a renascent Africa so as to promote positive values and principles that have the ability to strengthen the continent economically, socially, ethically, intellectually and morally. She called for the embracing and strengthening of positive cultural heritage and traditions, and to link them to new ways of envisioning Africa. Ms. Sowa also challenged civil society to play their role in identifying those practices that need to be abandoned. Overall, she stated that civil society will play an important role in the adoption of a definition of a renascent Africa.

Ms. Sowa further highlighted the need to challenge civil society to take its place and to continue to play a role in the social, economic and political change of the continent. Ms. Sowa asked the question of how civil society has to change and what needs to be done so civil society can step up and tackle the many issues, including that of governance. She recognised that indeed, CSOs could lead efforts to come out with new models of governance pertinent to the continent.

She also emphasized some challenges facing civil society, with the example that organisations that exist to make money rather than to effect change undermine the rest of civil society. She also identified concerns on funding, resources and resourcing, and navigating tensions relating to donor interests and accountability. On accountability, she stated that it went beyond finance and included issues around enforcing ethical standards, addressing right social issues as well as living principal values reflected by vision and mission statements. All in all, issues raised showed that there exists the need to prevent fragmentation and withering of the sector.

Ms. Sowa mentioned that researchers of the third sector have the potential to help civil society deal with some of the matters raised. She presented that there is a problem of insufficient documentation and that better documentation could capture models and other efficient strategies on the continent. There was potential and the responsibility to capture and promote lessons learnt and that would influence what needs to be changed to strengthen the impact of CSOs. She made reference to how Dr. Moyo and his team were able to change international discourse on the role of philanthropy in Africa, through their volume on the subject of African Philanthropy. Ms. Sowa emphasized that asking the right questions offer room to explore issues in depth. On research, she presented that external funding affects chosen topic and resulting outputs. She identified that as a challenge to the continent.

In her conclusion, Ms. Theo Sowa stated that it was her hope that the conference would make a difference by really exploring questions which plagued civil society and further using the gleaned information to produce think pieces and research work to help civil society make the needed contribution to development in Africa. She hoped that such efforts would help civil society to be

part of a renascent Africa that is about equality, strength and built on a heritage. She further expressed hope for a renascent Africa capable of leading a discussion that can cause a significant change in other parts of the world and in favour of Africa.

3.0 SESSION 1: CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

3.1 Nana Afadzinu (Ms.) – Executive Director, WACSI

Ms. Nana Asantewa Afadzinu, the Chairperson for the session, started by informing that the subsequent session would build on the brilliant foundation of the keynote address. Two research papers were presented in this session, with the first paper by Dr. Kenneth Aikins and the second paper by Mr. Okoli Rowland Chukwuma. She noted interesting points, to the effect that both papers explored civil society differently. After the Chairperson's introductory message and brief overview of the session, she gave the floor to each of the authors to present their papers.

3.2 Kenneth Akins (Dr.): Civil Society in Africa as a Conduit for Development through the Promotion of Peace

Dr. Aikin's paper examined the meanings that Africans attach to civil society, the perceptions of the role of civil society in the advancement of development, and also explored opinions on the role of civil society in the promotion of peace in times of conflict. Dr. Aikins also investigated the extent to which chosen institutions (which included civil society) are preferred in the peacebuilding process.

His paper concluded that majority of Africans understand the concept of 'civil society' to mean a group of citizens or NGOs with common interests and activities. He also identified that there was recognition of civil society's engagement in the reconstruction process of peacebuilding, and also as being an agent in negotiating new norms and governance. He touched on the emerging role of civil society as it relates to advocating for democratic law and order. Dr. Aikins also found that civil society is one of the preferred agency/institution in peacebuilding based on their autonomous and neutral stance. He recommended that civil society be considered a key player during the peacebuilding process. He also added that further research should be carried out on the potential of civil society in peacebuilding, with a focus on indigenous peacebuilding strategies.



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3.3 Okoli Chukwuma (Mr.): State-Civil Society Relations in the Era of Neoliberal Reforms: An Assessment of the Struggle in the Pension Reforms in Nigeria, 2004 – 2014

Mr. Okoli Chukwuma's paper investigated the changing nature of CSOs from pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial eras. His study examines state-civil society relations in the face of neoliberalism and provokes the questions around the character of civil society in Nigeria, how its character impacts the relationship with the post-colonial state which is associated with neoliberalism and how the character of civil society affects its capacity to advocate inclusive policy reforms favourable to the poor.

Using the case study of the pension reforms in Nigeria, Mr. Chukwuma concluded that civil society organisations currently exhibited a predatory nature which undermined their capacity to lobby for inclusive pension reforms. Mr. Chukwuma stated that the contributory pension scheme is being implemented in a manner that protects the interest of the capitalist class who are able to influence CSOs, while the lower class are left to bear the burden of the reform. He expressed that the CSOs are not concerned about masses and called for popular CSOs that will protect the vulnerable as it relates to the new contributory pension scheme. He recommended that CSOs, particularly labour unions and professional associations should be proactive and have larger society in mind when engaging the state on issues.



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Ms. Amy Oyekunle and Mr. Gideon Boako critiqued the papers of Mr. Aikins and Mr. Chukwuma respectively. They highlighted strengths, weaknesses and provided recommendations on the ways forward.

3.3.1 Amy Oyekunle (Ms.)—Gender and Development Consultant

Ms. Amy Oyekunle commented on the fact that development and peacebuilding initiatives are not mutually exclusive but rather reinforce each other. She suggested to include the dimension of women in peace building in the paper, given that women have played a key role in that space. Ms. Oyekunle called for a re-examination of the methodology. She agreed with the recommendations and further expressed that a regional focus would also reinforce the paper.

3.3.2 Gideon Boako (Mr.)—PhD Candidate, Wits Business School/ Associate Editor, Ghanaian Journal of Economics

Mr. Gideon Boako stated that Mr. Chukwuma gave insight into the relationship between CSOs and governments and also gave understanding into the pension scheme. He suggested merging some of the research questions. Mr. Boako also commented that it was possible to explore other factors, rather than to conclude that reforms were dominated by elites. He found the findings and conclusions quite general.

3.4 Plenary Discussion

During the plenary discussion, the methodology used in the research papers was queried and there were comments that called for papers to be restructured. There were concerns on the effectiveness of CSOs in meeting welfare needs and the need to examine which actors preferred CSOs. Calls were made to explore further the role of non-formal movements. Further comments were made on the need to investigate extreme social movements that were seen as agents of conflict. The issue of the constraints of neoliberalism for the development of Africa and the need for Africans to develop an economic paradigm that enabled the continent's development and put the people at the centre was highlighted.

The Chairperson concluded the session with remarks that touched on the need for more research and documentation of civil society and their interventions during pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods, to glean lessons that can inform the present. She also called for the deliberate exploration of better alternatives to the neoliberal economic paradigm for Africa and for civil society to be more involved in this endeavour.

4.0 PANEL DISCUSSION: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN AFRICA: SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

The panel, chaired by an experienced gender activist, was composed of three young women: two Mandela Washington Fellows and a Milead Fellow, an experienced scholar and a practitioner, respectively.

4.1 Rose Mensah-Kutin (Dr.) – Executive Director, Abantu for Development

Dr. Mensah-Kutin chaired the session and stated in her introductory remarks that the panel provided an opportunity to expand knowledge and learning on women's issues and emphasised the importance of women issues to all.

4.2 Dzodzi Tsikata (Prof.) – Associate Professor, ISSER, University of Ghana

Prof. Tsikata started by presenting that women have long been involved in the struggle for a better Africa and informed that women have changed the development course in many instances. They have elevated discourse on gender-based violence and more specifically, violence against women. Prof. Tsikata re-iterated that there have been achievements against a lot of odds and also identified that there was an opportunity for more to be done.

After questioning if Africa was really renascent, Prof. Tsikata honed in on the women's movement. She identified the changing face of activism by women from pre-colonial to current times and stated that beyond terms such as movements and groups the common mission of fighting for change stood out and was a unifying element. She welcomed dialogue specifically on definitions

and stated that undertaking such a task provided an opportunity to be even more aware of existing forms of gatherings.

Prof. Tsikata recognised the current surge of young female activists, a development she lauded. She mentioned the African Feminist Forum as having good linkages with achievements and said gains had been made in the social sphere with a broad acceptance of the need to promote gender equality, although there still remain challenges. She added that there were challenges within most African countries and that policies which support women in pregnancy, childbirth, and politics had few achievements.

Prof. Tsikata concluded by stating that there is a future for women's movements. She recognised the need for intergenerational dialogue stating if generations linked more, there would be positive dividends to be reaped.

4.3 Sefora Marcelle Kodjo (Ms.) – Sephis, Mandela Washington Fellow

Ms. Sefora Kodjo, a young Ivorian and a Mandela Washington Fellow was of the view that although some movements were not officially recognised, they did contribute to effective change. She cited the example that women in her village, Tiassalé, organized unofficially to protect women rights in relation to their agricultural land. She entreated the need to acknowledge such rural women that are realizing great achievements.

Ms. Kodjo mentioned that there was much resistance when it came to addressing issues considered sensitive. She called for women's movements to continue to push and to ensure that every issue could be brought to the table, acknowledging that a rights-based approach could be used to address concerns.

On challenges, Ms. Kodjo identified a gap in the transfer of knowledge from the older generation to the younger generation and said there was a need to develop upcoming female leaders, an endeavour that her organisation, SEPHIS was interested in, and which is being currently undertaken more from the angle of peer-to-peer engagement. She noted that issues differ by country, population and ages, and made it sometimes difficult to have a unified voice but urged people involved in movements to indeed advocate for the key issues affecting the citizenry, rather than use such platforms for personal gratification.

4.4 Mirabel Nfihkela Ngong (Ms.) – Mandela Washington Fellow

A young Mandela Washington Fellow from Cameroon, Ms. Ngong stated that although there have been feats with regards to women movements, there was still much to be done. She cited that women's movements had stood the test of time and contributed greatly in the political processes and paid tribute to the efforts of civil society in ensuring an expansion of the political space for women's participation. Using a case in Cameroon, she gave an example of the Takembeng/Takumbeng, a female social movement in the Northwest Region of Cameroon that has gained many strides. She mentioned some note-worthy advancements in legislation, and in countries such as Senegal, Cameroon, Mauritius, Rwanda, among others. She however called for greater positive impact from women who had been given the opportunity through this advocacy

to take up the political space. There was the need to move beyond mere representation to significant impact, she said.

Some of the challenges she identified include political compromise by women in leading positions, the lack of quality education and societal stereotypes against feminists and feminism. She also echoed the challenges related to mentoring and inter-generational knowledge transfer.

4.5 Mawuli Dake (Mr.) – Co-Founder, Moremi Initiative

Mr. Mawuli Dake, Executive Director of the Moremi Initiative, a programme dedicated to raising young women leaders informed the meeting of the Initiative's mission. He stated, that Moremi Initiative is a movement of women's rights and social justice activists and broadly, change agents on the continent who engage in critical issues and contribute to positively impact their communities. He presented their successes stating that together these individuals form a growing powerful Pan-African community that can dramatically impact the future of the continent. Mr. Dake further pointed out that at societal levels, women's movements and struggles have forced attitudinal and cultural change. He commended achievements of the Solidarity for African Women's Rights (SOAWR), the West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) and the Women Peace and Security Network Africa (WIPSEN), as movements furthering dialogue on women issues. Overall, he presented that women's movements are the most active, consistent, resilient and visible on the continent today.

Challenges identified were that some people were consumers rather than contributors to networks, and called for inclusive participation of individuals. He also identified the possible passivity that the use of technology in activism could pose. He mentioned the need for good leadership, and sustained momentum on the part of individuals involved in movements. He concluded by calling for a multigenerational approach, and an increased involvement in movements in the fight against inequality and for inclusivity on the continent.

4.6 Saajida Shiraz (Ms.) – Programme Officer, Moremi Initiative/MILEAD Fellow

As a product of the Moremi Initiative and a MILEAD fellow, Ms. Saajida Shiraz introduced herself as a beneficiary of the activities of women's movement in Africa, and gave account of her involvements with organizations leading transformational leadership and intergenerational mentoring in Africa. She stated that the benefits also gave her the opportunity to mentor other young women. She mentioned that she is impressed by the successes of the organizations and identified that more efforts need to be made to reach out to even more young women. She advocated that young women should be valued, given a voice and acknowledged for their work and urged that environments imbued with a spirit of solidarity should be open to more women with the mission to provide a space where these individuals can thrive.

Ms. Shiraz attributed her success in finding her voice to women's movements and expressed hope that more people across the continent would have access to such feminist movements. She concluded by stating that women's movement in Africa has come a long way with successes seen in the numbers; increased number of girl child enrolments, increased number of women in

leadership positions, increased reported cases of domestic violence, and a perceived decrease in domestic violence.

4.7 Plenary Discussion

The Chairperson, Dr. Mensah-Kutin summarised that the panel provided information on the history and changing character of women's movements, gave insight into inspirational grass root initiatives and a home-grown leadership program, and offered the opportunity for personal testimonies.

The panel discussion was followed by a discussion that touched on matters such as the involvement of men in dialogue pertaining to women's issues, the idea of African feminism, the place of traditions and culture in dialogue, education of upcoming generation, women empowerment in olden days, current women empowerment strategies and the need for dialogue beyond women's empowerment. More broadly, gender issues, sexuality, multi-generational mentoring, education of women, feminist strategies, exploring gaps between elite and grassroots organisations, human rights – approach to dealing with issues, education on gender issues and exploring the levels at which women's movement work were discussed.

Dr. Mensah-Kutin concluded by stating that it was an insightful panel discussion and called for practitioners to partner with academics to investigate issues in the forward march to position the continent for a transformational change.

5.0 KEYNOTE ADDRESS: “CIVIL SOCIETY AND PHILANTHROPY IN AFRICA”

5.1 Bhekinkosi Moyo (Dr.) – Chief Executive Officer, Southern Africa Trust

Dr. Bhekinkosi Moyo, the Executive Director of the Southern Africa Trust and the current Africa Board Member of the ISTR gave the second keynote address. He started by thanking WACSI for organising the conference and commended the coordinating team for their hard work and dedication. Dr. Moyo revealed that he began his work on philanthropy after having identified a gap in relation to the discourse on philanthropy in Africa, during his PhD thesis. He has been elevating discourse on the issue ever since to fill the gap.

Dr. Moyo stated that there is a distinction between Philanthropy in Africa and African Philanthropy. He added that there has been a rise in dialogue pertaining to philanthropy in development discourse. He made reference to the inclusion of philanthropy in national development agendas and in global development agenda such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He called on civil society to pay attention to the changing landscape. On African philanthropy or philanthropy in Africa, Dr. Moyo identified the need to further position discourse at academic and intellectual levels, to produce continent-specific outputs.

Dr. Moyo re-iterated the need to define African philanthropy from an African perspective. He informed that philanthropy goes beyond money and included social and intellectual capital. Dr.

Moyo further informed that there was an increase in private wealth. Additionally, according to Dr. Moyo, there is an increase in giving by high net worth Africans and who mainly give within the borders of their countries, rather than regionally. He recognised that this trend held potential for philanthropy and could help curtail the concerns around donors driving the agenda. He advised civil society to tap into these circles, and to note that the sectors of interest are education and health. Dr. Moyo also urged CSOs to pursue local giving initiatives.

According to Dr. Moyo, research shows that majority of funding to civil society in Africa was from philanthropies from Europe and US. He presented that the visibility of Africa as a target for philanthropic investment by American foundation has increased dramatically since 2002. It was also presented that organizations mainly fund in and around the areas in which they are situated, while employing a geo-political strategic mentality in most of their engagements. Despite the compelling and urgent issues civil society is involved in such as economic and social inequality, high unemployment, health care and increased threats of terrorism, most of the funding are not directed towards such issues. They mainly reflect the interests of donors rather than the needs of countries. Dr. Moyo called for CSOs to work on such matters.

Dr. Moyo concluded by stating the implications of philanthropy for civil society. He emphasized that pursuing philanthropy could provide alternative sources of resources which would lead to more self-reliant structures as well as spearhead efforts to serve the masses. He identified the need to create an enabling legal framework on the continent such as taxation and philanthropic laws. He identified that civil society also could benefit from such developments and called to advocate legislation for an enabling environment.

Dr. Moyo emphasized that philanthropy is on the increase. He made further additions hammering the need for more research on resources, and also stated that there was the question of how to change traditional thinking in relation to philanthropy.



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There was a brief time for discussion. The idea of re-investing private money for public good was shared as being an underlying premise for philanthropy work. Additionally, concerns touched on the need to question philanthropy endeavours of institutions/ individuals linked to corruption practices and human right violations, respectively. Generally, the main idea of philanthropy as an alternative source of funding for civil society was very clear.

6.0 MODELLING THE INFLUENTIAL IMPACT OF CSOs IN AFRICA

6.1 Yao Graham (Dr.) – TWN-Africa

Dr. Graham, the Chair mentioned that there would be three presentations rather than four and welcomed the first presentation. He gave a brief overview of the session, after which the researchers presented papers.

6.2 George Awalla (Mr.): The Role of Civil Society in Strengthening the Impact of Community-based Volunteering in Korogocho, Nairobi

Mr. Awalla's paper examined the role of civil society in strengthening the impact of community-based volunteering in Korogocho, Nairobi. The questions asked include how volunteering affects poverty, the perception of local volunteers and the role of civil society in supporting volunteers. The key findings stated that there is a positive impact of community based volunteering, with both formal and informal volunteering improving the well-being of people. Volunteerism also enabled support to some of Korogocho's most vulnerable people, such as at-risk women, drug addicts and criminals. Additionally, the formalisation of volunteer activity had challenged the effectiveness of volunteer interventions, with some viewing it as low paid jobs.

The research also revealed that CSOs had a role to play in strengthening and overcoming challenges of community based volunteering. It was also highlighted that trust played an important factor in volunteering initiatives. The paper recommended that CSOs should invest in volunteering programs. Also, there was a call for more research on the link between financial incentives and volunteering. Mr. Awalla concluded that volunteering can fill critical gaps and highlighted that it has gained recognition within the SDGs framework. He asked that volunteers be provided with a thriving environment and given roles well suited to their profiles.

6.3 Abah Danladi (Mr.): Civil Society and Democratic Governance in Nigeria's Fourth Republic: A Historical Reflection

Mr. Abah Danladi, the presenter, mentioned that the work is a joint paper with Adihion, Tanako Angyetsokwa. The paper looked at the nexus between civil society and democratic governance. He started with the introduction that civil society groups have been agents of change in the country and have helped deepen democratic governance. The paper after having examined CSOs, sheds light into the evolution of their involvement with the nation's current democratic governance. The paper ascertains that the current democratic dynamics in Nigeria stifles the growth and effective functioning of civil society and as such, has caused a decline in the roles of civil society in contemporary democratic governance in Nigeria.

The work concludes that although CSOs have had commendable achievements in the past in relation to the democratization process, there has been laxity in activism since the 1980s and 1990s due to an unfavourable climate. Further, despite a surge in CSOs, there has not been significant impact on democratic governance.

Recommendations include that CSOs reduce their over dependence on foreign donors often with skewed interests. Other findings suggested to build the capacity of civil society leaders and advocates. The authors further called for restructuring within CSOs to enable them prod issues relating to governance, and to be a voices for welfare and the masses.

6.4 Kehinde Olayode (Dr.): Society in Protest: Social Movements and Resistance to Economic Neoliberalism in Africa

Dr. Kehinde Olayode's paper explored the question of if economic prescriptions of neo-liberalism are compatible with democratic norms. He also investigated the facets of social movements' resistance to neo-liberalism in Africa, how transnational forces have influenced social movements'

resistance in Africa and the implications of social movements' resistance for conventional discourse on civil society and governance. Dr. Olayode also explored if a fully African democratic project can be sustained in the context of neo-liberalism.

Dr. Olayode concluded by citing that African social movements have been on the forefront in making crucial changes in economic, politics and labour relations across Africa. He also informed that African issues had been placed on the global agenda as a result of social struggles. He identified limitations that spanned areas such as funding, organizational strength, technology and participation. He also concluded that the potency of African social movements has been limited as a result of ethno-religious polarisation.



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6.4.1 George Bimpeh (Mr.) – Executive Director, SEND Ghana

Mr. Bimpeh stated that the paper provided a good narrative to rethink volunteering in Africa in a context-specific case. He stated that although methodology was commendable, a complementary quantitative approach would strengthen the work. Not exhaustive of all his points, he suggested to include evidence to back some of the key findings, an example being to provide the magnitude of the impact in poverty reduction. He also mentioned that it was possible to explore motivation beyond stipend. He further asked to investigate the interrelated forces shaping volunteerism in Africa. He recommended that content should be even more detailed to enable other CSOs learn from strategies that are effective.

6.4.2 Lehlohonolo Tlou (Prof.) – Associate Director, Centre for Regional Integration in Africa (CRIA)

Prof. Lehlohonolo Tlou firstly commended the presentation. She suggested that the first part with key terms be strengthened. She also advised that discussions be deepened on civil society interventions and how such initiatives have managed to strategically shape democratic governance. She recommended to broaden the terminology of governance, which would give room to examine the extent to which input from civil society formulated matters such as a development agenda. By this suggestion, she stated that it would enable the paper to further focus on the proactive engagement of CSOs. Other questions raised touched on sustainability, political implications of recommended trust fund, among others.

6.4.3 Kanio Gbala (Mr.) – Trust Africa

Mr. Kanio Gbala discussed the third paper. He mentioned that it was a brilliant review and suggested to include in the paper, the dimension of leadership. He stated that the abdication of responsibility by African leaders had to be explored and he informed that there was an opportunity to explore good leadership models that could be promulgated on the continent.

6.5 Plenary Discussion

Dr. Graham raised a few points for discussion. Some included to further discuss the term ‘volunteers’ by examining what can be considered volunteering in CSOs and to generally look at the continuum of the volunteers and their relation with CSOs. Also, with specific reference to the second paper, he elucidated that the discussion of types and diversities of CSOs spelled a complex nature of these organisations; a reflection of the diversity of society and needs. He stated that in the face of being aware of the intricacies, there was much expectation placed on these CSOs as if entreating all to work on democratisation issues. Dr. Graham also asked to investigate interface on the terms civil society, CSOs and social movements.

There was a lively discussion that spanned areas such as setting the right expectation of volunteers, discussing volunteerism within an African context, exploring local resources, volunteerism and sustainability, and developing frameworks for volunteerism. There was also the call to view democracy as a spectrum and to investigate specific parts in relation to CSO involvements, to produce good database for CSOs and to develop indicators to assess civil society work. There were concerns with regards to how extreme movements are responding to neo-liberalism as well as the characterisation of rural groups within a neoliberal framework and the limitations that it poses.

7.0 SUSTAINING CIVIL SOCIETY IN AFRICA

7.1 John Patrick Ngoyi (Father) – JDPC, Nigeria

The session was chaired by Father Ngoyi.

7.2 Sholagbade Abiola (Mr.): A Critical Appraisal of the Importance and Constraints of Civil Society Organizations in the Democratic Governance in Nigeria

Before Mr. Sholagbade Abiola expounded on his paper, he stated that he realised after Mr. Danladi’s presentation that their work was similar, and clarified that it was not a case of collusion. In his paper, Mr. Abiola explored the expected roles as well as the methods and involvements of civil society groups in contemporary Nigerian politics, governance and in the economy. In addition, he researched the influence of CSOs in the abovementioned areas.

His research work concluded that the perception of CSOs has become more complicated in recent years. He informed that like the state, they had equally failed in living up to their missions and visions, and had been plagued with corruption issues, lack of unity and partisanship, among other drawbacks. Abiola recommended that CSOs revamp their capacity, foster a sense a unity, and overall, effectively deal with issues.

7.3 Omolara Balogun (Ms.): The State of Civil Society Organisations’ Sustainability in Ghana, commissioned by WACSI in 2014

The goal of the research was to explore, gather, and share knowledge on civil society sustainability in order to kick off a regional agenda. With a focus on Ghana, the objectives included to explore the diverse meanings of sustainability to/for civil society, examine the “state of sustainability” of civil society, identify relevant criteria to measure the sustainability of civil society, identify key challenges threatening the sustainability of civil society, determine how the sustainability of civil

society organizations impact their work and to collate different sustainability strategies that civil society organizations are using.

The conclusion and recommendations included the need to diversify financial resources, institutionalize structures and practices of good governance, invest in capacity building even in the face of dwindling funds, run a periodic health check on relevance, mission and programmes, share results broadly and invest in visibility, enhance quality of service delivery, enhance influential power, have good leadership, undertake strategic alliances with private sector and to plan for sustainability. Ms. Balogun in her concluding remarks cited that the overall picture deduced from the study is that numerous organisations are striving to operate, others are just surviving the change and many others are actually thriving. While it can be concluded that the state of sustainability of civil society in Ghana is challenging, she informed that there was hope for the sector.



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7.3.1 Titilope Ajayi-Mamattah – Principal Consultant, TAM Advisories

Ms. Ajayi-Mamattah commended Mr. Abiola for efficiently describing tensions as it relates to the perception of what civil society should do, against the reality of civil society. She suggested a definition of civil society for the purposes of the paper. She challenged some of the conclusions stating that rethinking the use of the word ‘civil society’ in an African context analytically and practically could provide a framework to re-explore some conclusions from the paper. She expounded on the role of women’s political involvement and activism in Nigeria and suggested that the author could explore further, government perception of protests on women issues led by women movements. She advised to frame financial concerns within the wider frame of sustainability. Not exhaustive of all her points, Ms. Ajayi-Mamattah also mentioned that other areas that could be explored include the relation between CSOs and social movements, regulation in civil society and ethics within which CSOs work.

7.3.2 Roosa Jolkkonen (Ms.) – PhD Candidate, University of Oxford

Ms. Roosa Jolkkonen in her comments commended the paper, stating that the sustainability strategies were relevant to other African countries. She also applauded the use of specific examples in the work. She expressed that further, different levels of sustainability can be explored. Ms. Jolkkonen also suggested to have a detailed description of organisations included in the research paper. This, she said, would allow for a comparative study and enable lessons to be drawn on what types of organisations are doing well. Ms. Jolkkonen also mentioned that factors affecting sustainability could be categorised as external or internal. She identified that there were many interlinkages that can be made in the analysis section of the work.

7.4 Plenary Discussion

Father Ngoyi commented on sustainability. He mentioned that the struggle for change would continue even in the context of limited funding, stating that it was the kind of activities pursued that would differ rather than an abrupt end to advocating for transformation. He pointed that the existence of the desire in itself to effect change for the welfare and wellbeing of Africans spelled

sustainability. In making reference to women groups in markets, who are not tangled in donor discourse, and have been effective and resilient in endeavours, he pointed that activism without donor dependency was not impossible. Father Ngoyi called relevant stakeholders to be up to date with global discussions. He also identified the need to re-examine the neoliberal agenda. Finally, he challenged all to form partnerships without much dependency, to contest and change policies that are not beneficial and to be viable agents of change.

Participants also raised the issues of sustainability, donor interest, leadership, strategies for sustainability, 'projectisation' of CSOs as a result of funding issues, perceptions of NGOs and indigenous grassroots CSOs. The need for an enabling operational environment was echoed. Some participants also asked to foster a solution oriented mentality among Africans and a mission driven mentality among CSOs. The role of diaspora involvement in supporting CSOs initiatives was also highlighted.

8.0 PUBLISHING WORKSHOP: “STEPS TO GETTING YOUR RESEARCH PUBLISHED”

Prof. Paul Dekker encouraged practitioners and scholars to publish, after giving insights into publishing. He presented the types of publications, gave insight into academic journals, presented the order for writing empirical articles and informed on the publishing cycle. Finally, he shared extensively on 'Voluntas' and other journals and series that are relevant to the field of civil society.

After the presentation, he answered questions that some participants had on self-plagiarism, costs associated with publishing, to name a few.

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9.0 MOVING FORWARD AND CLOSING REMARKS

9.1 Nana Asantewa Afadzinu (Ms.) – Executive Director, WACSI

Ms. Afadzinu gave the closing remarks. She reiterated it was a rare opportunity for civil society practitioners and researchers to undertake such an exercise of introspection and collaboratively.

In addition to the publishing of the research papers in the 'Voluntas' Journal by ISTR, she urged all to move on with ideas from the conference. She asked thinkers to engage issues on the current neoliberal development paradigm, African philanthropy, the sustainability of civil society, independent resourcing strategies and African feminism. Ms. Afadzinu further urged to identify what can be learnt from the past in relation to the aforementioned issues. She stated that much had to change in order to have a truly renaissance Africa.

She thanked all for their active participation and for making excellent contributions to the issues discussed. She mentioned that WACSI, IAS and ISTR would look at ways to advance discourse on matters raised and asked participants to continue discussion in their spaces.

9.2 Paul Dekker (Prof.) – Former ISTR Board Member

Prof. Dekker was grateful for the organisation of the conference. He also stated that he appreciated the combination of researchers and practitioners. He found discussions focused and interesting and was able to draw a parallel with some issues, such as volunteerism and dependency, to be discussed at the global conference. He again informed on the global ISTR conference to be held in Stockholm from 28 June to 01 July 2016 and recognised that it was possible to explore means for people in the Africa region to be involved, citing possible video conferencing strategies.

Prof. Dekker asked for papers to be submitted to ‘Voluntas’ and suggested that general project information of organisations be sent to the insight journal of ISTR, as it could be a way to organise people interested in specific issues. He concluded by again, expressing his delight at the organised conference.

9.3 Bhekinkosi Moyo (Dr.) – ISTR Board Member/Southern Africa Trust

As the current Africa Board Member of ISTR, Dr. Moyo gave insights into the workings of the Board and provided information pertinent to the Africa region. He urged participants to be on the lookout for information from ISTR on several subjects. Dr. Moyo also mentioned that there is not a host for ISTRAN Conferences and identified that recruiting a full time, or part time co-ordinator for the region would make ISTRAN sustainable. On behalf of the board, he thanked WACSI, especially Ms. Afadzinu, Mr. Arthur and Mr. Vandyck. Dr. Moyo also expressed thanks to Prof. Dekker for his presence.

ANNEX 1: MEDIA COVERAGE

<http://www.modernghana.com/news/687062/civil-society-actors-brainstorm-at-3rd-istr-conference.html>

<http://xyzafricanewsbulletinat8.blogspot.com/2016/04/xyz-africa-news-bulletin-20h00-19-april.html?m=0>

<https://www.ghanabusinessnews.com/2016/04/19/civil-society-organisations-called-upon-to-uphold-integrity/>

<http://www.newsghana.com.gh/csos-in-africa-charged-to-make-themselves-accountable/>

<http://www.ghana.gov.gh/index.php/media-center/news/2701-ghana-hosts-africa-regional-conference-on-civil-society>

ANNEX 2: CONFERENCE AGENDA

Time	Duration	Session	Resource Persons		
DAY ONE: 19 APRIL 2016					
08:30 – 09:30	30 min	Arrival and registration of participants			
09:30 – 10:30	60 min	Opening session: Welcome & Introduction	Nana Asantewa Afadzinu, WACSI Prof. Paul Dekker, Former Board Member, ISTR Prof. Francis Doodoo, IAS, University of Ghana		
09:30 – 10:00	30 min			Welcome address	
10:00 – 10:30	30 min			Keynote Address “Civil Society and a Renascent Africa; A Stock Taking”	Theo Sowa, Executive Director, AWDF
10:30 – 10:35	5 min			Overview of agenda and objectives	Isaac Hubert Arthur, WACSI
10:35 – 11:00	30 min	Tea and coffee break			
11:00 – 13:00		Session 1: Civil Society and Development in Africa			
11:00 – 11:15	15 min	Chair’s Opening Remarks	Nana Asantewa Afadzinu, WACSI		
11:15 – 11:35	20 min	Paper – Civil Society in Africa as a conduit for development through the promotion of peace (Kenneth Aikins, Author)	Amy Oyekunle, Gender and Development Consultant (Discussant)		
11:35 – 11:50	20 min	Paper- State-Civil Society relations in the era of neo-liberal reforms: An assessment of the struggle in the pension reforms in Nigeria, 2004-2014 (Okoli Rowland Chukwuma, Author)	Gideon Boako, University of Witwatersrand (Discussant)		
11:50- 12:10	20 min	Discussions			
12:10 – 12:30	20 min	Chair’s summary	Nana Asantewa Afadzinu, WACSI		
12:30 – 13:00	30 min	Plenary discussion: Questions, Answers & contributions			

13:00 – 14:00		Lunch	
14:00 – 15:30		Panel Discussion: The Significance of the Women’s Movement in Africa: Successes and Challenges	
14:00- 14:15	15 min	Chair’s Opening Remarks	Dr. Rose Mensah-Kutin, Abantu for Development
14:15 - 14:30	15 min	Panel Member	Prof. Dzodzi Tsikata, ISSER
14:30 – 14:45	15 min	Panel Member	Sefora Marcelle Kodjo, Sephis, MWF
14:45 – 15:00	15 min	Panel Member	Mirabel Nfihkela Ngong, MWF
15:00– 15:15	15 min	Panel Member	Mawuli Dake, Moremi Institute
15:10– 16:00	15 min	Panel Member	Saajida Shiraz, Milead Fellow
16:00 – 16:15	15 min	Chair’s summary	Dr. Rose Mensah-Kutin, Abantu for Development
16:15 – 17:00	45 min	Plenary discussion: Questions, Answers & contributions	
17:00 –	30 min	Closing of day one and Tea Break	
18:00 – 20:00	60 min	Group Dinner and Networking	
DAY TWO: 20 APRIL 2016			
08:30 – 09:30	30 min	Arrival and registration of participants	
09:30– 10:00	30 min	RECAP of DAY 1	
10:00– 10:30	30 min	Keynote Address “Civil Society and Philanthropy in Africa”	Dr. Bhekinkosi Moyo, Southern Africa Trust
10:30– 11:00	30 min	Tea and Coffee Break	

11:00– 13:00		Session 3: Modelling the influential impact of CSOs in Africa	
11:00 – 11:15	15 min	Chair’s Opening Remarks	Dr. Yao Graham, TWN-Africa
11:15 – 11:30	15 min	Paper – The role of civil society in strengthening the impact of community based volunteering in Korogocho, Nairobi (George Awalla, Author)	Mr. George Bimpeh, SEND Ghana(Discussant)
11:30 – 11:45	15 min	Paper- Civil Society and Democratic Governance in Nigeria’s Fourth Republic: A historical reflection (Abah Danladi, Author)	Prof. L. Tlou, CRIA (Discussant)
11:45 – 12:00	15 min	Paper- Society in protest: Social Movements and Resistance to economic Neoliberalism (Kehinde Olayode, Author)	Mr. Kanio Gbala Esq., Trust Africa (Discussant)
12:00 – 12:15	15 min	Discussions	
12:15 – 12:25	20 min	Chair’s Summary	Dr. Yao Graham, TWN Africa
12:25 – 12:40	15 min	Plenary discussion: Questions, Answers & contributions	
12:40 – 13:00	20 min		
13:00 – 14:00	60 min	Lunch	
14:00 – 16:00	120 min	Session 4: Sustaining Civil Society in Africa	
14:00- 14:15	15 min	Chair’s Opening Remarks	Father John Patrick Ngoyi, JDPC, Nigeria
14:15 – 14:35	20 min	Paper- A critical appraisal of the importance and constraints of civil society organisations in the	Titi Mamattah, TAM Advisories (Discussant)

14:35 – 14:55	20 min	Democratic Governance in Nigeria (Sholagbade Abiola)	Roosa Jolkkonen, University of Oxford (Discussant)
14:55 – 15:20	25 min	Paper – Civil Society strengthening and sustainability in Africa (Omolara Balogun)	
15:20 – 15:30	10 min	Discussants	
15:30 – 16:00	30 min	Chair's summary	
16:00 – 17:00	60 min	Plenary discussion: Questions, Answers & contributions	Father John Patrick Ngoyi, JDPC, Nigeria
16:00 – 17:00	60 min	Session 5: Publishing Workshop	Dr. Paul Dekker, Former ISTR board member and editor of the Book Series: Non-profit and Civil Society Studies: An International Multidisciplinary Series
16:00 – 16:30	30 min	Presentation - Steps to Getting your Research Published	
16:30 – 17:00	30 min	Questions & Answers	
17:00 –		Session 6: Moving Forward and Closing Remarks	Prof. Paul Dekker, ISTR Nana Afadzinu, WACSI

ANNEX 4: CONFERENCE PHOTOS



