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THE ROLE OF CIVIL ACTORS IN PEACE MEDIATION AND POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION: A FOCUS ON NIGERIA

EKERETTE EWANG SAMPSON

A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

June 2020

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Acknowledgements

First, I would like to share my sincere gratitude to all those people and organisations that have helped and made it possible for this thesis to be completed. I want to thank my parents and siblings for giving me the support even through hard times and funding my fieldworks and travelling to Nigeria and back to the United Kingdom.

I would also like to thank my supervisors, Dr Catherine McGlynn and Dr Shaun McDaid, for their support and suggestions that helped me complete this thesis. This thesis would not have been completed without their help. I would also like to acknowledge and thank all the people and organisations that participated in the research. I would again thank God for keeping me alive to see the completion of this thesis and giving me good health even with all that happened in all the years I toiled and struggled. My appreciation also goes to the University of Huddersfield, for it has been a great time working in the university's environment and making cherished friendships and networks.

I would also extend my gratitude to my family for the advice and support both materially and emotionally. Without them, I would not have had the strength and mental capacity to keep pace with the PhD program.

List of Abbreviations

AAPW	Academic Associates Peace Works
ACF	Arewa Consultative Forum
ADLN	Association of Democratic Lawyers
AG	Action Group
APC	All Progressives Congress
AQIM	Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
ASUU	Academic Staff Union of Universities
BPW	Federation of Business and Professional Women
CAC	Corporate Affairs Commission
CAN	Christian Association of Nigeria
CAPP	Community Action for Popular Participation
CBN	Central Bank of Nigeria
CD	Campaign for Democracy
CDD	Centre for Democracy and Development
CDHR	Committee for the Defence of Human Rights
CLEEN	Centre for Law Enforcement Education Nigeria
COWAD	Community Women and Development
CPED	Centre for Population and Environmental Development
CRP	Constitutional Rights Project
DA	Democratic Alternative
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
ERA	Environmental Rights Action
ERC	Electoralreform committee
FOI	Freedom of Information Bill
FOMWAN	Federation of Muslim Women Associations in Nigeria
GPI	Girls Power Initiative
ICCT	International Centre for Countering Terrorism
IDPs	Internally displaced people
IFMC	Interfaith Mediation Centre
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INC	Ijaw National Congress
IPOB	Indigenous People of Biafra
IYC	Ijaw Youth Council

JAAIDS	Journalists against AIDS
JTF	Joint Task Force
MACBAN	Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association
MAN	Manufacturers Association of Nigeria
MASSOB	Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra
MEND	Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger-Delta
MJTF	Military Joint Task Force
MOSIEN	Movement for the Survival of Ijaw Ethnic Nationalist
MOSOP	Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People
MOSOP	Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People
MRA	Media Rights Agenda
MRM	Media Rights Movement
MURIC	Muslim Rights Concern
MWAN	Market Women Association of Nigeria
NACA	National Agency for the Control of AIDS
NACATT	National Civil Society Coalition against Third Term
NADECO	National Democratic Coalition
NALICON	National Liberation Council of Nigeria
NANS	National Association of Nigerian Students
NAPTIP	National Agency for the Prohibition in Trafficking of Persons
NBA	Nigerian Bar Association
NCNC	National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons
NCWS	National Council of Women Societies
NDDB	Niger Delta Development Board
NDDC	Niger Delta Development Commission
NDPVF	Niger-Delta People's Volunteer Force
NDVF	Niger Delta Volunteer Force
NIREC	Nigerian Inter-Religious Council
NLC	Nigerian Labour Congress
NMA	Nigerian Labour Congress
NNPC	Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation
NOA	National Orientation Agency
NPC	Northern People’s Congress
NPN	National Party of Nigeria
NUJ	Nigerian Union of Journalists
OMPADEC	Oil Mineral Producing Area Development Commission

ONSA	Office of The National Security Adviser
OPC	Oodua People's Congress
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
PANDEF-	Pan Niger Delta Forum
PEDO	Peace and Development Organization
PREDA	Peace, Reconciliation and Development Association
SACA	State agency for the Control of AIDS
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
SNC	Sovereign national conference
SNG	Save Nigeria Group
SWAAN	Society for Women and AIDS in Africa
TUC	Trade Union Congress
UAD	United Alliance for Democracy
UDFN	United Democratic Front of Nigeria
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN	United Nations
WAF	Women Advancement Forum
WANEP	West Africa Network for Building Peace
WASU	West African Students Union
WEST	West African Students Union
WILDAF	Women in Law and Development in Africa
WIN	Women in Nigeria

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to conceptualize Nigerian civil society, to assess its potential and capability of effectively mitigating ethno-religious conflicts in the nation. By conceptualizing civil society in Nigeria, the research points out the strengths and limitations to the concept's effectiveness, looking at the historical understanding of the concept in the Nigerian context, also contradictions and particularities embedded within traditional civil society, especially with the states inability to carry out its responsibility to its citizens.

In conducting this research, qualitative in-depth interviews of thirty-six civil society organisations were conducted, to contrast theoretical principles of the concept in order to understand the relevance of civil Societies in the resolution of ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria. The analysis will establish that the relationship between civil society and the state is characterized by civil society being critical of the Nigerian state without really opposing the state, although it is done in a tense and suspicious environment. Here, civil society is understood to work closely with the state to meet the socio-economic needs and aspirations of diverse groups. The analysis will also explain that the causes of conflict are social, economic, and political in nature, and that is why most of the organisation's carry out both direct and indirect roles in resolving conflicts. It will also show that though civil society organisations are involved in some direct conflict resolution roles, most organisations are involved in indirect socio-economic roles that they hope will mitigate against structural violence in Nigeria.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.0 Introduction

This chapter's intention provides a background to the concept of civil society to develop an understanding, which would have implications for theory and policy on civil society in Nigeria. The chapter provides a background to the study, looking at the history of conflicts in Nigeria and the need for civil society's involvement in mitigating conflicts that have arisen from contestations with the Nigerian state. Following from this is the research aims, objectives and research questions. Next, is the contribution to research, the definitions of terms before the chapter concludes with the thesis's structure.

1.1 Background to the study

The end of the Cold War has introduced a new era in international politics, as the global community have focused their attention to violent intra-state conflicts stretching across various countries, regions and continents of the world (Islam and Chakma, 2013). This surge in intrastate conflicts has seen several peacebuilding approaches employed by stakeholders to ensure sustainable peace and security in the international system. According to Cilliers and Schuenemann (2013), conflicts bring about diverse outcomes on individuals and society, which may include the loss of lives, properties, destruction of infrastructure, displacements and psychological trauma. Paffenholz (2006, p.15) defines peace building as "an overreaching term to describe a long-term process covering all activities with the objective to prevent violent outbreaks of conflicts or to sustainable transform armed conflict into constructive, peaceful ways of managing conflict". Therefore, the aim of peace building is to prevent and manage violent conflicts, while at the same time evolving processes that will bring about long-term sustainable peace.

The UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali in 1992, proposed a framework to manage international conflicts and introduced the term peace building (Paffenholz, 2006). Peace building as a concept before the 1990s focused on the role of external actors. But John Paul Lederach (Lederach, 1997), shifted the attention from external actors to actors within the conflict-affected countries. It still has to be discussed if westernized debates about civil society can be transferred to non-western nations.

Post-war reconstruction in peacebuilding; centres on democratization, good governance and economic development (Bah, 2012). Civil Non-state actors do not only seek to promote democracy but look to "provide humanitarian relief, persecute human rights abuses and promote human development" (Samu, 2013, p.10); which in the long run increases people's material, social and political wellbeing. Although most post-war reconstruction programs are embarked upon by state actors like the World Bank and the IMF; implementation of these programs at the grass-root level is mostly carried out by non-state actors (Ndegwa, 1996) who focus mainly on human development. The global political system makes it increasingly difficult for citizen participation in post-conflict peacebuilding. This difficulty stems from state actors being recognized as the only actors in the international system. This study seeks to bring to the forefront the idea of people-orientated participation in post-conflict mediation and post-war reconstruction, especially with the changing trends and patterns of conflict experienced after the end of the cold war. Civil Non-state actors such as community-based organizations can collaborate or partner with state actors to consolidate sustainable peace and development in conflict-prone societies. The concept of peacebuilding gained international significance at the end of the cold war in the 1990s. The focus of conflicts moved from intra-state conflicts to the management of conflicts within nation-states (Miall et al. 1999). The leading proponents of the peacebuilding debates were nation-states and the UN (Paffenholz, 2006).

Nigeria, a country with over 200 ethnic nationalities and a Christian / Muslim divide which was set in place by the colonial state to unite and control the diverse ethnic groups, has had its fair share of civil unrest amid calls for the country's disintegration (Leith and Solomon, 2001). The Nigerian state structure has not helped calm nerves either as ethnic politics and the states weak connection to Nigerian citizens, has accelerated their exit from the state (Geddes, 2010). Agitations and contestations have continuously shaped pre and post-independent Nigeria for the nation's citizens' socio-economic and political rights. These contestations stem from a colonial past where the British merged various ethnic groups that were politically and socio-culturally isolated and diverse. This, in turn, resulted in pre-independence conflicts (stemming from discrimination, exploitation, marginalisation and tribalism) prompting traditional, religious and ethnic associations to agitate against the discriminatory policies of the colonial state (Kew, 2016).

Post-independence Nigeria witnessed a violent civil war (Biafra civil war) in 1967, primarily fought to determine ethnic dominance and the nation's federal status leading to the deaths of between 500, 000 to 1,000,000 people (Graf, 1988). The conflict ended with the state government promising to resolve the endless cycle of intra- ethnic disputes. But that promise was not met as violent clashes raged on, post-independence without any hope of the countries ethno-religious conflicts being resolved. As Nigeria's economic outlook continued to decline from the 1980s to the late 1990s, military coups and counter-coups led to further confrontations between the state and various associations and groups such as student associations, trade unions, professional and business associations (Kew, 2016), as well as ethnic and community-based associations (International Crisis Group, 2017). The Nigerian states continuous deficient responses and solutions to these raging conflicts are further highlighted by the resurgence in clashes for land and resources (Graff, 1988), and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the northern region of the country (lyekekpolo, 2016). This has led to calls for a strategic response to these conflicts and the involvement of civil society organisations in Nigeria to help mitigate conflicts and build peace.

For its part, civil society is a concept that is continuously being debated as to its relevance in contexts that are not western in nature and in this case, the Nigerian context. To understand the peculiarities embedded in African civil society, it is necessary to analyse the arguments that lie within civil society theory. Civil society according to Diamond (1997, p.6), is 'the intermediary realm of organised social life that is civil, voluntary, autonomous from the state and bound by a legal order or set of shared rules … involves citizens acting collectively in the public sphere to express their preference and ideas'. By this definition, civil society is categorised as an intermediate sphere between the state and the market sphere standing alone in an independent sphere, where interests are articulated. Civil society is concerned with the public realm rather than the private as Diamond (1997, p.6) considers family life, the individual and inward-looking groups as 'parochial society'. In this sense, the western understanding of civil society excludes groups such as ethnic and traditional organisations (with informal structures) who may be capable of carrying out the same functions as their civic counterparts because of their inward-looking activities.

In contrast, Ekeh (1975, p.91), provides an idea about civil society in Africa by mentioning that the distinction between the public and the private realm 'limits the scope of politics in Africa'. His view on civil society opposes that of Diamond because there is no distinction between the public and the private sphere in Africa. His reason for this is that African civil society has two publics, one based on kinship primordial (informal, structured organisations) ties, which are linked to the individual (private); the other based on the colonial civil formal structures of the state, with no linkages to the private. This contradiction to the western understanding of civil society, calls to question its applicability to non-western contexts given that the private is excluded from the western definition of the concept. As a result of Africa's colonial history, associational life exists outside traditional western civil society ideas, given that citizens participate in the primordial public (in ethnic and religious organisations), who are not considered to be civil as a result of their neo-patrimonial relations with the state (Kasfir, 1998).

By characterising civil society organisations as ‘civil’, it excludes African ethnic and religious organisations who carry out functions that represent Nigerian citizens' interests and might not fulfil the civil criteria as understood in the traditional sense of the concept (Kasfir, 1998). Therefore, to examine organisations that aim to represent Nigerians' socio-economic and political interests, it is vital to stop thinking of primordial African organisations as uncivil. Instead, the field of organisations that carry out functions that can contribute to democracy should be expanded because not all ethnic or religious groups are aggressive (Kasfir, 1998).

Therefore, given the Nigerian state's failure to resolve the complex ethno-religious conflicts that have raged in the country’s history this research focuses on civil society organisations and their roles in resolving social, economic and political conflicts in Nigeria. This is because theoretical contradictions within civil society theory call for further research and given the need for more research within African contexts, this study is conducted in selected states in Nigeria.

1.2 Aims, goals of the project and the research question.

This study seeks to bring to the fore the idea that excluded groups’ participation and inclusion in the Nigerian socio-political system can lead to the reduction in the incidence of violent conflicts within the nation's communities. This is especially the case because these groups are understood to contradict the ideas that only civil groups are capable of ushering democratic norms and values. By engaging these groups in effective peace mediation and post-conflict reconstruction, these organisations can help consolidate sustainable peace and development in Nigerian Society in collaboration with the state.

This research aims to conceptualise Nigerian civil society to assess its potential and capability to mitigate ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria effectively. In conceptualising the Nigerian civil society, I analyse the contradictions and particularities embedded within traditional civil society, particularly the state's inability to carry out its responsibility of responding to citizen’s demands.

This study is critical because very few researchers have looked at civil society's role in resolving conflicts in Nigeria, looking at a comprehensive study of the country's conflicts, since independence. The failure of the Nigerian state to mitigate against violent conflicts has seen civil society organisations becoming important agents in the implementation of peacebuilding initiatives.

Although the relationship between civil society and the state is characterized by civil society being critical towards the state and problematic at some instances, yet civil society still collaborates with the state and is very prominent in the socio-economic and political development of the nation. And in this, the thesis aims to highlight that civil society organisations can be critical in carrying out direct and indirect roles in conflict resolution that brings about positive peace. Therefore, by conceptualizing civil society in Nigeria, this research looks to highlight some limitations to conventional civil society's effectiveness by looking at the historical understanding of the concept in the Nigerian context, as well as advocate for the broadening of the concept to include excluded groups, which are mostly primordial in the case of Nigeria who can carry out functions that represent the needs and interests of Nigerian citizens (Ekeh, 1975).

The following research questions guide this study:

- To what extent can non-state actors foster and facilitate peace in conflict-ravaged communities in Nigeria? And what are the long-term effects/impacts, as well as challenges to peacebuilding initiatives being employed in Nigeria?
- Who is and isn't part of Nigerian civil society?
- How effective are these civil actors, and do they fit into existing models of civil society literature?

1.3 Motivation and Contribution to the Research

The ideas for this research study stemmed from the researcher questioning the Nigerian government's ineffective management of the various conflicts that have been prominent in the country's recent socio-political life. As a witness to the Boko Haram bomb blast of the 25th June 2014 in Abuja, Nigeria, the researcher has always been curious about different strategies and ways in which non-state actors could be prominent in helping to mitigate conflicts in the various geopolitical regions of Nigeria. Therefore, the motivation of this research is to help enrich both practical and academic knowledge.

Being an indigene of Akwa Ibom state, the researcher has always been concerned that with the resources at the disposal of the state and federal government, there is still a lack of socio-economic development in the country and particularly in the southern part of the country where the country's riches is produced and is challenged by communal clashes, environmental degradation, criminal activities, Herdsmen-farmers conflicts and the Niger-Delta militancy.

The researcher was also curious to find out why, with the vast numbers of civil society organisations in the country sustainable peace was still difficult to attain even with the level of funding these organisations are perceived to be receiving from donor funders to help with the development of the country. Following this, there was some curiosity about why ethnic associations and religious organisations were not being engaged a lot more in quelling tensions and mitigating conflicts. These questions have led the researcher to study and understand how these non-state actors could be part of the nation-building process in Nigeria by engaging them in roles that could build peace. Therefore, to answer the question what the contribution of this thesis is to research knowledge, it can be said that the results from this thesis have significant value to policy on the resolution and transformation of conflicts in Nigeria. Essentially, the idea of civil society as a normative concept and the reality of the term in Nigeria does hide the fact

that it is a concept with historical links to the country and should not be dismissed as a product of an internationalised western agenda. Instead, this thesis aims to correct the dominant conceptualisation of civil society in the hope that it can be promoted as a non-violent approach to help create sustainable positive peace in Nigeria.

This research study provides the opportunity to expand existing knowledge on civil society's role in resolving conflicts in Nigeria and contribute to the limited body of knowledge on this topic. The thesis contribution to knowledge is that civil society in Nigeria is not coming from a context where it is conceptualised as interacting with the state to influence or be influenced as in a liberal democratic state. It also is not in a context where the state is highly oppressive and civil society is in opposition to the state. Civil society in Nigeria should be understood from the context of a fragile state, which has multiple problems with democratic basis but is not outwardly oppressive as was the case in eastern Europe. And in this context where the state is weak, the lines separating civil society and the state are fuzzy, allowing civil society to occupy part of the space normally filled by the functioning state to carry out functions by civil and uncivil society actors (Marchetti and Tocci, 2009).

1.4 Definition of terms

Civil society: civil society in this thesis is an independent sphere composed of various formal and informal organisations outside the state and markets but are intertwined with the state and markets to influence socio-economic and political development in Nigerian society. They are better defined by their functions and contexts, which include formal and informal associations with both formal and informal structures (Orji, 2009; Sotiropolous, 2004). As Ekeh (1975) points out, these informal organisations in the primordial public in Africa can operate in the civic public sphere, carrying out the same functions as civic organisations given their historical links to and the issues associated with morality in the African context.

Uncivil/ non-civil society: This concept in academic literature tends to refer to organisations that challenge the conventional liberal democratic values of civil society (Glasius, 2010). In some literature, it is a catch-all term for a range of disruptive and threatening elements that emerge in spaces between the individual and the state (Rumford, 2001). For some other scholars, the distinction between civil and uncivil is unhelpful, as it is over-simplistic and cannot explain the motivation of some groups and people, an example being the 9/11 bombers (Rumford, 2001; Kopecky and Mudde, 2003). But a majority of literature take on the view and insist that the empirical definition of civil society should include uncivil society organisations (Kopecky and Mudde, 2003; Fatton, 1995). In this thesis, it is understood in the context of Nigeria to mean parochial/informal structured organisations that carry out the same functions and roles as those conventional civil society organisations recognised in literature.

Conflict: Conflicts can be described as a continuous process of intra-personal, inter-group communication that takes place within a social context (Jeong, 1999). Here, the sources of grievance/ conflicts are associated with structural injustice, therefore, making conflict a social phenomenon and part of human interaction (Austin et al, 2012). For any conflict to occur, the violence associated can either be direct or indirect (Galtung, 1969). In Nigeria, conflicts arise as a result of intra-personal and inter-personal interactions that are diverse but associated with structural injustice. It leads to both structural and cultural violence that manifests through direct violence.

Peace: Although peace is a difficult concept to define, Galtung (1996) defines peace as the absence of violence, adding that peace can either be positive or negative. With positive peace, structural violence is absent, and it involves mutual development, mutual trust, mutual respect, regard and mutual co-operation (Galtung, 1996; Maill, 2007). Negative peace, on the other hand, is defined as the absence of social justice since there is a lack of personal violence or the absence

of direct violence. This thesis is aware of the critiques of Galtung's definitions of peace such as Foucault's ideas on power and domination, and liberal peacebuilding. But Galtung's definition is going to be used a framework in this thesis because it acknowledges in the context of Nigeria that peace is the egalitarian distribution of power and resources that eliminates both structural and cultural violence (socio-economic and political inequalities).

Peacebuilding: Peacebuilding is a complex term with various meanings. In this research study, peacebuilding means those structures in society that remove the causes of war and aim to help society get past the possibility of violence and create expectations that will not lead to the reoccurrence of violence (Richardson, 1976; Maill, 2007). Besides, it focuses on structural measures that prevent conflicts, establishing acceptable institutions, protecting human rights and provides basic needs. The term was introduced by former UN secretary-general Boutros Ghali, who proposed a framework that concentrates on the capacities of international actors and donors in addressing the undifferentiated set of needs (Harpviken and Kjellman, 2004). But of recent, there have been calls to consider cultural priorities in peacebuilding, as it places emphasis on local organisations and looks to address the root causes of conflict in given contexts (Harpviken and Kjellman, 2004). Peacebuilding in this thesis incorporates local peacebuilding techniques and organisations (both formal and informal) because it provides for the cultural contexts of communities in Nigeria in order to get to the root causes of structural and cultural conflicts.

1.5 Thesis chapters

This thesis consists of seven chapters, which would address the research question as to the role civil society can play in the mediation of conflicts and also the democratization of Nigerian society.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

This chapter provides a background study that gives an overview of the research, providing information on the prevailing circumstances in Nigeria, of which this research provides answers to. The chapter states the aims and goals of the research, while also presenting the research questions, the methodology, the research findings, the limitations and the thesis structure. Having introduced the thesis in this opening chapter, the rest of the work is divided into the following chapters:

Chapter 2 – Literature (Theoretical Perspectives)

The second chapter reviews the literature on civil society theory, which will be used to provide a guide to the theoretical underpinnings go the research. The literature will identify gaps in civil society theory and its linkages with the state and society. The main argument of the chapter is that the conventional understanding of civil society developed from the bourgeois claims to individual freedoms in the capital markets in western Europe, civil society has been unable to emerge with the same rigour in Africa and Nigeria in particular because it does not share the same history. It argues further that civil society in Nigeria should be viewed as a product of specific and historical context. The chapter then focuses on the definitional ideas of civil society and its functions, putting forward a broad definition of the concept in order to challenge the liberal definition of the term. Civil society will also be delineated showing their functions in resolving conflicts in Nigeria. The chapter will also focus on civil society's relationship with citizenship, the state and its boundaries in Nigeria. The relevance of civil society to Nigeria will be debated as it will emphasise that civil society can be applied beyond the borders of western liberal democratic nations. The chapter will finally discuss the relationship between civil society and peacebuilding as emphasis will be placed on both formal and informal organisations playing important roles in helping to resolve ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria.

Chapter 3 – Context (Civil society and Nigeria)

This chapter gives a contextual background to Nigeria's socio-political history, from colonialism to the present. In giving this background, civil society in Nigeria will be analysed with questions like, who is Nigerian civil society and the role they play in mediation. The chapter will also aim to analyse some conflicts in Nigeria such as the Herdsmen and Famers conflicts, the Boko Haram insurgency and the Niger-Delta militancy. Civil society organisations will then be set out looking at who civil society in Nigeria is. Finally, the strengths and weaknesses of civil society in Nigeria will be discussed.

Chapter 4 – Methodology

The chapter presents and explains the research methodology framework used in this thesis. The chapter discusses and provides justification for adopting an interpretivist social constructivism philosophical assumption. It then goes on to explain that the research will be conducted using qualitative research methodology that involves inductive reasoning. Following from this, the chapter will show that the research strategy is qualitative in nature focusing on semi-structured interviews with thirty-five participants from organisations consisting of democracy and human rights organisations, professional organisations, issue-oriented and gender-based organisations and very few religious organisations. These organisations were drawn using convenience sampling, and the semi-structures interviews are accompanied by documentations, online web pages, books and journals for triangulation. The data is analysed using thematic analysis with ethical considerations and the researcher's reflections on his personal experiences being discussed at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 5 and 6 – Analysis 1 and 2

Both chapters provide empirical analysis, which will focus on themes that will analyse civil society in the context of Nigeria. The analysis in chapter 5 challenges the notion that civil society in Nigeria is a sphere consisting of only civic associations with formal structures who are independent of the state and markets. It states that civil society in Nigeria also includes informal

organisations who are outside the state and markets but are intricately linked with these spheres to influence socio-economic changes through the capacities of the state and capital markets. The chapter will also challenge the idea that the state in Nigeria is no longer the key actor in delivering social services, as primacy is now understood to reside with civil society and its organisations. Chapter 6 will explain that the causes of conflicts in Nigeria are socio-economic and political, which has led to structural, cultural and direct violence. Also, it will show that some of these civil society organisations are involved in direct conflict resolution roles, while the majority of these organisations engage themselves in indirect roles in the hope that it will help mitigate against structural violence in Nigeria. The chapter will further explain that challenges related to finance, a lack of skilled staff and the state's restriction on civil society organisations activities are some of the issues that affect their long-term peacebuilding impacts in Nigeria.

Chapter 7 - Recommendations and conclusion

The conclusion will summarise the main components of the thesis from the theoretical perspectives, the Nigerian context of civil society, the methods used and the findings of the analysis. The chapter concludes by giving recommendations and offering ideas for consideration in the future. The following chapter summarises the relevant literature on civil society and conflict resolution to provide the scholarly grounding for the chapters that follow.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.0 Introduction

This thesis is focused on the potential role that civil society can play in peacebuilding/ conflict resolution. It will analyse what are the main problems within this context and propose solutions to improve this aspect. Different authors defined this concept in different ways but each one having common elements. For example, Young (2002) considers that the concept of civil society is aimed at addressing societal problems by influencing state policies and political, social and economic life. Therefore, one could place civil society as a sphere of social interaction, which interplays with the economic, social and political fabrics of any society in order to bring about equity and justice. To have a better understanding of the term and how failure to recognise the importance of non-western contexts has rendered the term vague, this chapter aims to fill this conceptual gap in order to answer the thesis question on the role civil society plays in the resolution of conflicts in Nigeria. The chapter synthesises various theoretical arguments on the western understanding of the term but makes it clear that African civil society evolved from a different historical period from the west, therefore it should not be excluded from the ideal understanding of the term.

Section 1 of this chapter will first focus on debates on the definitional ideas on civil society and its functions. The aim is to highlight that these western philosophical understandings of the term tend to be ambiguous especially in non-western contexts. Therefore, this section will attempt to put forward a broad definition in order to challenge liberal philosophical thought on the concept. Besides, the section will also delineate the types of civil society in Nigeria and their functions in society and in resolving conflicts. Following from this, the section will provide the origin of the concept so as to understand how the concept emerged and developed in western theoretical thinking. Next, the section will focus on three key debates on civil society: civil society and

citizenship, civil society and the state, and the boundaries of civil society. In doing this, it can be seen that civil society is a contested concept in Africa and especially Nigeria.

Section 2 of this chapter will focus on the relevance of the concept to Africa, particularly in Nigeria. This section is essential as it will emphasise that civil society can be applied beyond western liberal democratic settings as it will have to consider the historical and socio-economic and political contexts of Nigeria before it can be relevant. Section 3 of this chapter will focus on the relationship between civil society and peacebuilding, which is very complex, especially when states are recognised as being the main actors in peacebuilding. This section will mainly analyse the literature on conflict and will emphasise the role and functions of both formal and informal organisations in managing and resolving conflict in Nigeria. Further, this will help in outlining the role of civil society in Nigeria's current conflict(s).

At the end of this chapter, a conclusion will be drawn that civil society in Nigeria should be viewed as a product of specific and historical contexts. It is an independent sphere that is distinct from the state and economy but connected and mediates with these conflictual spheres to bring about social justice. Also, civil society here is not an alternative to the state, rather its borders with the state and markets are fuzzy, allowing these spheres to interact with one another so that formal and informal organisations can influence the capacities of the state and markets. Furthermore, the chapter will show that peace is not only the absence of violence but the absence of structural violence. While conflict is a social phenomenon associated with structural and cultural injustice.

2.1 Who is Civil Society?

2.1.1 Origin of the Concept

As mentioned in the last section, there is no common understanding of the concept of civil society, which emerged from western states and has taken a global meaning these days. One of the first scholars in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century to bring attention to the concept civil

society in political discourse was John Locke, who understood civil society as co-existing with the state in that ‘the civilised order of political society’ contrasts with ‘the uncivilised state of nature’ (Bunyan, 2013, p.540). By such conception, civil society is a body on its own, that is a way of constituting the state but not a standalone separate sphere by itself (Parekh, 2004). This civil body in Locke's understandings protects individual's rights and property against the abuses of the state’s authority. Therefore, citizens were free to pursue their purposes and enter relations within the limits of the laws of the land in a well-ordered society that ensured freedoms in public, which entitled them to enforce collective binding decisions (consent of members protected the basic rights of members) (Parekh, 2004).

Other political scholars like Adam Ferguson, Hegel, Marx, de Tocqueville and Gramsci also gave their understandings of civil society and the extent to which the state relates to this entity. For enlightenment scholars like Adam Ferguson, civil society was a social alternative to political society, which brought for the first time the issue of individualism, which was prevalent at that period of emergent capitalism in the eighteenth century and was absent in the ideas of Locke (Lewis, 2002, Seligman, 2002). Here, civil society is considered to be a middle ground between private life and the state, although independent of the state and founded on the bourgeois world of commerce with the individual being the independent owner of a property (Fine, 1997). This means that only a civilised society can create a framework for a commercial and civil society since it is not equated with militaristic or primitive society, rather it is based ‘on a civil authority governing by means of laws and maintaining the basic rights of its citizens', which non-European societies lacked (Parekh, 2004, p.15). Therefore, it can be observed that Ferguson laid the foundation in positing that non-European societies are incapable of having civil societies. His ideas also differ with Locke as he places more emphasis on individuality in the public sphere rather than on a hierarchical medieval ordered society. But they both agree on the need to restrict the state's power against abuse, as well as allow citizens to be involved in both commercial market activities and the public sphere.

For Hegel, he drew a sharp distinction between the state (political society) and civil society, explaining that civil society occupied a space between the family and the state (Parekh, 2004). As Robert Fine (1997, p.19) explains, Hegel's conception of 'bourgeois civil society was neither wholly civil nor wholly bourgeois, but a dynamic whole, vulnerable to its own disintegrative tendencies, yet capable of performing the tasks of social integration with only peripheral help from the state'. Though Ferguson stated that civil society is an ethical arena, Hegel, on the other hand, mentions that civil society 'is not, in itself, that realm of ethical realization.....the heterogeneity of interests and classes which make up civil society are, in Hegel's thought ultimately self-defeating-so long as they remain with that "moment" where universality is not concretely (but only abstractly) realized (Seligman, 2002, p.25). Here, civil society is argued to inherently unstable riddled with tensions and conflict, which it cannot regulate itself, therefore it cannot act as the site for freedom, which then requires the state to regulate civil society, in order to give its atomized members a sense of community and contribute to the common good (Parekh, 2004, Lewis, 2002).

For Karl Marx who differed from earlier conceptions of civil society concerning the state, explained that civil society is unique to modern bourgeois society, especially in respect to the autonomy and the freedom from moral and communal constraints that it had currently acquired (Parekh, 2004). In his critique to political economy, he reduces civil society to economic relations just like Hegel, as he explains 'human agency is not absent from the sphere of economics and that the economic forms of modern society are but the objectified or fetishized forms of appearance of definite social relations between people' (Fine, 1997, p.24). He was also aware that the state could not also transcend civil society or resolve the contradictions within because civil society the realm of the conflict itself, which it is tied to the class war inherent in civil society and lacked the capacity to act autonomously (Parekh, 2004). Therefore, he located the state at the superstructure and civil society at the fundamental structural base given that it was viewed as a

vehicle for exploitative relations between superordinate and subordinate classes (Bunyan, 2013). A point, which Gramsci disagreed with though he was an ardent follower of Marxist principles.

Contrasting Marx, Antonio Gramsci placed civil society in the superstructure, which he divided into two levels; civil society commonly called the private realm of free-associational activity that included a wide range of organisations, and political society or the state which is a coercive governmental apparatus (Bunyan, 2013; Nielson, 1995). Together it was believed that 'these two levels correspond on the one hand to the function of" hegemony" which the dominant group exercises throughout society and on the other hand to that of "direct domination" or command exercised through the state and "juridical" government' (Hoare and Smith, 1999, p.145). He also disagreed with Marx, by arguing that civil society is an arena, separate from the state and markets in which ideological hegemony is contested, and contains ideologies that challenge and uphold the existing order (Lewis, 2002). He, however, explains that in the real world, the boundaries of these spheres are blurred, as they flow into each other and are not separable, but analytically they are separable (Nielson, 1995). Gramsci's ideas are the foundation for what influenced the resistance of totalitarian regimes in Eastern Europe during the communist era and Latin America (Lewis, 2002).

Alexis de Tocqueville on his part has been credited in the nineteenth century with giving a positive account of associationism in the United States, given that he advocates self-government and civic participation to counteract the abuses by the state (Lewis, 2002; Fischer, 2006). He stresses the need to forge bonds of solidarity through voluntary organisations, and for civil society to create an equilibrium to the state and the market to hold the state accountable to its citizens (Parekh, 2004). The idea is that these voluntary associations are schools of democracy in which, democratic thinking and behaviours are learned to defend individuals' rights against authoritarian regimes, therefore contributing to social capital (Paffenholz and Spurk, 2006). From the eighteenth and nineteenth century, what was of major concern was posting a unified vision of

social order that recognised legal, moral and economic autonomy, with civil society being touted as the solutions to these problems (Seligman, 2002). For Habermas, he emphasised the role of civil society within the public sphere establishing that the 'political system needs the articulation of interests in the public space ', which would allow for different interest to be brought forward to the political agenda (Paffenholz and Spurk, 2006, p.4). With this idea in mind, the belief is that excluded groups need to organise themselves to articulate their interests in the public sphere.

As mentioned in the last section, civil society is currently viewed as a sector of voluntary action within institutional forms that are distinct from the state, family and markets with blurred boundaries (Paffenholz and Spurk, 2006). Furthermore, it consists of a diverse set of organisations comprising of non-state actors and associations that are not driven by private or economic interests but instead interacts with the public sphere. Therefore, the present idea is that to globalise democracy, efforts need to be made to create and strengthen civil society outside the state especially through voluntary associations in the public sphere, so that social justice can be attained (Orji, 2009). In the next section, emphasis will be placed on essential debates that border on the relationship between civil society and citizenship, civil society and the state, and the boundaries of civil society, which will aim to draw out the question of civil society's relationship with the state in the Nigerian context.

2.1.2 Definition of Civil Society

Civil society as a concept is much disputed as there are many definitions to the term (Petrie & South, 2014). It is a contested topic, and the ambiguity of this concept comes from the fact that there is no single agreed version of the term, though there are similar themes and elements in understanding the concept. However, in time the concept civil society has progressed and taken different connotations from being linked with the state to now being viewed and emphasised as withdrawing from the state or being in opposition to the state (Kaldor, 2003). According to Woods (1992, p.79), its emergence in 17th the century, was so as to act as a 'counterweight to

monarchical and semi-feudal institutions that continued to treat the political arena, as the private domain of kings and princely. The end of the cold war and communism in the early 1990s saw the transformation of the concept of civil society as the democratic wave opened up more spaces for civil society. In Africa, civil society has been shaped to serve the goal of democratic reform rather than the relationship between social formations and the associations to represent them to the state (Kasfir, 1998). The hope is that an active civil society will be able to challenge the state's abuse of power and establish foundations for a sustained democratic government.

According to conventional liberal theorists, civil society is generally conceived to be a sphere of collective voluntary associations which are civic in nature and beyond the boundaries of the private, state and market sphere (Orji, 2009). Similarly, Diamond (1994, p.5) argues that civil society is a realm between the state and private sphere, of organised social life that is voluntary, self-generating, supporting, autonomous from the state, and bound by legal order or set of shared rules. Moreover, he states that civil society relates to the state in some way but does not aim to win formal power in the state. Diamond (1994) explains that civil society encompasses both formal and informal organisations such as economic, cultural, informational, and educational, interests-based, developmental, issue-orientated and civic organisations. But he states that religious, organisations and ethnic chauvinists' organisations that are looking to monopolise a political space in society, contradicts the pluralistic and market-orientated nature of civil society (Diamond, 1994, p.6-7). Civil society in Diamond’s view is understood to be organisations with a formal structure that permits specifics civic interests, which means they agree to act within rules of a civil nature that conveys mutual respect, eschews violence and the respect for pluralism and the law (Orji, 2009). This clearly states that civil society is a sphere of associations that are civic and independent from the state and markets. From this perspective, civil society is a public realm between the state, markets and family, although these realms overlap one another in the middle with each realm having its own roles and competence, which does not change over time (Edwards, 1998).

On the other hand, Kaldor (2004, p.169) mentions that civil society in its conventional form is conceptualised as the process where individuals through voluntary organisations 'negotiate, argue, struggle against or agree with each other and with the centres of political and economic authority' publicly. They place emphasis on the state no longer being the key vehicle for the delivery of essential social services, situating civil society globally, through which links and appeals to the international authorities enable groups to create political space to challenge the state (Kaldor, 2003). The idea is that the activities of civil society in the global arena rather than put pressure on the state directly, links with the international community, who then pressurise the state, which moves civil society towards global rules and institutions (Kaldor, 2003). As Robert Fine (1997, p.9) explains, civil society is neither 'utopian socialism' nor 'utopian capitalism', but the 'life-world' of the middle, which places primacy on civil society over the political and market spheres. He explains that 'its distinguishing mark is that it privileges civil society over all other moments or spheres of social life, on the ground that civil society furnishes the fundamental conditions of liberty in the modern world' (p.9). As such, this definition of civil society as stated by Robert Fine has led to development agencies like the World Bank and IMF (International Monetary Fund) taking up the idea of good governance, which 'envisaged a reduced role for the state and privatized forms of service delivery through flexible combinations of governmental, non-governmental and private institutional actors' (Lewis, 2002, p.571). From this, it is evident that the state no longer constitutes the key vehicle for the delivery of essential social services, rather primacy is placed on civil society and its organisations.

However, some scholars have opposed the liberal definition of civil society especially as it relates to African and non-western contexts. Lewis (1992) mentions that the history of civil society in Africa should be distinguished from Europe, where authoritarianism gave way for the reinvigoration of the concept. For Monga (1995), civil society cannot be defined without referring to the peculiarities or context in which it emerged. He argues further that civil society refers to "those birthplaces where the ambitions of social groups have created the means of generating additional freedom and justice" (p.363). Additionally, it includes churches, religious institutions

and all organisations that have helped amplify the affirmation of social identity and the rights of citizenship, including interactions between the state, political parties and leading personalities. His premise here is that civil society in Africa was developed by associations who were able to manage communal anger. This definition differs from the liberal understanding of civil society, as it emphasises the historical context and capacity of African civil societies to evolve within their own trajectory.

In defining civil society and its relationship to the state, Kasfir (1998) explains that civil society includes all public political non-state activity occurring between the state and family. This definition includes ad-hoc or unplanned civil activity (ethnically organised public action) can influence the states actions and public decisions. Therefore, this definition shows that civil society and the state are intimately linked because of the intertwining nature of the state in African society and means that associations can consolidate democracy if they work constructively with the state as well as oppose it.

Walzer (2002, p.35) also mentions that autonomous individuals in associations are 'motivated by interests or conviction or cultural or religious identity' and civil society does not exclude the markets and the political arena from its definition, being that 'it reaches to politics and economics as well as to the multitude of social activities distinct from these two'. As Edwards (1998) explains that the borders between the state, civil society and the markets are 'fuzzy' and characterised by connections and overlaps between institutions as the roles and responsibilities continually evolve and hybrid institutions emerge. Orji (2009) on his part gives a sociological conception of civil society, which expands the concept to include a wide range of societal groups. He states that civil society is a realm composed of all sorts of associations and organisations that exist outside the state and markets and working to protect "collective interests" (p.82). This definition recognizes the existence of three sectors in society (state, markets and civil society), each sector functioning to make and enforce laws, provide an avenue for exchange of goods and services and serve as an arena for debate and common endeavour, respectively (Orji, 2009). It

allows for organisations in civil society to create space to debate socio-political and economic development and giving people in society the ability to influence and control both the state and markets.

As Orji (2009) explains organisations in civil society must have strong roots and bonds to the society in which they hope to democratise. Kasfir (1998) agrees with this view as he states that there is a danger in separating civil society organisations from the social bases of society whose government they hope to reform, especially if these organisations must meet multiple organisational and societal criteria's, they are less likely to represent social interests that are widely shared by groups within civil society. Furthermore, many Africans consider the primordial public realm, even with its inorganization as more significant than a formally organised civil society that is promoted by western liberal scholars. This is because these informal associations in the primordial public realm, although inward-looking and parochial, do 'encourage a strong sense of social obligation, mutual commitment, spirit of self-sacrifice', and therefore should be included in the conceptualisation of civil society (Parekh, 2004, p.20). Edwards (1998, p.3) explains that ethnic associations can provide a vehicle for the emergence of allegiances above the level of 'kin, clan and tribe'. His argument is based on the fact that the clans in Somalia who fuel hostilities in the country also provide mutual support to their members. Therefore, these ethnic associations can be a positive and negative influence at the same time and should be included in civil society. As Sotiropoulos (2004, p.11) explains, not all groups are considered part of civil society however, these uncivil groups are also not condemned to stay outside the boundaries of civil society forever, the reason being that these sorts of groups (primordial and traditional groups) may play a role at some point in the public sphere in order to fulfil the functions of civil society of 'aggregation, intermediation or representation of material and ideal interests'. Therefore, in this view, not only groups that are civic or civil in nature and which contribute to the public sphere should be considered as part of civil society. Organisations who do not pass the civility criteria should also be considered as part of civil society. In this, it can be said that 'civil society is better defined by a set of functions.....informal collectives loosely held together and

identified by a common cause rather than by an officially registered name and address, may also be elements constituting civil society' (p.11).

For Young (2002), civil society involves three levels of associative activity (private, civic and political associations) that support democracy and promote social justice. She explains that these different levels of associative activity - private (Families, social clubs and inward-looking ethnic or religious organisations), civic (activities at broader community) and political associations (lobbying organizations and Special-interests associations) - allow associations move from one level of associational activity to the other, with some associations moving along all three levels. This means that associations in civil society do not only work within the civic level of associative activity, they also can work in the non-civic and political level of associative activity and change their nature depending on the context. By this notion, the aim of both civil and non-civil associations is to carry out functions which influence the activities of both the economy and state and not to gain power for itself (Young, 2002). They do this by making a space for debate on development, allowing citizens to participate to influence and control the state and markets to improve their general wellbeing (Orji, 2009). Therefore, organisations in civil society carry out not only civic associative functions but also private and political associative functions. They are capable of working in non-civic levels and can change their nature dependent on the contexts, to carry out functions that will influence the state and the markets positively. In this sense, informal civil society organisations perform the same civil functions that influence the state and the markets just like the conventional civil society organisations recognised in literature.

2.1.2.1Types of civil society organisations, their roles and functions

From how civil society is defined in the last section, it can be observed that any characterisation of civil society in Nigeria, would have to take into consideration the historical and contextual peculiarities of the country. And for the context to be considered, we would have to understand which types of associations and organisations have played some roles and still carry out functions

in the socio-economic and political development of the country. Before we look at the types of groups and their functions in Nigeria and its conflicts, it would be appropriate to understand how conventional civil society is characterized.

Diamond (1994), posits that civil society encompasses a vast array of organisations such as economic organisations (productive and commercial associations), cultural organisations (religious, ethnic and communal organisations that defend collective rights, values, faiths and beliefs), informational and educational organisations (those that produce and disseminate public knowledge, ideas and news), interest-based organisations (those that defend the interests of members such as workers, pensioners and professionals), developmental organisations (those that improve the infrastructure, institutions and quality of life of communities), issue-oriented organisations (environmental protection organisations, women's rights and land reform), civic organisations (looking to improve the political system through democratic means, human rights monitoring voter education and anti-corruption efforts), the mass media and institutions belonging to the broader field of autonomous cultural and intellectual activity (such as universities, think tanks, publishing houses and artistic houses). In addition, he mentions that these organisations are distinct from other social groups as they are concerned with public rather than private ends, relates with the state in some way, but does not aim to win formal power in the state (given that they seek benefits, policy changes, concessions and accountability), encompasses pluralism and diversity and are partial in that they don't seek to represent the whole of a persons or community's interests (different groups should be able to represent different interests).

According to Cooper (2018, p.4), civil society encompasses a wide variety of actors 'with a range of purposes, constituencies, structures, degrees of organisation, functions, size, resource levels, cultural contexts, ideologies, membership, geographical coverage, strategies and approaches. Furthermore, it includes actors such as NGOs (civil society organisations and non-profit organisations with organised structures that are registered), online groups (social media

communities), social movements, religious leaders and faith-based organisations, labour unions, social entrepreneurs, grassroots associations, cooperatives, youth clubs, independent media, community-based organisations, academic institutions and organisations of indigenous peoples. Amoore and Langley (2004) in the characterisation of civil society, mention that they are voluntary associations (reflecting of de Tocqueville's conclusions) that help to promote a healthy liberal democracy and aim to find a more democratic means of economic organisations. On a similar note, Edwards (1998, p.3) adds that civil society must be 'formal, democratic and modern- as opposed to traditional associations based on ethnicity'. Besides, civic values should be inherently altruistic, and it should cut across sectional interests and always celebrate community as positive.

Organisations in civil society also have to carry out certain functions especially in defending the rights of citizens and also in democratising nations states. Diamond (1994) in emphasising the democratic building functions of civil society, mentions that civil society provides for the limitation of state power, stimulates political participation, develops democratic attributes, creates channels for interest's aggregation, generates cross-cutting interest (pluralism), trains new political leaders, monitors elections, disseminates information, achieves economic reforms and allows for the freedom of association. Additionally, he states that this democracy building civil society organisations must have certain features in their internal structure and character. He mentions that groups with anti-democratic goals and methods (groups aiming to take over the powers of the state, reject the rule of law and power of the state) cannot be considered part of civil society. Also, civil society has to be institutionalised, as such groups 'contribute to the stability, predictability and governability of a democratic regime' (p.12). They also have to be internally democratic, as this affects the degree in which participants can be socialised into democratic behaviour. A pluralistic civil society helps groups to survive and encourages these groups to cooperate and negotiate with one another. As well, civil society helps democracy when individuals have the opportunity to participate in multiple associations and informal networks at

multiple levels of society, thereby allowing the cross-cutting function of civil society.

With these functions, some important caveats are also laid out by Diamond. First, these associations must be autonomous from the state in their financing, operations and legal standing to perform democracy building roles. Second, the self-limitation issue where a confrontational 'rent-seeking civil society can overwhelm a weak, penetrated state with the diversity and magnitude of demands', leaving very little of the public sector being concerned with the overall welfare of society (Diamond, 1994, p.4). This goes back to what was mentioned earlier about ethnic chauvinists looking to monopolise the political space, thereby contradicting the pluralistic nature of civil society. Third, although civil society is independent from the state, it must not be isolated from the state rather it should be watchful and respectful of state authority. Last, civil society groups cannot be substitute for political parties who have a broad and enduring basis of support. Cooper (2018) mentions that civil society has made some positive changes globally as it has carried out roles such as providing services (healthcare and education), advocacy, being a watchdog in monitoring the state, building active citizenship and participating in global governance processes. Civil society here plays an essential role in building an integrated society, generating a democratic political culture, and also generating a real democratic polity (Vujadinovic, 2009). This means that civil society's role involves 'securing individual freedoms and democracy in the face of incursions by the state', thereby emphasising a narrow range of roles, which includes the promotion of good governance (Edwards, 2018, p.3).

For Van Leeuwen and Verkoren (2012), civil society also play important roles in post-conflict settings especially since peacebuilding has shifted from signing peace agreements to civil society now seen as representing marginalised groups in post-conflict settings. They mention that civil society roles include monitoring human rights, advocating for marginalised groups and providing early warning signals. Their idea is that civil society as the agent of development is considered an alternative to the state in providing development to nation states and its citizens. Furthermore,

civil society's role takes into consideration the concept of social contract between the state and its citizens. It is believed that the states authority is based on the consent of citizens 'who forfeit some of their freedoms in exchange for the benefits of social order through the rule of law' (Van Leeuwen and Verkoren, 2012, p.83). Therefore, if the state fails in its social contract with its citizens, civil society becomes the sphere where this social contract can be renegotiated. In this, civil society organisations 'work at societal level to encourage contact and reconciliation between conflict parties' (Marchetti and Tocci, 2009, p.212). In addition, activists, NGOs and foundations, and alternative media groups are encouraged to diffuse and rearticulate conflict narratives. As well, truth and reconciliation commissions, private citizens and religious organisations also carry out social reconciliation programmes. Paffenholz (2009, p.11) mentions that after large scale violence has ended, 'monitoring, social cohesion and socialisation are needed' as well as felicitation which also is very relevant in this phase. Fischer (2011) adds that in the prevention of conflicts, NGOs' are active in early warning activities, preventive diplomacy through third parties, mediation and negotiations, initiatives for cross-cultural understanding and building of relationships. This is because NGOs' do things which the state cannot do, by giving room for the development of creative ideas and also providing channels for groups or individuals to communicate, which the state would not have allowed.

Yet, Edwards (1998), while mentioning who belongs to civil society and who is excluded states that both modern and traditional associations are layered on top each other, making kin-based organisations, informal groups, spiritual communities, entrepreneurs, traders associations, farmers groups and credit societies part of civil society. He adds that these groups represent both civic and uncivil values, and since there are no universal civic values, traditional organisations can evolve into modern ones over time. Therefore, civil society can be both positive and negative influences in society at the same time. Kew (2016) explains that the types of civil society organisations that have been active in Nigeria's socio-economic and political history since the pre-colonial era include religious organisations, traditional associations, ethnic associations, trade

unions, professional associations, student groups, human rights organisations, pro-democracy associations, women interests groups, economic and development associations, environmental organisations and conflict resolution organisations. Orvis (2001) also states that patron-client networks, ethnic associations, self-help and cooperative groups and traditional associations are important elements of African civil society because they are largely based on norms of moral authority. For Adejumobi (2004) ethnic, professional, human rights organisations and NGOs' have been vocal in calling for the restructuring of the Nigerian federation. They have been able to articulate their vision by asking for self-determination, resource control, regional autonomy and called for a sovereign national conference (SNC). Similarly, communal and ethnic groups, pan-ethnic groups, civil and environmental groups have played roles in the Niger-Delta contestations and agitations against the Nigerian state (Ikelegbe, 2001).

These types of groups have carried out roles such as promoting participation in economic, social and political life, organised the management of goods, services and resources, caring and nurturing those in need, and preserving culture (Edwards, 1998). Ikelegbe (2013) mentions that civil society organisations have been very important in carrying out various roles in the neglected areas of Nigerian society, which the state has been unable to provide for such as social services, social welfare and economic empowerment. They have supported the state in the educational sector, gender related issues, the vulnerable and physically challenged, poverty alleviation, relief and humanitarian assistance, natural resource and environmental governance.

Omede and Bakare (2014) also state that civil society plays roles in the social, political and economic development of African countries. This is made possible, as they 'improve the quality of governance', 'develop the capacity of governments to apply principles of accountability, transparency and openness', and 'work towards gaining the commitment of all elected officials, public servants, and NGOs to good governance' (Omede and Bakare, 2014,p.206). Furthermore, since civil society organisations in Africa are typically closer to the grassroots of communities

than most state actors, militant/violent groups cannot be considered as part of civil society in Nigeria because they deny pluralism, diversity and propagate the use of violence to achieve their goals in Nigeria. As well, though conventional understandings of civil society exclude parochial society (i.e. individual and inward-looking activities such as religious worship) and economic society (profit making individual businesses), since it is concerned with private and not public ends. When these groups are said to engage in public ends to 'fight poverty or crime or improve educational institutions in community, they are participating in civil society organisations' (Omede and Bakare, 2014, p.211). Therefore, religious organisations and business associations in Africa are part of both parochial society and civil society given that they carryout both inward-looking activities and engage in public ends to cater for socio-economic and political interests. Van Leeuwen and Verkoren (2012) point out, that social contracts and the role civil society plays differ according to contexts. This is because where the state is not present, social relationships are considered more important than obligations as national citizens and the 'arrangements of governance might be based more on social patronage and clientelism than on bureaucratic logic' (Van Leeuwen and Verkoren, 2012, p.88). Therefore, this makes people to fall back on deeply rooted public authorities who would be more important in situations of conflict.

Regarding civil society's role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, Ekiyor (2008) posits that civil society organisations and women's groups have been very active in mitigating and building peace in Africa, as they have been key in addressing socio-economic inequality in society, protecting families and communities (in Sierra Leone and Liberia where women groups and faith-based groups used information provided by family members who joined rebel movements to protect communities), assisting with humanitarian relief, promoting human and women's rights and strengthening government organs such as the judiciary and security sector. They have been active in poverty reduction strategies, youth employment and women microfinance projects which have been crucial I rebuilding economies shattered by conflict. In the resource conflict in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria, civil society has been able to advocate

for the regions interests, monitor the states policies, as well as their human rights records (Ikelegbe, 2001). In addition, they have raised public awareness of the issues and problems of the region, while putting pressure on the state and multinational oil companies, as well as creating channels for dialogue and negotiations. Haynes (2009) in his article on the role of religion in conflict resolution in Nigeria, maintains that inter-faith dialogue when skilfully organised and pursued, can encourage religious adversaries to work together towards peaceful accommodation. This therefore means that faith-based organisations can help sustain peace by encouraging their devotees to 'develop peace via utilisation of explicitly religious tenets' (p.72).

It is clear that the conventional view of civil society being beyond the boundaries of the state and the private sphere does not hold in the context of African states and Nigeria in particular. As Monga (1995) and other Africanist scholars point out, civil society associations in Africa cannot be defined without looking at their contextual historical peculiarities. This means that the boundaries between African civil society organisations, the state and markets are blurred allowing for connections and collaborations with formal and informal non-state institutions and the institutions of the state in the public sphere. This also counters the argument that the state is no longer the key actor for the delivery of essential social services, given that the intertwining nature of the African state allows civil society organisations to carry out certain functions like debate and work constructively with the state, as well as oppose and contests the state in order to achieve social justice for citizens. Civic and primordial associations encourage a strong sense of social obligations in Nigeria as they are viewed to be more capable of carrying out functions that aggregate and represent the interests of their members. These organisations have played key roles and functions in the drive to democratise as well as improve socio-economic development (Parekh, 2004). In carrying out specific functions such as providing protection and services to citizens, advocating for the marginalised, mediating in conflicts, monitoring the state and strengthening community relations, these organisations move along the private, civic and political associational levels in order to influence the actions of the state and capital markets so as to

resolve the various ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria.

2.1.3 Civil society and Citizenship

There are current debates as regards the relationship between civil society and citizenship, and what rights are needed in the modern world. These debates stem from liberal theorists' philosophical understanding that individual rights and political neutrality are the foundation for legitimacy in democracies (Cohen and Arato,1992, p.8). Their idea is that individuals have moral rights that is under the control of the right owner and serve as constraints on government and others. By this conception, they consider individual autonomy and universalism as important attributes to the idea of moral rights. The early development of the market economy saw the bourgeoisie challenge aristocratic privileges by claiming equal political rights for the marginalized, who had been excluded from the public sphere (Young, 1989).

In contrast to the liberal idea of individual autonomy, global civil society theorists like Held, McGrew, Goldblatt and Perraton, argue that political action is provided for by publics outside the state, but under authority of international law of global governance (Held et al,1999). Kaldor (2008, p.42) similarly, explains that global civil society is 'the medium through which social contracts or bargains are negotiated between the individual and the centres of political and economic theory'. In this case, the individual takes priority over collective actions, but under international law. They place their demands, not to the state but to global bodies who then put pressure on the state. However, Baker (2002, p.119) criticises the global civil society position stating that such transnational voluntarism sees a retreat from the issues at the global level about the political self and 'falls short of an assessment of political possibility in terms of identifying potential new forms of citizenship'. Furthermore, he adds since the state is not constitutive in the struggle for social justice, at the global level, it is important that the global ethic should involve more than values and principles. This is because, to have a norm governed world system will mean that there is need for a transnational body, which has to regulate and co-ordinate the political activities of transnational social movements, and that such norms are maintained and adhered

to (Baker, 2002). Such form of regulation is needed, so as to manage the fragmentations and differences embedded in civil society. In Baker's opinion, the state backed by its institutional power of coercion, is important to co-ordinate the activities of civil society in order to for citizens to achieve social justice.

Communitarians on the other hand, dismiss the claim by liberal theorists that individual autonomy is the standard for legitimacy and moral rights. They hold that 'what the liberal sees as universal norms grounded in the Universal character of humanity (dignity or moral autonomy) are in fact particular norms, embedded in shared understandings of specific communities' (Cohen and Arato, 1992, p.9). Alexander (2006, p.196) refers to this universalism of moral rights stating, that territory turns civil society into a space, specifically 'civil society can become unique and meaningful only as a particular place....a place that is different from places outside the territory'. This emphasises that rather than seeing individual autonomy and civil society as a universalistic given, it should be observed that civil society is a product of specific historical and social contexts, which must be taken into consideration. For Walzer, civil society gives us the option of not only choosing individual lives, but also other complex forms of life (economic and political) and especially in groups (Chambers and Kymlicka 2002). Furthermore, 'when members of excluded or marginalised groups are oppressed because of their membership, their standing in the world is collective, not an individual issue' (Chambers and Kymlicka 2002, p.40). From this point of view, the best way to address politics, is to deal with the collective not just with the individual, given that civil society is a product of specific contexts and its peculiarities.

Young (2002) believes that in order for a civil society to be unique, meaningful, and capable of addressing the moral rights debates, it is useful to consider the self-organizing approach. In this case, self-organization (forms of communicative interaction, developed by associations (civic and private) and social movements, which support identities, expand participation and create networks of solidarity) activities of civil society, as a defensive aspect of Cohen and Arato's

dualistic theory of civil society, 'contribute to self-determination, and to a lesser degree, self-development, by supporting identity and voice, facilitating innovative or minority practices, and providing some goods and services' (Young, 2002, p.165).The author further adds that 'civil society limits the ability of both State and economy to colonize the lifeworld, and fosters not only individual self-determination but collective self-determination (Young, 2002).

Similarly, Cohen and Arato (1992, p.441) posits that 'rights begin as claims asserted by groups and individuals in the public spaces of an emerging civil society'. Associational life allows individuals to collectively organize and express their interests through communicative interaction, which in turn serves as oppositional function and develops ideas for political action (Young, 2002). Furthermore, Young (2002) considers that social justice does not only involve self-determination, but also self-development (the ability to engage in the world and grow). Young (2002) concedes that while self-development is not reducible to the distribution of material goods, market forces 'impinge on the ability of many to develop and exercise capacities', making self-development not only reliant on the communicative and organizational activities of civil society alone, but 'positive state intervention to regulate and direct economic activity' (Young, 2002, p.184).

Nonetheless, it should be understood that the relationship between the state and citizenship in Africa is an area of political theory; which is contested and reflects the failure of states in handling the demands and interest of its constituents. As Beiner (2006, p.25) posits, citizenship in Africa ‘consists in sharing a political community and enjoying the benefits and assuming the political responsibilities that give effect to this experience of shared political community'. Adejumobi (2006) adds that citizenship is a social pact between the state and citizens, where 'reciprocity and exchange ‘are carried out through rights and privilege for the individual, and in return the state gets commitment and loyalty. The premise here is that the state plays a major role in the construction of citizenship, through which civil society looks to mitigate the gap between the state and individuals (Beckman, 1993). As Lewis

(1992) explains, the conferment of fixed rights and obligations to citizens in society, gives a sense of the private sphere being limited, and also the use of public authority being limited.

In this regard, this thesis will not place citizenship as an idea that that emerged and developed in western European philosophical thought as individualism, rather citizenship here will be viewed as a constantly changing phenomenon that depends on its social contexts and emphasises the collective organisations of individuals in groups to express their interest to the state in order to attain social justice. In the context of Nigeria, citizenship involves the collective communicative interactions of formal and informal associations to nurture collective self-determination and self-development through the state's regulatory capacity in the market economy. In the next section, the relationship between civil society and the state will be analysed to contextualise how they relate with one another, especially in the present understanding of civil society being acknowledged as the centre of social justice and located outside the control of the traditional state.

2.1.4 Relationship between the state and civil society

There are questions as to what the relationship between civil society and the state is, given that both of them are embedded with inequalities and conflict. This thesis agrees with the view that the state and the markets are important to civil society, in that their capacities and coordinating capabilities are significant to the attainment of social justice for citizens (Young, 2002). In addition, 'civil society limits the ability of both state and economy to colonize the lifeworld and fosters Individual and collective self-determination..... civic associations deepen democracy and promote Self-development because they are relatively autonomous from both state and economy and from each other, potentially and often actually subject to participatory democratic governance by their members' (Young, 2002, p.189). Therefore, this thesis accepts the idea that civil society plays a mediating role between the State (political society) and the markets (economic society) (Walzer, 1995). By mediating through political and economic society, civil society, which is independent of the state, avoids the encroachment of associational life by the state and the markets, while promoting individual and collective self-determination and self-development.

However, the question which still remains is: How can civil society, the state and markets be necessary spheres for the resolution of Nigeria's various conflicts, when their various attributes contradict one another?

The position of neo-liberals such as Held, McGrew, Goldblatt and Perraton, who see civil society as an alternative to the state, argue that the minimisation of the state is the social ideal, given that society might have many social and economic problems which can be engaged by voluntary co-operation in civil society (Held et al, 1999). Kaldor (2003, p.590) projecting the global civil society view, explains that global governance has emerged in a system where states are sewn together by 'agreements, treaties and rules of transnational character' based on rules, and not on the agreements of these states but by public support through global civil society which is carried out using cosmopolitan law that applies not just to the states but also to individuals. Similarly, Beckman (1993, p.23) explains the neo-liberal strategy of 'de-legitimising of the state is central to the ideological de-construction of the post-colonial nationalism.....civil society is therefore substituted for the nation as the principal locus of legitimation'. In particular, he maintains that this redefinition of the state is seen as a shift in the balance of power, which therefore undermines the bargaining power of post-colonial nationalism. Here, civil society is autonomous and self-organizing in a 'system in which states are increasingly hemmed in by a set of agreements, treaties and rules of a transnational character' based on cosmopolitan law (human rights law), that applies not just to states but also to individuals (Kaldor, 2003, p.590).

Castelles (2008) explains that economic, cultural and communicative activities are globalised, allowing non-governmental actors to become the advocates of the needs, interests and values of people, further undermining the role of the state to respond to challenges faced by structural and global transformations. Furthermore, he refers to the deregulation and liberalisation of state powers and procedures, using networking as the flexible and borderless form of structures in any domain. In addition to that it includes 'global financial markets; global production and

distribution of goods and services; international trade; global networks of science and technology; a global skilled labour force; selective global integration of labour markets by migration of labour and direct foreign investment; global media; global interactive networks of communication, primarily the Internet, but also dedicated computer networks; and global cultures associated with the growth of diverse global cultural industries' (Castelles, 2008, p.81).

Alternatively, communitarians like Walzer reject this approach and believe the relationship between civil society and the state is 'dialectical' in that no move towards social justice, is possible without the state's distributive capacities (Walzer, 2002, p.43). For Bratton (1994), civil society serves the hegemonic function of justifying state domination. He adds that as long as civil society actors grant consent, civil society is in a complementary relationship with the state. The argument by Bratton is that as long as civil society manufactures political consent, it is the source of state legitimacy as elites who are in power, will have to depend on the acceptance of the general populace to remain in power. Lewis (1992, p.39) posits that actors in political society play important roles in 'negotiating, articulating and fostering the interests in civil society, and they hold an equally crucial function in sustaining democratic rules and procedures. In the context of Africa, individuals and groups did not develop their interests (economic and political) because of the parasitic behaviours of African leaders (Woods, 1992). These leaders have been using patronage to buy the loyalty of opposition to their rule and have been heavy handed in eradicating those that do not conform to their rule (Kasfir, 2008). Kasfir further states that this patronage system is what kept civil society in Africa from maintaining their autonomy from the state, but because of internal and external pressures on the African state, 'many states may have modulated their urge to dominate without the intention of giving it up' (Kasfir, 2008, p.10). On a similar note, Beckman (1993, p.24) explains that the class character of African states is defined in terms of 'rent-seeking' by the political class, as their relationship to production is predatory linking them to neo-patrimonialism, that stresses clientelist relations. He adds further, the state's

expenditure is reduced to patronage ‘favouring some sectional interests and discriminating against others in the pattern of ethnic or clan politics’ (p.24).

As a result of this, Ikelegbe (2013, p.41) mentions that the relationship between civil society and the state in Nigeria could be adversarial, characterized by struggles for domination and control, opposition and competition, but democratization has broadened the context and cooperation between civil society and the state, enabling the state and civil society to work in ‘areas of healthcare, micro-credit, human capital development and social welfare'. Therefore, in this regard, the relationship between civil society and the state should not be understood as ‘civil society as a moral alternative amidst decreasing state responsibility' but as one where civil society cooperates with the state on the one hand and plays its oppositional role to the state's excesses on the other (Obadare, 2005, p.35). In helping with the development of the wider society, civil society can carry out certain functions such as limiting the state's power and holding them accountable, influencing state policymakers and changing society through alternative ideas and practices such as the feminist and environmental movements (Young, 2002). Civil society associations here, do not concentrate on being adversarial and confrontational, rather it integrates ‘disagreements and confrontation with dialogue; challenge and opposition with consultation; and competition and contentions with cooperation and collaboration’ (Ikelegbe, 2013, p.14). Therefore, civic associations should assist the political elites to adopt the state's actions to the interests of individuals and groups in society, by playing an auxiliary role in policy implementation, relieving the state of part of its administrative burden of delivering benefits to its citizens (Bratton, 1989).

This thesis rejects the neo-liberal idea of civil society as the key vehicle for the delivery of social services. In this neo-liberal view, international agencies are the spokesmen of the forces of civil society that have been suppressed (Beckman,1993). Furthermore, empowerment of civil society by these international agencies is meant to lay the foundation for a future state that is more

responsive to the aspirations of people in the grassroots of society. But as Chambers (2002) posits, the lifeworld (civil society) is where all social interactions take place. He adds, although the lifeworld stands in contrasts to the state and the economy (systems), the lifeworld without the state is difficult to imagine because the state guarantees and protects the integrity of the lifeworld. Therefore, by placing civil society as a sphere independent from the state it does not mean that it is in conflict with or an alternative to the state. Instead it should be recognised that civil society as an alternative to the state; fails to address the relationship between social processes and state power in Africa in that it does not take into consideration 'fundamental differences in the manner in which production is organised and wealth generated in African societies, whether for instance, the base is large-scale commercial agriculture, small-scale peasant production, or mineral rent (Beckman, 1993, p.24).

According to Young (2002, p.156), 'state institutions have unique capacities for coordination, regulation and administration on a large scale that well-functioning democracy cannot do without'. As Alexander (2006) adds these spheres surrounding civil society cannot be read off as dependent variables rather because of their interpenetrated internal modes of organisation with the rest of society, civil society can reach beyond its borders into non-civil realms. Furthermore, 'what happens in these other spheres, what is possible and what not, fundamentally affects the structure and operation of the culture and institutions of civil society in turn.....we must recognize that civil society is always nested in the practical worlds of the uncivil spheres, and we must study the compromises and fragmentations, the "real" rather than merely the idealized civil society that results' Alexander (2006, p.194-195). Civil society, rather than being antithetical to, and placed as a distinct sphere from the uncivil spheres of the state and economy, supports and overlaps each of these different realms through communicative/ relational networks of the three levels of associational life (Young, 2002).

Consequently, this thesis regards civil society to be in a communicative interplay with both the economic markets and the state, going beyond the self-deterministic nature of liberalism. Civil

society is not looking to challenge the state, rather the aim of civil society is to advocate for and carry out certain functions that changes the way the state is run, focusing on issues such as ‘corruption, environmental degradation, and the rights of disadvantaged groups’ (Yang, 2009, p.34). And in this case, civil society organisations in Nigeria as a result of this communicative relationship with the state and markets carries out functions that are capable of mitigating the various ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria.

2.1.5 The boundaries of civil society

The idea that discourse in the public sphere involves interaction only between civil organisations and state institutions is one that has produced different arguments as to what the boundary of civil society is. With the various debates on the boundaries of civil society, Young's position on the boundaries of civil society gives a plausible accent of what this thesis agrees the public sphere should look like. The author states that 'unless multiple spheres are able to communicate with and influence one another, however, they are only parochial separatist enclaves with little role to play in a process of solving problems that cross groups.....inclusiveness in democratic processes, then, suggests that there must be a single public sphere, a process of Interaction and exchange through which diverse sub-publics argue, Influence one another, and influence policies and actions of state and economic Institutions' (Young, 2002, p.172). This, in turn, means that discourse in the public sphere should be inclusive of state institutions and excluded groups because these excluded groups will be given the opportunity to express their opinions publicly and influence public policy (Young, 2002).

When defining the public sphere, Habermas stated that 'the public sphere can best be described as a network for communicating information and points of view (i.e., opinions expressing affirmative or negative attitudes); the streams of communication are, in the process, filtered and synthesized in such a way that they coalesce into bundles of topically Specified public opinions' (Young, 2002, p.170). Here, Habermas believes that to get genuine democracy, a system of wide

guarantees in civil society includes much more than groups, who decide to use their freedom in democracy-enhancing ways and which allows for the protection of people's rights to join political or non-political groups (Chambers, 2002). Fraser explains that 'in societies with structural social and economic inequalities... arrangements that accommodate Contestation among a plurality of competing publics better promote the ideal of participatory parity than does a single, comprehensive, overreaching public sphere' (Young, 2002, p.171).

Walzer (2002), agrees with Fraser's position that the public sphere should be inclusive of excluded groups and have multiple discourses. The author explains that individuals form groups motivated by their interests or by their cultural or religious identity, which civil society caters for. He further, posits that 'the demand for public acknowledgement of the existence, achievements, and needs of minority groups is probably made more often in companies, unions, churches, parties, philanthropic organisations, professional associations, and so on, than in more official settings' (Walzer, 2002, p.40). The argument here is that societies with social and economic inequalities tend to have the public sphere monopolised by advantaged groups, while marginalised social groups, have always associated and organised themselves outside of the public sphere in parallel publics creating what Ekeh (1975), in the African context calls the two publics. In the parallel publics, they express themselves and their interests with the aim of influencing public debate and bring about the institutional change (Young, 2002).

However, global civil society theorists argue that civil society provides for public spheres, which operate under international law as an agent for dispersed sovereignty in democratic global governance (Baker, 2002). Their idea is that the public sphere as the space of debate has shifted from the ‘national to the global and is increasingly constructed around global communication networks' and without an international public sphere, the global political order will be defined by the ‘realpolitik' of nation-states (Castells, 2008, p.78-80). Although global civil society is promoted by a group of powerful states and international organisations, it is criticised by neo-

Gramscian theorists because the policies and practices attributed to this worldwide form of civil society increase the wealth and power of the few and undermine the political capacity of the poor (Katz, 2006). For Cox (1993), indigenous groups are not the bearer of new ideas here, and instead, it is the intellectual spectrum which picks up these new ideas and grounds them in the domestic economic developments of states. Therefore, the world hegemonic order (social, economic and political structures) expressed in universal norms (rules that support the dominant modes of production), institutions and mechanisms, is an order within a world economy in which a dominant mode of production, culture and system of social institutions penetrates all countries within, exploiting subordinate methods of production (Cox, 1993, Burnham, 1991). It must take extent beyond classes and the elites, to include different social forces of various classes and social democratic groupings (Katz, 2006).

This view is contrary to the idea portrayed by Diamond (1994, p.6), who mentions that organisations within civil society must be ready to ‘operate by some set of shared rules', which ‘eschew violence and respect pluralism' under the ‘irreducible condition of its "civil" dimension'. As Ikelegbe (2013, p.8) asserts, civil society here is understood to include ‘civic secondary associations; middle level, non-primordial and professional associations, that are national, autonomous that engage the state in the public realm to promote civil values or norms, and seek the common good or purposes’. The engagement with the state is between citizens and civil society, which then ensures that the balance between stability and social change is maintained in the conduct of state affairs (Castells, 2008).

Yet, Ikelegbe (2013) mentions that this engagement is exclusive as it excludes primary associations such as communal, ethnic, grassroots self-help and religious associations because they are parochial and parasitic. He also explains that informal/primordial associations should be included in the public sphere given their importance in resolving social, political and economic malaise which has beset Nigeria for some time. Kasfir (1998) also agrees with this position, as

he says that the emphasis placed on civility obscures the political and economic cleavages that must be resolved before members of African society can be at peace with each other to work within a democratic system. He also states that organisations in civil society play an important role when they promote pressing issues that affect their constituents. As Habermas (2004, p.8) points out, the communication process that flows through the parliamentary bodies and informal networks of the public sphere 'opinion-formation generates 'influence'; influence is transformed into 'communicative power' through channels of political elections; and communicative power is again transformed into "administrative power" through legislation. Therefore, it should be stated that civic, private and political associations with their multiple discourses and forms of expression, allows for multiple sub spheres to communicate and influence one another, serving as a space where civic and excluded groups can also aim to influence public discourse to bring about institutional change (Young, 2002).

In brief, this thesis reiterates that there should be a single public sphere where communicative interactions and exchange takes place between associations in diverse sub-publics, who go on to then influence one another, as well as the actions of the state and markets. By this notion, societies grappling with social and economic inequalities especially in non-western contexts need to include marginalised social groups in the public sphere, by allowing them to organise in sub-publics within the public sphere so as to tackle socio-economic and political inequalities. The inability of the African state to cater for the interest of its citizens and the exclusion of marginalised groups in the public sphere (owing to the civility criteria) has given more impetus for these excluded groups who are considered non-civil to demand more engagements with the state since they represent the interest of their constituents and can carry out the same functions as civic groups in mediating and mitigating against socio-political and economic problems. In the case of Nigeria, the context of colonialism eroded the state's capacities to provide for the economic and political interests of the diverse ethnic nationalities within the country. In the next section, the aim will be to focus on the relevance of civil society in Africa and Nigeria specifically

to analyse the concept to the countries specific social, economic and political processes. It will look at how civil society is conceptually approached in Africa in order to show how important the social and political culture of a country is the formulation of the concept.

2.2 The relevance of the concept to Africa in general and Nigeria

2.2.1 Is civil society a western concept?

The relevance of civil society and its usefulness to Africa is a topic that has been debated for a while now. This is especially the case, because the notion civil society, from its origin in western Europe has had conflicting meanings (Adekson, 2012). As Adekson (2012, p.42) posits, 'due to the lack of clarity in the use of this increasingly employed idea, it is imbued with sometimes contradictory and normative ideals'. This lack of clarity stems from the collapse of the Soviet Union and the social insurrection against authoritarianism in Central and Eastern Europe, which introduced the idea of civil society as an alternative to the state, with the capability to limit and democratise the state through counter-hegemonic activities (Young, 2002). It is these contradictions that give rise to the thinking that civil society might not be applicable outside western tradition. This section looks to analyse the various debates which emanate from the concepts' applicability as a policy tool and analytical concept in non-western contexts.

The doubt about the usefulness of civil society outside the western context can be seen in Kunz's scholarly works, when he mentions that 'For the solidification of a working democracy over la tongue dure'e - for sustaining freedom - 'a' civil society, constructively linked to the state and serving as a source of policy input, will be a prerequisite. For the original project of democratic breakthrough - - for seizing freedom - civil society is an aggregate of groups and activities, whose presence is measured in its cumulative impact on demolishing autocracy' (Kunz, 1995, p.187). He suggests that civil society in the west is a product of ideas of the autonomy of law and the principle of reciprocity as observed in Western European federalism. Hutchful (1995) also explains that the emergence of civil society was not out of a static and activists' position of contestations between the boundaries of civil society and the state, but from a mature civil

society where the boundaries between the state and civil society have been settled.

David Lewis (2002) characterises the relevance of some of the debates that emanate about civil society and its applicability to Africa. The author's analysis proffers four ways in which civil society can be examined, and this section will be looking to analyse some of the contradictions inherent in these arguments. The first argument agrees that civil society does exist in non-western contexts, as it's based on a positive and normative view (top-down) of civil society as part of building and strengthening democracy in non-western nations. The second argument, which Lewis calls Western Exceptionalism, sets out that there is no civil society in non-western contexts, given that the concept emerged from a historical European period in time and can have little or no meaning within differing political and cultural environments. The third historical adaptive argument suggests that civil society is potentially relevant to non-western contexts, but needs to take on local meanings, which should not be applied too firmly. The fourth argument, ignores the issue of relevance, rather arguing that civil society has long been part of Africa's colonial histories. He argues that civil society can have many meanings and should be analysed the way it currently exists in order to understand its characteristics and structures.

2.2.1.1 The Prescriptive view

The positive notion that civil society is relevant to strengthening and sustaining democracy stems from De Tocqueville's Idea that institutionalised civil societies could make governance more democratised and the state more responsive to its citizen's needs (Diamond, 1997). This idea became imperative in Africa and Nigeria especially, given that civil society plays vital roles in the collapse of tyrannical governments and the establishment of democratic governments, through the use of protest and other organised civic actions (Adekson, 2004). For Lewis (2002, p.576), who talks about the role of NGOs and donors, he states that civil society has brought about good governance, this good governance coming in the form of the ‘monitoring of elections, voter education and capacity building'. Such prescriptive developmental policies,

rather than being instruments for the inclusion and development of groups and collective claims, restricts and exclude such claims (Lewis, 2002).

With this positive view being the present-day export to the African continent and the world, Lewis (2002) states that this idea is a relatively optimistic theory, although there is anxiety as to its usefulness. As Makumbe (1998) mentions using the example of foreign donors, stating that these donor agencies are not accountable to local communities, as their autonomy is compromised, and they end up implementing the agendas of these foreign agencies. For Kasfir (1998, p.126), ‘using a normative concept of civil society to analyse African politics is likely to obscure than it clarifies’ given that ‘non-state organisational actors in African civil society may be capable of no more than modest, tentative and often reversible contributions to democratisation’. As Allen (1997, p.337) explains ‘Thus apart from the grant-seeking NGOs and the academic, it is proponents of the 'liberal project' who need civil society: western governments, their associated agencies, multinationals, and IFIs. Africanists can dispense with it: 'civil society forms part of a large body of general concepts that have appeared briefly to illuminate analysis but which are too diffuse, inclusive and ideologically laden to sustain illumination: nation building, modernisation, elite, dependency, disengagement-even, perhaps, ethnicity.' His explanation, therefore, rests on the belief that civil society in Africa is a concept that is employed as a political ideology. Although the aim of this view on civil society looks to democratise nation states, using this normative idea of civil society in the African context restricts and excludes rather than strengthening democracy.

Ekeh (1975, p.92), in his attempt to clarify the distinction between the public and the private sphere in colonialism stated that the public sphere had acquired a peculiar western connotation…. the private realm and the public realms have a common moral foundation'. In his view, it means that the public and private realms have generalised morality, as opposed to the differential association morality that obtains between public and private in Africa. Ekeh's submission is that the publicization of the private sphere in Africa is a characteristic of absolutists regimes, as opposed to the anti-absolutists which Kunz (1992) refers to in Lokean

terms. Here, the private and public realms have common foundations, in that what is ‘morally right in the private realm is also considered morally right in the public realm' (Ekeh, 1975, p.92).

The private realm in Africa is commonly associated differently with the public real in morality terms, leading to two public realms, one with primordial ties that influence an individual's public behaviour (primordial public) and the other (civic public), which is associated with the colonial state and is situated with the politics of colonialism and civility (Ekeh, 1975). Also, this civic public is considered to be amoral and lacks the generalised moral imperatives that operate in the private primordial public. As mentioned earlier, Sotiropoulos (2004) states that the civic groups, as well as non-civic groups, should be considered as a civil society given that these non-civic groups carry out the same functions that are attributed to civic groups. Ekeh (1975) points out that these same political actors in the primordial public still can operate in the civic public carrying out the same functions and at the same time they show a unique dialectical relationship between the two publics, which has fomented the political conflicts which Nigeria is looking to resolve.

Therefore, in this view, non-civic/informal associations have a significant role to play as well as formal/civic associations in the socio-economic and political development of Africa, which can go beyond the ideological promotion of the term. These informal associations (in the primordial public) according to Ekeh, are able to operate in the civic public carrying out the same functions as civic organisations because both realms have a generalised morality. They are essential because of their ability to move along the different levels of associative activity as mentioned earlier influencing the economy and the state to mediate and mitigate against socio-economic and political conflicts (Young, 2002).

2.2.1.2 Western emancipation view

There are also arguments which say that civil society, cannot be applied outside the western European context because it developed through European history. Chabal and Daloz (as cited Aiyede, 2000) argue that civil society in Africa is non-existent because the state lacks proper

institutionalisation and is weakly autonomous from society. Their idea is that civil society which is dominated and integrated into patrimonial networks with the state is incapable of counter-hegemonically pressuring the state. Using De Tocqueville's thoughts on democracy consolidation, the voluntary participation of citizens in associations outside the state is the 'bedrock' of the democratic practice and culture and independent economic vitality (Diamond, 1997, p.41).

The idea that civil society developed from western histories and cannot be applied to Africa forgets African history of colonialism which excluded and forced citizens to associate in the primordial sphere, thereby obstructing African social life (Makumbe, 1998). This, therefore, has created a private/public sphere distinction which is used to characterise civil society organisations from non-western contexts. In the West, the historical context of politics led to the individual assuming rights, which implied the willingness of the individual to perform duties, which were transactional and were the main attributes of citizenship in the European context (Ekeh, 1975). As well, in African, colonialism meant that citizenship acquired various meanings depending on whether it was conceived in the primordial or in the civic public. The individual in the African sense viewed his duties as a ‘moral obligation to benefit and sustain a primordial public' to their ethnic groups in the form of ‘Voluntary contributions to ethnic associations' (Ekeh, 1975, p.106-107).

Furthermore, the individual benefits by gaining some form of ‘identity or psychological security' that allows the individual to function in society (p.107). As well, in the civic public because of the amorality of the public, economic value is more emphasised in contrast to the primordial public leading the individual not to have any moral urge to give back, as their duties are less emphasised. This goes back to the historical context of colonialism, where rights of African citizens were denied and restricted leading to them forming ethnic/traditional associations in the primordial public, which eventually played important roles in emancipating African citizens from colonial rule (Makumbe, 1998).

The contestations and agitations between civil society and the state in Nigeria as explained by Hutchful (1995) emanated from the inept political and fragile economic systems, as well as the uncertain relations between competing for ethnic and religious groups that have characterised the Nigerian states since independence (Bradley, 2005). Also, the ethnic and religious cleavages occasioned by colonial rule ‘sullied political activity' and exacerbated rival political party tensions because the parties, up until recently were not centred around ideological differences and issue competitiveness but revolved around ethnic linkages (p.70-71). Therefore, though African does have its peculiarities, it cannot be said that civil society cannot be applied outside western Europe without considering the effects of colonial rule on the public sphere. Civil society has been an important part of colonial history and is now manifested in contemporary Nigerian socio-political processes, struggling regardless of how tough it has been to challenge the dominant power if the state and mitigate against economic and political discrimination and exclusion of Nigerian citizens (Jeong, 1999). And it is this exclusion of Nigerian citizens that has led to various ethno-religious conflicts in the country exacerbating over time. Consequently, it will be important to see how civil society can be very important in tackling the exclusion of citizens from socio-economic processes and also becoming major actors in mitigating against conflicts in the country.

2.2.1.3 Adaptive view

Disagreeing with the prescriptive and the western emancipation ideas, this view calls for a mid-way between the top-down imposition of civil society or abandoning the project if it is inappropriate (Lewis, 2002). The idea is that civil society needs to move away from the western understanding of rights, to include self-help groups organised for personal and economic ends (Lewis, 2002). Ekeh (1975) explains that there are calls for the concept of civil society to be adapted to the peculiarities of the African context, to develop a more robust and effective African civil society. As Lewis (2002, p.579) states, ‘recognition of local counter-part traditions may, therefore, counter the tendency to undervalue the role of kin-based and ethnic organisations in helping to form public opinions and political pressure groups '.

By accepting such local traditional groups, there could be a potential for these groups to accept some aspects of democratic principles (Lewis, 2002). Kasfir (1998, p.124) adds that Africa has a rich associational life but weak democracy. He posits that the fragility in African democracy is as a result of ‘weakly institutionalised states, a political economy greatly dependent on patronage and ethically mobilised societies’. The author goes on to argue that participatory democracy is the alternative way to organise democracy and strengthens civil society, as it places emphasis on the grassroots and informal organisations. Making the concept of civil society broader to include informal/involuntary and kinship organisations widen the concept to be locally specific to the context of Africa and Nigeria in particular (Lewis,2002).

2.2.1.4 Historical relevance

Highlighting civil society's relevance to Africa, Lewis (2002, p.580) argues that civil society has always been relevant to African ‘governance' and ‘citizenship' since the colonial era. Lewis (2002) adds that western liberal view ignores organisations or groups which do not fit into the western prescription of civil society. Gyimah-Boadi (1996, p.128) posits that associational life in Africa is dominated by informal kin-based groups, which are 'preliberal or illiberal' and do subscribe to 'extremely hierarchical' and 'undemocratic values'. These reinforce the views of critics, as the normative, prescriptive characteristics which are embedded in civil society theory regarding institutionalised rule setting organisations, are missing in Africa. The legacy of colonialism shaped the dynamics of local social and political culture in Africa, creating challenges for governance and democracy in the continent.

By excluding groups and associations which are considered uncivil by western standards, it should be realised that African civil society ‘innately is not a western phenomenon…those aspects of African civil society that ostensibly appear to be self-destructive or ill-developed in fact are genuine manifestations of this rather Vague but recognisable concept' (Adekson, 2004, p.39). Furthermore, he states that application of civil society to Africa has been made in an effort to ‘capture' and ‘promote' democratic struggles under the guise of ‘market reforms' and ‘political

liberation' (Adekson, 2004, p.1). The imposition of civil society to Africa as a liberal project, does face limitations as local civic organisations who lack material resources, turn to foreign donors for finance (Bratton, 1994). This is the long-run turns to over-dependence on foreign donors, which reverses the direction of accountability to citizens (as organisations leaders report to the foreign donors) and causes ‘a political liability' for local civic organisations, as they are regarded agents of foreign organisations (Bratton, 1994, p.8).

The idea that civil society does not exist in Africa, and is a western conception, seems erroneous, given that civil society in Africa has been important in bringing about social and political change (Makumbe, 1998). In explaining civil society's role in anti-authoritarian struggles in Africa, Gyimah-Boadi (1998, p.20) states that ‘the role of popular forces (trade unions, traders associations), elite organisations (professional associations, academic unions), and religious groups and leaders in the pro-democratic agitation that brought down autocratic regimes. As Alexander (2006) posits rather than seeing individual autonomy and civil society as a universalistic given, it should be observed that civil society is a product of specific historical and social contexts, which must be taken into consideration. Therefore, by this, it can be explained that civil society in Nigeria is a product of colonialism which played a major role in the social and political exclusion of African citizens as they started associating and organising themselves in the private sphere (Bratton, 2004).

In summary, it has been discussed that civil society in Nigeria, is relevant and did not just evolve from the political evolution of Western Europe. It has been a constantly evolving mainstay in the African socio-political and economic arena and should be looked at from the colonial historical context. The colonial state gave rise to the two publics, which has led to some critics arguing that as a result of citizens morality being embedded in the primordial amoral public in Africa, institutionalised moral associations should be prescribed in mitigating conflicts in African countries as a result of ethnic and religious cleavages. But the marginalisation of informal groups from the definition of civil society excludes the interest they represent, as these groups are important in protecting the interests and voice of African citizens (Orji, 2009).

Therefore, for civil society to project the interests and voice of Nigerians, it has to represent and influence the state to make changes that affect the socio-economic and political lives of Nigerian citizens. In the next section, this thesis aims to develop the interrelationship between civil society and peacebuilding, so that academic literature can be drawn to understand the role civil society can play in resolving and transforming the various conflicts plaguing the Nigerian nation.

2.3 Peacebuilding, Conflict Resolution and Civil Society

2.3.1 What is Peace

The relationship between civil society and peacebuilding is a complex one, especially in a situation where states are recognised as the main actors in peacebuilding. Before going into the development and approaches to peacebuilding, it is important to define the concept of peace. Galtung (1969), in his three principles on peace, considers that peace should be used for social goals, which may be complicated and difficult (not impossible) and should be viewed as the absence of violence. He defines negative peace as the absence of social justice since the lack of personal violence does not produce a positive outcome in conflict, meaning that there is just the absence of direct violence. On the other hand, he states that positive peace is the 'absence of structural violence', as it does not depend only on the 'control and reduction of the overt use of violence, but of what is elsewhere referred to as vertical development', in that 'peace theory is intimately connected not only with conflict theory, but equally with development theory' (Galtung, 1969, p.183). On a similar note, Maill (2007, p.12) refers to the distinction between negative and positive peace stating that positive peace, involves 'mutual development, mutual trust, mutual respect and regard, and mutual co-operation'. In contrast, he sees negative peace as the absence of direct violence, because it is 'inappropriate to describe changes that are brought about either through the international use of coercion or as a result of structures of domination as peaceful change'. Furthermore, peace is the 'pursuit of common goals, in a mutual co-operation and in awareness of the wholeness of society' (Maill,2007, p.12).

Maill (2007) adds further, that the causes of war, are not the opposite of the prevention of conflict, given that they are likely to be part of the factors that work together to make a peaceful society. The factors that prevent wars (structural measures) are not the opposite of the causes, they 'co-exist' because such structural measures such as 'good governance' and 'development and democracy' can both inhibit conflict or intensify conflict (Maill, 2007, p.16). Essentially, this thesis agrees that peace is not just the absence of violence, but also the absence of structural violence which does not depend only on the reduction of direct violence, but on the egalitarian distribution of power and resources. In the context of peace in Nigeria, this egalitarian distribution of power and resources will involve the elimination of socio-economic and political inequalities (structural and cultural violence) which gives rise to the country's conflicts. This is because of the absence of the guardians of social control in traditional African societies (kinship, religious and political systems), which are concerned with the wellbeing of communities. The absence of these institutions, broken families and the inability of families to make ends meet has led to social disparities, while providing a pool of unemployed youths who are ready to take up arms to execute ethno-religious conflicts in the country (Odukoya and Çanci, 2016). Therefore, civil society organisations in Nigeria will have to play specific roles in in the country's socio-economic and political life in order to mitigate these direct, structural and cultural violence to gain positive peace.

2.3.2 Conflict

The literature on conflict is one where there are varying accounts and understanding of what it means. Additionally, the causes of conflict are quite diverse. Therefore, it is important to understand what conflict means in order to have a better understanding of how to build peace. Lederach (1995) states that social conflict is a phenomenon created by humans and lodged in human relationships. Also, 'it is a phenomenon that transforms events, the relationship in which conflict occurs and indeed its very creators.....it is a necessary element in transformative human construction and reconstruction of social organizations and realities' (p.17). Drawing on a

structuralist and behaviouralist tradition, Galtung mentions that conflict is ‘a kind of energy that arises when living beings have their goals frustrated' (Maill, 2007, p.30). The definition of Jeong (1999) describes the conflict as a contentious process of interpersonal or inter-group interaction that takes place within a larger social context. In addition, it is a context where the sources of grievance are associated with structural injustice, which is often embedded in a political framework that can be socially interpreted and construed. Austin et al. (2012) define conflict as a clash between antithetical ideas or interests within one or two people or groups or states pursuing mutually incompatible goals. In addition, they mention that every conflict has its history, dynamics, therefore if a conflict is a social phenomenon and part of human interaction, then conflict as a driver of social change should be considered a constructivists approach. Reason being that ‘constructive approaches to conflict aim to create a social and political environment which allows the root causes of conflicts to be addressed and which enhances sustained and non-violent alternatives’ (Austin et al., 2012, p.11).

Galtung (1969) explains that violence is present when human beings are influenced in such a way that their actual physical and mental realisations are below their potential realisations. In that stead, violence is ‘present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realisations are below their potential realizations' (Galtung, 1969, p.168). This means that violence is present when the potential to cause harm is higher than the actual harm because the potential to cause harm is avoidable. What is important is that violence can be either direct or indirect, as Galtung (1969, p.170) notes ‘we shall refer to the type of violence where there is an actor that commits the violence as personal or direct, and to violence where there is no such actor as structural or indirect. In both cases, individuals may be killed or mutilated, hit or hurt in both senses of these words, and manipulated by means of stick or carrot strategies’. Austin et al. (2012, p.11) posit that ‘conflicts may either be manifest through behaviour and action or latent, remaining inactive for sometimes, while incompatibilities are not articulated or are part of structures (political system, institutions etc.)'. As Galtung (1969, p.171) explains that direct violence corresponds to ‘violence with a clear subject-object relation’ that

manifests because it is visible, while indirect violence, on the other hand, is violence without the subject-object relationship, also called structural violence or social injustice. The factors that prevent wars (structural measures) are not the opposite of the causes, they 'co-exist' because such structural measures such as 'good governance' and 'development and democracy' can both inhibit conflict or intensify conflict (Maill, 2007, p.16).

Talking about structural violence in Nigeria, Nwokolo (2017) states that the discovery of oil in the Niger-Delta in 1958 introduced structural violence to the country's socio-political landscape. He adds that the structural violence created in this oil-bearing communities was ‘all- pervasive, and generated many different forms of violence, such as physical, including armed, cultural, psychological and environmental’ (Nwokolo, 2017, p.498). Furthermore, the negative effect of commercial oil production, such as poverty, repression and social alienation, which were present at the inception of oil production, was ‘built into the very structure of these oil hosting communities' (p.501). The violence in this context was not visible given that there was no subject-object relationship; therefore, this indirect form of violence has produced social injustice in Nigeria. The structural violence was avoidable because, given the knowledge, warning signals and the money made from the oil, the government and oil companies failed to use the revenues from oil to solve the various problems affecting the area such as development (Nwokolo, 2017).

To broaden the horizons of violence to cultural aspects, Galtung (1990), adds that cultural violence is aspects of culture (the symbolic sphere of our existence), which can be used to justify or legitimise direct or structural violence. His expansion to cultural violence justifies the use of culture to carry out violence on others and make it acceptable. He mentions that cultural violence makes direct and structural violence ‘look, even feel right- or at least not wrong', therefore making cultural violence equate to indirect or latent structural violence (Galtung, 1990, p.291). Arisi and Oromareghake (2011, p.375) explains that ethnicity in Nigeria is an important proxy of cultural factors affecting violence since it ‘encompasses values and norms that govern the behavioural and psychological levels of women's participation in decision-making and power relations within households and at community levels'. This aspect of cultural conflict for

example makes the male child more prominent, ignoring the rights of the girl child to be included and be able to participate in the daily socio-political life of the country. Violence ‘includes much more than the use of physical force by persons.... structural conditions such as unjust and oppressive political systems, social inequality or malnutrition, as well as their justification through culture or ideology are seen as chief sources of violence and war (Austin et al., 2012, p.116).

Therefore, resolving conflicts should aim to use an approach that caters for direct (personal harm), indirect (structural) and cultural violence because resolving conflicts that include class, cultural and ethnic dimensions often requires ‘negotiation of incompatible values as well as material interest' (Jeong,1999, p.7). The dynamics of intermediate and war- level conflicts suggests that they are driven by long-standing animosities that are rooted in perceived threat to identity and survival, thus psychological (long-term rooted) and cultural features often drive and sustain conflict rather than just substantive features (national interests with a short-term frame) (Lederach, 1997). In Nigeria, structural violence has given way for direct physical violence and cultural violence, which has been pervasive and proliferated over time. This means that both formal and informal organisations in civil society would not only be focusing on aspects of direct violence but would focus on roles that aim to resolve social disadvantage in Nigeria such as gender inequality, sexual violence and other cultural aspects which can be used to justify or legitimise direct or structural violence in the country.

2.3.3 Civil Society and Peacebuilding

There is a difficulty in agreeing what definition of peacebuilding will be appropriate in conflicting societies, owing to the complex and broad nature of the concept. Galtung differentiated between Peacekeeping, Peacemaking and Peacebuilding, stating that peacekeeping involves the balance of power and the use of force to discourage the warring actors from going back to armed violence ((Richardson, 1976)). He also adds that Peacemaking through

conflict resolution involves negotiated agreements to end violence by the conflicting actors, while with peacebuilding 'structures must be found to remove the causes of war and to offer alternatives in situations in which war might occur' (Richardson, 1976, p.111). Paffenholz and Spurk (2006) mention that peacebuilding has three phases of conflict: preventing the start of armed conflict, management of conflict through signing of peace agreements and the post-conflict peacebuilding phase, which is divided into two phases (immediate aftermath of armed conflict (1-5 yrs.) and the period after conflict (5-10 yrs.)). Maill (2007) states that peacebuilding aims to help societies get past the possibility of violence and also create expectations which they believe will not lead to the reoccurrence of violence.

He adds further that peacebuilding is concerned with structural measures that look to prevent conflicts and create a political space that places conflicts in the 'political rather than a militarized arena, the establishment of acceptable institutions, the protection of human rights and provision of basic needs' (Maill, 2007, p.18).

According to Mohammed and Yalwa (2018, p.2), peacebuilding implies the process whereby durable peace is established, and there is an effort to prevent conflict from occurring by getting to the root cause of the conflict through 'reconciliation, institution building and politics as well as economic transformation'. For Austin et al. (2012, p.62-63) this means that peacebuilding is based on the view that violent armed conflicts do not just end automatically with the signing of peace agreements or the deployment of peacekeeping forces, rather it is a 'long-term process of ongoing work' in three dimensions (altering structural contradictions, improving relations between the conflicting parties and changing individual attitudes and behaviours). In the first dimension, they believed that state building and democratic measures are essential elements to reform the structures that reproduce conflicts such as the education system, economic and sustainable development, empowerment of civil society and social justice and human rights.

With the second dimension, they also state that the aim is to reduce the effects of war-related hostilities and disrupted communication between the conflicting parties through programmes of reconciliation, trust building and dealing with past aims to transform damaged relationships.

Adding to this, Barnett et al (2007, p.49-50) posit that post-conflict peacebuilding has three dimensions namely; stability creation (by reinforcing the stability and discouraging combatants from returning to war through disarmament, demobilisation, reintegration programs, security sector reforms and arms control), restoration of state institutions (building key state functions that have the capacity to generate public goods and possess legitimacy), and addressing socio-economic dimensions of conflict (trauma counselling, transnational justice and reconciliation, gender empowerment, promoting economic development and building bridges between communities). As Paffenholz and Spurk (2006) explain, peacebuilding gained recognition after the collapse of the Soviet Union during the cold war. She adds that this shifted the attention of conflicts from intra-state conflicts, to the 'management and resolution' of Conflicts within states (Paffenholz, 2006, p.16). In the wake of the shift in focus to conflicts within states, the UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali introduced peacebuilding and proposed a framework that concentrates on 'the capacities of international donors and international actors in addressing an ambitiously broad- albeit undifferentiated- set of needs' (Harpviken and Kjellman, 2004, p.7).

Such a framework introduced what is described as a top-down approach to peacebuilding, where international actors and states, implement peace agreements and provide peacebuilding interventions (Harpviken and Kjellman, 2004). The change of strategy of peacebuilding in the 1990s paid more attention to external actors and their role in putting an end to armed conflicts and wars (Paffenholz, 2006). At the institutional level, 'many international organisations and foreign policy bureaucracies of states have re-orientated themselves in order to engage in a range of peacekeeping, peacebuilding, peacemaking, peace-enforcement, and conflict- prevention activities' (MacGinty, 2011, p.20). This form of intervention, liberal peace, reflects the interest of international organisations, international financial organisations and nation-states in the global north; who delegate down a complex chain from States and international organisations

of the global north to national governments (ministries and municipalities)-INGOs and NGOs-to the locals (MacGinty, 2011). In this situation, it could be seen that local civil organisations had no role in liberal peace, as international non-governmental organisations and domesticated non-governmental organisations are more prominent and less likely to prioritise local initiatives. As Harpviken and Kjellman (2004) emphasised, the liberal peace interventions include the disarming of the warring parties, destruction of weapons, monitoring elections, repatriating refugees, promoting participation, advancing human rights and strengthening the institutions of states. It is acknowledged that liberalism has provided a framework for international interventions, but MacGinty (2011, p.28) warns, that the problem is that 'liberal interventionalism can become a steamroller, pushing aside indigenous norms, prescribing particular forms of political and economic organisation, and limiting certain freedoms in the name of other freedoms'. Here lies part of the criticism of international Interventions, as the perception remains that liberal peacebuilding, aims to produce forms of governance that agree with the expectation of states and international organisations, which in turn fails to connect with local cultural expectations (MacGinty, 2011). This has led to calls for local cultural priorities to be included in peacebuilding, which places emphasis on local organisations and looks to address the root causes of conflict in a given Context (Harpviken and Kjellman, 2004). As MacGinty (2011) explains of indigenous peacebuilding, they do not invoke specific techniques to the resolution of Conflict like liberal peacebuilding; instead, it involves wider cultural habits, which focuses on relationships and on how individuals and communities interpret the world. They provide better insights into the needs of society, without the need for a fix-it-all framework of peacebuilding which is not context specific (Harpviken and Kjellman, 2004).

Essentially, this thesis agrees with the view that incorporating local peacebuilding techniques into the discourse on peace would go a long way in understanding the dynamics of peace. This is because by incorporating local approaches to peacebuilding, this would provide the ‘cultural contexts and understanding of particular community attributes’ (Parver and Wolf, 2008, p.54). Furthermore, it allows for local civil society organisations which are embedded locally to get

to the roots of issues causing the conflict. In doing this, their functions should cover the economic, political and social make-up of countries, which will mean local organisations collaborating with the state to create avenues that citizens can play active roles in society to protect their interests (Marchetti and Tocci, 2009; Parver and Wolf). This thesis will be focused on post-conflict building and aims to establish that peacebuilding is not just the use of coercive power or the signing or negotiation of agreements to prevent the reoccurrence of violent conflicts, it involves 'a comprehensive approach to the transformation of conflicts that addresses structural issues, social dynamics of relationship building and the development of a supportive infrastructure for peace (Lederach, 1997, p.21). In short, post-conflict peacebuilding should be focused on stabilising the state, restoring the institutions of the state so that it can have the capacity to generate public goods and address socio-economic problems (Barnett et al., 2009).

This means that formal organisations including informal ethnic and traditional associations in Nigeria, would need to be incorporated into post-conflict peacebuilding efforts so as to benefit from their local peacebuilding techniques and practices. They will provide the local contexts of communities in order for the root causes of ethno-religious conflicts to be ascertained and resolved. They will also have to collaborate with the state to get resources distributed, allow ideas and interests to be heard and get cultural practices respected, which in turn would give concrete results and mitigate against social, economic and political conflicts. Reason why their contributions need to be included in peace processes is because though they are considered non-civil, they encourage a strong sense of social obligation in Nigeria and are recognised to be more capable of taking on civil functions that represent the socio-economic needs of Nigerian citizens.

2.3.4 Approaches to Peacebuilding

To understand the post-conflict peacebuilding better, it is good to look at different methods which are related to different theoretical schools to know how each approach can be applied in

order to de-escalate conflict and introduce a reconciliatory phase.

2.3.4.1 Conflict management

This approach is one of the oldest, as it involves ending wars using different diplomatic initiatives through external diplomats and from bilateral and multilateral organisations (Paffenholz and Spurk, 2006). Within this approach, states and state-like actors either from the conflicting parties or from third parties are the primary actors with civil society having a marginal/secondary value in the process (Marchetti and Tocci, 2009). The conflict management school has been criticised because mediators concentrate on the top leadership of the conflicting parties, ignoring the facilitation by different internal and external actors during and after negotiators (Paffenholz et al., 2009). Also, it has been criticised because it overlooks the deep causes of conflict instead focusing more on the signing peace agreements and the short-term management of armed conflict.

2.3.4.2 Conflict Resolution

This school of thought emerged in the 1970s, adopting socio-psychological conflict resolution workshops at the inter-personal level (Paffenholz and Spurk, 2006). The resolution of conflict emerges when basic needs are denied and needs the re-articulation of adopted satisfiers through a changed understanding of a group's identity and interests in a way that it fulfils the needs of every citizen (Marchetti and Tocci, 2009). It also focuses on dialogue, persuasion and problem-solving aspects that are beyond signing peace accords and are a non-coercive means of managing conflicts. These are done through workshops which aim to bring individuals from the conflict parties together, to rebuild the relationships between the representatives of the conflict parties and try to solve the causes of conflict (Paffenholz and Spurk, 2006). Furthermore, under this approach ‘relations need to be rebuilt not only between the top representatives of the conflict parties but also within society at large’ (Paffenholz and Spurk, 2006, p.20).

The approach focuses on the deep-rooted causes of conflict, including the structural, behavioural and above all, attitudinal aspects, by helping conflict parties to explore, analyse, question and reframe their positions and interests as a way of transcending conflict (Austin et al., 2012). It places emphasis on the involvement of non-elites, looking to include individuals, communities and civil society groups in order to address deep-rooted conflicts using long-term resolution approach (Paffenholz et al., 2009). The involvement of civil society organisations and groups means that they play more of a prominent role here, as they become 'indispensable actors allowing the shift from mere top-down management and settlement to bottom-up social reconciliation and pacification' (Marchetti and Tocci, 2009, p.21). This approach is criticised by advocates of conflict management because they see the process as too long to be able to stop wars; also they believe that building relationships between the conflicting parties do not result in agreements to end wars (Paffenholz and Spurk, 2006).

2.3.4.3 Conflict Transformation

This approach is rooted in critical thinking and focuses on deep-rooted conflicts based on the idea that 'the rearticulating of identities and perceived interests through psychological, educative and discursive change is not sufficient' therefore, there needs to be 'active change in structural determinant, which gives rise to violent conflicts (Marchetti and Tocci, 2009, p.212- 213). Lederach developed this comprehensive, transformative approach looking to solve the dilemma between short-term conflict management and long-term relationship building, as he sees the need to rebuild destroyed relationships through reconciliation within society and the strengthening of society's peacebuilding potential (Paffenholz and Spurk, 2006). It identifies 'mid-level individuals or groups' empowering them to build peace and support reconciliation given that the empowerment of the middle level is assumed to influence peacebuilding at the 'macro and grassroots level' (Paffenholz et al., 2009, p.5). In addition, it adopts a community-based bottoms-up approach, shifting its focus from international to local actors. But there are criticisms to this approach, namely that the linkage between the tracks is not elaborated enough

as it under-conceptualises conflict management and the importance of the state in the process (Paffenholz et al., 2009). Also, the emphasis on incorporating traditional values and local views need to be critically analysed in today's world, as these structures are often transformed by modern developments.

Having observed the various arguments for these approaches, this thesis will be making use of the conflict resolution approach because of the research questions to this study centre on how civils society actors can facilitate peace in conflict-affected communities in Nigeria. This approach is adopted because it focuses on the long-term relationship building and problem-solving aspects that conflict transformation also shares. But it does not agree that there needs to be an active change in the structural determinants that cause violent conflicts. Instead, this thesis focuses on how the parties in deeply rooted conflicts can prevent the reoccurrence of violent conflicts, by concentrating on the structural, behavioural and attitudinal aspects of the conflict (Austin et al., 2012). This thesis also agrees with the position that relations need to be rebuilt between the top representatives of the conflict and within the society at large. The reason is that as stated earlier, peacebuilding should not just depend on the coercive power of the state which informs the use of conflict management but should also resolve conflicts by stabilising the state, restoring the institutions of state and address socio-economic problems through civil society organisations. Therefore, states and state like actors through conflict management are also involved in the process of resolving the conflicts.

2.3.5 Conflict Resolution

This section will examine Lederach's (1997) conflict resolution framework. By looking at this framework, we can understand that peacebuilding is an activity that will require various actors to play roles which are capable of entrenching sustainable peace.

Beginning with levels of leadership, Lederach (1997) proposes three levels of leadership: top-

level leadership (level 1), middle-range leadership (level 2) and grassroots leadership (level 3).

Level 1 leaders consist of key political leadership and military leaders in a conflict, who are visible, have power and influence and are locked into positions regarding issues with the conflict. Level 2 leaders are in respective leadership positions themselves but have no connection to the state or the adversarial parties to a conflict. Leaders in this level consist of highly respected individuals (education, health and business), primary networks of groups and institutions within the context (religious and humanitarian organisations) and identity groups. Features of level 2 are that the leaders are connected to both level 1 and level 2 leadership; their positions are not based on power and their relationship cross-cut lines and boundaries of the Conflict. Level 3 consists of the masses, with leadership being involved in local communities, indigenous non-governmental organisations.

The features of level 1 Leadership are that the model builds on a hierarchical power structures that are made up of eminent figures and leaders look on obtaining short-term achievements as well as a ceasefire and signing an agreement. It is modelled on a top-down approach which puts the responsibility for peace on the representative leaders of the conflicting parties (Lederach, 1997). By ignoring the middle range and grassroots leadership, this level avoids getting to the root cause of the conflict, rather relying on prescriptive methods and strategies in a bid to transform conflict. Level 2 leaders approach peace itself, through problem-solving workshops, conflict resolution training and peace commissions (Lederach, 1997). Also, this level contains leaders (civil society leaders, religious leaders and professionals) who are in a crucial location in the conflict and might be the catalyst for building an infrastructure to needed to sustain peace. Problem-solving workshops provide for unofficial representatives of conflict parties to interact and conduct a ‘collaborative analysis' of what divides them (Lederach, 1997, p.46). As Lederach (1997) points out, one of the three features of this workshop are that participants are invited because of their knowledge of the conflict and their closeness to the decision makers, even though these decision makers are not invited to the workshops. The second feature is informal

and off the record, which is meant to give the adversaries an environment (political safe space) to discuss directly on their ideas in a comfortable setting, so as to encourage the building of relationships and the ability to look at problems and solutions. The third feature, also seen as the ‘third party' component provides multiple services such as the convening of parties, facilitating the meeting and providing expertise on the analysis of conflict and the conflict resolution process (Lederach, 1997, p.47).

Conflict resolution training has two aims; to raise awareness by educating people about how conflict operates, its general pattern and useful concepts to deal with conflict, and by imparting skills by teaching specific techniques often analytical, communication and negotiation skills (Lederach, 1997). Peace commissions vary in form and their application, depending on the conflict context. These commissions are aimed at changing perceptions and developing new ideas amongst the actors in the policy-making process, to training in conflict resolution skills to creating teams and networks and institutions that can play active roles in conciliation within the conflict setting (Lederach, 1997). According to Lederach (1997, p.51), 'the middle range holds the potential for helping to establish a relationship-and still based infrastructure capable of sustaining the general progression towards peace'. He adds that middle range peacebuilding has varied forms from the efforts at changing perceptions and developing new ideas amongst the actors in the policymaking process to training in conflict resolution skills, to the establishment of teams, networks and institutions that can play active roles within the conflict setting.

The level 3 leadership approach involves the grassroots (local leaders and leaders of indigenous NGOs), who face challenges compared to the other two levels. The first challenge is that it consists of many people which makes it hard for strategies to be communicated to the grassroots, while the second challenge is that many of the people at the grassroots are struggling for survival in terms of human needs. Therefore, any effort at conflict resolution might be impossible (Lederach, 1997). The approaches in this level involve a bottom-up and a programmatic peace

effort approach. The bottom-up approach involves 'achieving discussions and agreements to end the fighting at local peace conferences, by bringing together contiguous and interdependent subclans, guided by the elders of each subclan' (Lederach, 1997, p.53). The programmatic peace effort gives leaders in the grassroots and others the chance to work through the networks of churches and health associations at the community level to resolve conflicts.

2.3.5.1 Process

To understand the process of conflict transformation, Lederach (1997) points to Adam Curle's progression of conflict matrix. Here he points out that the matrix has four quadrants (education (Latent conflict), confrontation (overt conflict), negotiations and substantial peace) and is believed to be a useful tool for intermediaries in plotting the progression of conflict, where ever conflict is located at any point in time and the right approaches for peacebuilding. Curle goes on to state that in the first quadrant, the conflict is hidden because people are not aware of the inequalities that impact their lives; therefore education and activism is needed to raise awareness and diminish ignorance about inequalities in society and how to resolve them. The second quadrant pursues change that involves some form of confrontation (violent or nonviolent activity or a combination of both) making the conflict no longer hidden, therefore requiring rebalancing of power between the adversaries for change to occur. Here the confrontation increases awareness of interdependence and balance power. The increased awareness of issues/interests leads to demands to change the situation, which heralds the entry of advocates who work with and support pursuing change that involves the balancing of power and increasing the voice of the less powerful/legitimation of their interests. In the third quadrant, Curle adds that we move on to negotiations, 'if those involved increase the level of awareness of their interdependence through mutual recognition' (Lederach, 1997, p.65). Conciliation and other formal mediation methods help to support the movement from confrontation to negotiation. In the fourth Quadrant, it shows that successful negotiations and mediation can lead to a restructuring of the relationships of those involved. Curle refers to this as 'increased justice', however, he explains

that at any point in the progression, the conflict can jump ahead or cycle between several of the quadrants for periods of time (Lederach, 1997, p.66).

As Lederach (1997) mentions, the matrix is descriptive and points to the many roles and activities that might be played to encourage a movement towards sustainable peace. This framework suggests that the long-term progression of conflict towards justice and sustainable peace, must integrate and see these activities as necessary and mutually interdependent of each other. Agreeing with Christopher Mitchell's intermediary roles and functions, Lederach (1997) calls for peacebuilding to be to be recognised as a process made up of roles and functions, not an activity. He explains that these roles and functions, 'share a view of conflict as a dynamic process and peacebuilding as a multiplicity of interdependent elements and actions that contribute to the constructive transformation of the conflict' (Lederach, 1997, p.67). Paffenholz (2010) proposes the following seven functions that civil society can undertake in peacebuilding:

1. Protection of citizens: The aim here is to protect the lives and freedoms of citizens, against the tyranny of the state and other actors. As Paffenholz and Spurk (2006) mention the protection of citizens is an important function, but civil society needs some protection from the state and other armed actors to carry this function out. The main functions civil society undertakes here are an international accompaniment, watchdog functions, the creation of the zones of peace and the provision of aid, which are functions of international governmental organisations (INGOs), who support local and national organisations directly through international accompaniment (Paffenholz and Spurk, 2006).
2. Monitoring for accountability and early warning: With this function, civil society checks the government's activities and actions in order to hold them accountable for their actions. International and local organisations carry out activities towards early warnings and monitoring human rights cases, as these local, national and international organisations are cooperating more in this area (Paffenholz and Spurk, 2006). Civil society is typically important in monitoring because they have credibility for their ‘nonpartisan’ or ‘multi-partisan’ and local knowledge provided by independent monitors, of what can trigger conflict (Barnes, 2009, p.138). In

addition, although civil society does not directly get involved in in the negotiation of peace, it does have the potential to prepare the ground for a ceasefire and for peace agreements to be signed (Marchetti and Tocci, 2009).

3. Advocacy and public communication: Civil society articulates the interests and needs of excluded groups and opens channels for these groups to bring their needs to the notice of the public. Their advocacy and communication have been important in Uganda, as it allowed civil society organisations to engage the government on democratic reforms, focusing on the accountability of the government to its citizens and also freeing up the political space to allow for civil society to carry out its activities (Bainomugisha & Issaka, 2018).

4. Socialisation: Civil society carryout out functions that improve the democratic ideals and behaviours of citizens. Citizens learn to be tolerant, gain mutual trust with each other. Civil society carries out the functions of socialising citizens to the culture of peace and democratic values, as it promotes attitudinal change that can engender the peaceful resolution of conflicts (Paffenholz and Spurk, 2006). Also, the participation of citizens in civil society organisations creates avenues for dialogue, which breaks societal cleavages as religious groups for example, have been involved in promoting integration between adversarial groups (Bainomugisha & Issaka, 2018).

5. Building community: The participation in voluntary organisations allows for individuals to network with one another, creating societal links that build the society's cohesion. Civil society is also capable of bridging the divide between citizens from adversarial groups. This is essentially useful in peacebuilding to develop social capital is warring communities, as civil society organisations focused on joint activities that bring adversaries together, therefore, contributing to social cohesion (Paffenholz and Spurk, 2006).

6. Intermediation and facilitation: Civil society helps solidify diverse relationships through communication, negotiation and control with other groups and the state's institutions. The activities of this function are formal and informal facilitation between armed groups,

conflicting communities and the development agencies, although the role of civil society can be limited (Paffenholz and Spurk, 2006). As Barnes (2009) explains this function is normally taken up by state actors, but the trust which citizens place on these organizations and the skills they bring to the facilitate peace, makes them more acceptable as mediators given their use of non- coercive participatory methods that help with the adversary groups to understand each other better to resolve conflict.

7. Service delivery: Civil society provides services to citizens, which is an entry point for the other six functions of civil society in peacebuilding. The provision of services is an important function, that is mostly carried out by self-help groups especially in cases where the state is fragile and cannot provide for the public needs of its citizens (Paffenholz, 2010). Though this function is considered the prerogative of the state, civil society does still take up this function especially when it is seen to be directly linked to other functions and objectives of civil society (Paffenholz and Spurk, 2006).

From the conflict resolution framework presented by Lederach (1997), it is important to note that the middle level leadership (civil society leaders, religious leaders and professionals) and the grassroot level leadership (local leaders and leaders of indigenous NGOs) would be the most appropriate actors to bring about sustainable peace in Nigeria. The reason for this is that these two levels of leadership will incorporate respected individuals, primary networks of groups and institutions, ethnic and traditional leaderships structures as well as community-based organisations in getting to the root causes of ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria. Given that attempts by the Nigerian state to resolve conflicts in the past have involved top-down measures to peacebuilding, this approach looks at bottoms-up measures that are culturally grounded and involves the grassroots in resolving conflicts in the Nigerian context. It would involve local peace conferences and agreements by traditional and ethnic leaders, as well as problem solving workshops, trainings in conflict resolution and peace commissions.

So, in the post-conflict peacebuilding phase civil society is meant to carry out roles that monitor

the state, build relationships, mediate in conflicts and socialise warring parties to be tolerant and trust each other (Lederach, 1997 and Paffenholz, 2010). But Haynes (2009) argues as regards interfaith dialogue, that it can encourage conflicting parties to work together for peace but might not be sufficient to mitigate conflicts in Nigeria. He adds that conflicts in Nigeria are also concerned with socio-economic issues such as poverty, therefore religious organisations would have to collaborate with the state in making sure that developmental problems are also resolved. This means that the strategies on resolving conflicts as laid out by Lederach (and Paffenholz, would also have to include socio-economic developmental strategies with the active participation of the grassroots, the middle level leaders and the Nigerian state in order to gains sustainable peace. These actors will have to confront some of the short-term challenges of the socio-economic dimensions of peacebuilding (Adejumobi, 2004) and partake in roles that cross unusual boundaries, which may be considered to be the responsibility of the state and other actors in society (such as protection, service delivery and public communication) (Paffenholz, 2010). Therefore, in the various conflicts affecting Nigeria, these actors will have to play roles that that will resolve direct, structural and cultural violence such as protecting communities, monitoring the state and providing early warning signals, build and socialise communities, advocating and articulating specific interests, mediating in conflicts and providing services. Lederach (1997) states that peacebuilding is a multiplicity of mutually dependent elements and actions that contribute to achieving sustainable peace.

2.4 Conclusion

As emphasised in the first section of the chapter, the concept of civil society is a complex and ambiguous term that needs to be defined according to the historical peculiarities of each context. In light of the various debates about how civil society should be defined, this study will therefore take on a broad definition of the concept, which considers the historical and contextual peculiarities in order to challenge the ambiguous nature of the concept as it relates to Nigeria. This definition posits that civil society is an independent sphere composed of various formal and

informal associations and groups outside the state and market but intricately linked to the state and markets in order to influence socio-economic and political development in society. This conceptualisation of civil society is dependent on the functions and context these actors and associations are in and includes civil/formal and non-civil/informal organizations such as traditional or ethnic associations, business associations and religious organizations, who perform the same functions as their civic counterparts in the conventional understanding of the concept. By defining civil society in this way, this thesis aim is to overcome the conventional definition by broadening the concept, so that it includes associations who have played roles in the development of Nigeria and are therefore excluded from the liberal conceptualisation of the term. This definition is informed by considering the range of literatures and perspectives discussed in this chapter.

The argument is that civil society mediates with the political and economic society without being encroached by the sphere of the state and markets, which allows citizens to associate individually and collectively to bring about social justice. This chapter defined the term with the understanding that appropriating a normative or western notion of the term, ignores the nature and characteristics of localised traditional civil society organisations in Nigeria. Following this, the chapter also highlighted the issue of citizenship and equal rights as emerging from developments in liberal western philosophical underpinnings. As Alexander (2006) outlined, civil society should be considered a product of specific historical and social contexts, which must be taken into consideration when defining the term. The second key debate also highlights that civil society is not an alternative to the state, rather it is in a communicative interaction with the state and the boarders between the three spheres are fuzzy, allowing for these spheres to interact with one another to produce change. Furthermore, these interactions include various formal and informal associations who communicate in the public sphere that influence the actions of the state and markets.

The chapter also focused on the relevance of civil society in non-western contexts, pointing out that civil society in Africa, specifically Nigeria did not emerge from western political evolution.

Rather, civil society in Nigeria has been as constantly evolving historical phenomenon on the nation, agitating to advancing the demands and interests of citizens to the state. The last section discussed concepts such as peace, conflict, violence, and peacebuilding. It explained that peace is not only the absence of violence but also the absence of structural violence. Further, clarifying that conflict is a social phenomenon that is associated with structural and cultural injustice. The discussion on peacebuilding and conflict resolution highlighted the need for approaches that focus on the deep-rooted causes of conflicts using non-coercive communicative means. In this, civil society in Nigeria can play very important mutually dependent roles that aim to build relationships, monitor the state, mediate conflicts as well as cater for socio-economic issues. Future studies will have to analyse how effective informal organisations can be in direct conflict resolution roles that aim to resolve and transforms conflicts in Nigeria. Therefore, there is still scope to explore what the types of organisations I have identified can do to mitigate conflicts, which is what will be looked at in the next chapter. The next chapter will focus on the contextual socio-political history of Nigeria, looking at who civil society is and the roles they can play in mitigating conflicts in Nigeria.

Chapter 3: Context

3.1 Nigeria, Civil Society and Ethnic Conflicts

The previous chapter reviewed the literature on civil society, synthesising arguments as to what constitutes civil society, its relations to the state and peacebuilding. This chapter, therefore, will focus on the present and past conflicts in Nigeria's political history, examining civil society's roles and the effect of its activities in Nigeria. The chapter will start off by examining Nigeria's socio-political history from colonialism right to the transmission to civil rule in 1999. It will establish that Nigeria's history is rooted in British colonialism, which laid the foundation for ethno-religious divisions that continue to affect the countries socio-economic and political development. This will be followed by looking at the current security challenges the country is facing such as the Herdsmen and Farmer's (Fulani herdsmen) crisis, Boko Haram's insurgency, and the Niger-Delta militancy.

Next, civil society organisations in Nigeria will be set out looking at who constitutes civil society and who is not part of civil society in Nigeria. After that, the next focus will be on examining how civil society can be important in resolving these current challenges, and its roles in mitigating ethno-religious conflicts. The chapter concludes with the strengths and weaknesses civil society faces in carrying out its activities. Some of the strengths include mobilising on national issues, advocating for multi-party democracy, providing social services and management of conflicts. The weaknesses include issues such as disconnection from rural organisation, lack of unity, inadequate funding, government patronage, lack of internal democracy, lack of skills and corruption.

3.2 Civil society and Nigeria's Political History

3.2.1 Colonialism and Independence

Nigeria's post-Independence political crisis can be traced to its colonial past, which has shaped

the nations socio-political formations, and the way in which the state responds to the yearnings and agitations of its citizenry. The state was formed in 1914, when Lord Lugard amalgamated the north and the south protectorates, bringing together diverse ethnic groups, to create what is presently known as Nigeria (Osaghae, 1998). The amalgamation was preceded by the 1954 constitution, which created three autonomous federating regions (Ebenezer, 1995), consisting of three dominant ethnic groups, the Hausa Muslim north, which also had 'non- Islamic' minority ethnic groups within the region; the west, made of the Yoruba ethnic groups and various minority groups like the, Edo', 'Urhobo' and 'lsoko'; and the east which was dominated by the Igbo's, but made up of other minority groups like the 'Ijaw, Efik, Annang and kalabari' (Osaghae, 1998, p.2-3). According to Graf (1988, p.15), the colonial policy of indirect rule, was predicated on ‘the assumption that the colonised peoples (or 'tribes') were fundamentally and qualitatively different from one another', therefore the north and south, were administered and developed differently from one another (Osaghae, 1998).

Colonialism politicized ethnic relations and identity, as the British authorities through indirect rule, placed resources in the hands of certain groups within the Nigerian state and at the same time discouraged the intermingling (culturally and historically) of the various ethnic groups, which invariably led to the isolation of the Muslim north from the 'morally' bankrupt Christian south (Ikpe, 2009, p.685). Rather than set up structures which will integrate both the northern and southern parts of Nigeria, the colonial system 'made religion and ethnicity the preeminent markers of identity and pushed exclusionary identity politics into the political arena' (Public Radio International, 2014). The effects of these ethnic and religious cleavages were, the undermining of pre-colonial socio-economic structures and the polarisation of society, as intra-state development was unequal coming from the isolation of the three regions from each other and the discrimination of ethnic groups in the south compared to those in the north (Graf, 1988).

Civil society as explained is not a new phenomenon in the country's socio-political history. It is a concept that has preceded the country's Independence and has come in various forms, which

therefore contradicts western conception of the idea. Civil society in Nigeria has been in existence right from the colonial period up to the present. As Ikelegbe (2013, p.33) mentions, pre-colonial civil society in Nigeria was in the form of associational groups, that enabled the 'participation, communication, information flow and influence between the state and its citizens'. But he emphasises that colonialism brought about some attendant social dislocations, which provided the platform for agitations and brought about the formation of traditional or cultural groups such as 'Egbe Omo Oduduwa' and 'Jamiyar Mutanin Arewa' (Omode and Bakare, 2014, p.212).Repressive policies of the colonial state, such as 'forced labour, dispossession and commercialization of peasant lands, increased taxation including on women, and urban-biased development', all became sources of agitations that alienated the people from the colonial state and its threat of the subjugation people (Mgba, 2015, p.183). For example, the 1929 Aba women's protests that led to women in south-eastern Nigeria, revolting against the policies imposed by the British colonial administrators (Ukase and Audu, 2015).

Although several people were killed, this marked an important milestone, as the revolt took months for the colonial authorities to suppress and it provided the stimulation for the growth of civil society and nationalist protests against the repressive colonial state (Action Aid, 2007).
Independence came with the three main ethnic regions operating one-party systems within their domains in a Westminster styled parliamentary federal government with the NPC (Northern People's Congress) representing the Northern region, with Sir Tafawa Balewa as Prime Minister, the AG (Action Group) of the Yoruba dominated Western Region, headed by Chief Obafemi Awolowo and NCNC (National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons) in the Ibo dominated Eastern region, with Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe as Governor General (Ebenezer, 1995). The mistrust between these three regions manifested, in the Action Group (AG), which was the opposition in parliament being constantly harassed and persecuted by the NPC and NCNC coalition, leading to the eventual split of the AG, the arrest of Chief Awolowo and thirty others for corruption and 'charges of plotting to overthrow the Central government', with Awolowo's

eventual imprisonment in 1963 (Graf, 1988, p.35). Therefore, Nigeria's independence rather than provide an avenue for the different ethnic groups to live harmoniously with one another, intensified ethnic competition as the regional imbalances from the colonial extractive economy persisted, creating sources of instability and conflict (Graf, 1988).

The contestation for state power and resources between the three dominant ethnic groups, revolved around regional, ethnic and religious interests, which eventually led to the incursion of the military into governance, and the distortion of Nigeria's federal systems of governance (Osaghae, 1998; Ewetan and Urhie, 2014).

Independence saw civil society engaged in community activities, providing humanitarian assistance at the local level, which later followed on with labour organisations, student associations, and the media providing leadership, as well as organising protests against unpopular policies of the state. As Omede and Bakare (2014) emphasised civil society now moved from the nationalist protest against the colonial state to, placing emphasis on social and economic development. For example, Nigerian students under the West African Students Union (WASU) in 1960 at independence, marched to the parliament to demand that the prime minister, Alhaji Tafawa Balewa and his government should not commit to the Anglo-Nigerian defence pact (Mgba, 2015). It was perceived that the pact was a way for the British to re- colonise Nigeria. WASU also articulated a clear vision of a federal system of government, as the political arrangement that needed to be established in the country (Adejumobi, 2004). Following the military's incursion into politics and governance in 1966, the socio-political environment of dictatorships was intolerant of dissent, repressive and characterised by limited space for citizen participation and engagement as well as restriction of civil society from carrying its activities and activism (Ikelegbe, 2013).

The suspension of the constitution and the restriction of civil society organisations especially

those promoting separatists aims and identity politics, made it difficult to for civil society to be active until the end of the Biafran civil war where civil society shifted its focus to preserving national unity, reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction (Omede and Bakare, 2014). Gberevbie (2013) mentions that the military governments in Nigeria during the periods of 1966, 1979, 1983 and 1999, share the same characteristics of intolerance of opposition activities of civil society organisations, a lack of dialogue, corruption, intimidation, lack of credibility and transparency in government.

3.2.2 First Military Experiment and Civil War

The coup of January 1966, by Major General Aguiyi Ironsi, an Igbo from the eastern region, saw the killing of 'the premiers of the northern and western regions, the federal prime minister and a number of top army officers who were mainly northerners' (Graf, 1988, p.42). By July 1966, a counter- coup was carried out by mainly northern officers, headed by Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon, a northern minority who restored federalism. The counter- coup led to the death of General Ironsi, some Igbo officers and precipitated hostility towards Igbo's throughout Nigeria (Leith and Solomon, 2001). The Biafran civil war broke out on the 6th of July 1967 and lasted for over two and a half years, seeing between '500,000 to 1,000,000 deaths', largely fought to determine the federal status of the Nigerian nation (Graf, 1988, p.43). By the end of the civil war in 1970, Gowon promised to hand over power to a civilian government in 1976, but this promise was not fulfilled, given the inability of Gowon's government to stem issues such as corruption in his government, the dire economic situation and also the 1973 census, which was discredited because of inflated figures (Panter-Brick, 1978).

By July 1975, a bloodless coup removed Gowon from power, promising a transition to civil rule by 1979 by Brigadier General Murtala Mohammed, who went about carrying out corrective and decisive actions. But in 1976, General Murtala Mohammed was assassinated in a coup, which left his deputy General Obasanjo to take over as head of state and continue, with his

structural/political reforms of Nigeria and the eventual handover of power to a civilian government in 1979.

Civil societies mobilisation against unpopular state policies was witnessed in 1978 when students under the National Association of Students (NANS) challenged the military president, General Olusegun Obasanjo for introducing tuition and other fees (Mgba, 2015). The students argued that the Nigerian education system was turning into a reflection of the countries neo-colonial capitalist economy, which was geared towards making profits and not providing social justice for people. Also, Bradley (2005) adds that the 1970s formally ushered in women groups and the trade union movement, which played an important role as petroleum workers and groups forced policymakers to channel oil revenues to poor citizens in the Niger-Delta region and Igbo states in the southeast region. For Action Aid (2007), between the 1980s and the early 1990s, civil society played three important roles of mobilising the poor against the unpopular economic policies, aiding their members and the poor, and the restriction of the political space.

3.2.3 The Second Republic and the return of the Military

The second republic saw the northern-based National Party of Nigeria (NPN) winning elections, with President Shehu Shagari taking over the reins of power from General Obasanjo. But new issues sprang up, owing to the Shagari government's failure to address religious and political conflicts, like the Maitatsine religious riots, the Nigerian states oppression of political opponents/critiques, which led up to the 1983 elections (Graf, 1988). On the 31st December 1983, the military struck again overthrowing President Shagari's government with their reason bring the mismanagement of the economy, the fraudulent 1983 elections and large-scale corruption that characterised the Shagari regime (Graf, 1988). The new head of state, Major General Muhammed Buhari brought in an era of authoritarianism and oppression of critiques, although it is one regime that would have halted the economic and social decline of The Nigerian nation (Osaghae, 1998).

The inability of the General Buhari regime to find solutions to the lingering problems of economic decline, and the use of authoritarian methods to restore discipline in the Nigerian public life, prompted Major General Ibrahim Babangida to Overthrow the Buhari regime (Leith and Solomon, 2001).

With increases in oil revenues in the 1980s, and the shift of the Nigerian government towards infrastructural development and social services, civil society had to adopt strategies to manage the harmful effects of state policies like the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP), Rationalization, Nationalization and Privatization, poverty alleviation and empowerment (Omede and Bakare, 2014). Anti-SAP protests were carried out in 1986, when the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Nigerian students and organized labour protested against General Ibrahim Babangida's administrations SAP policy, given that the policy was conceived as an attempt by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to impose stringent conditionalities on the Nigerian economy and its populace, which therefore made the people poorer, would deepen the countries dependence on foreign actors and also it disrupted the transition to democracy (Mgba, 2015).

This was followed up by General Babangida's annulment of the June 12th, 1993 elections, judged to be one of the freest and fairest elections in the nation's history, which also galvanized civil society groups such as the National Democratic Coalition (NADECO), Civil Liberty Organizations (CLO) and the Campaign for Democracy (CD), the Oodua Poples Congress (OPC) and the Movement for the Soveriegn State of Biafra (MASSOB) to force Babangida to step down (Essia and Yearoo, 2009; Mgba, 2015; Adejumobi, 2004). Although the OPC started off as a socio-cultural and political organisation that aimed to protect the interests of Yoruba people in Nigeria, the organisation derailed and became a violent organisation. Before the violence, it fitted the assertion of this thesis that non-civil actors in Nigeria can perform civil society functions agitating for the interests of its members towards the state. But the violence of the group has meant that it does not qualify as a civil society organisation in Nigeria.

3.2.4 The road to the Restoration of Civil Rule

The bloodless coup headed by General Ibrahim Babangida was predicated on 'Buhari's failure to salvage the country's economic decline and restore social services.....authoritarianism and poor human rights record, and its failure to articulate a programme of a return to civil rule' (Osaghae, 1998, p.189). With all these changes brought about by the General Babangida regime, he faced a lot of backlash from the unimpressive nature of The SAP program, which made the Nigerian economy more susceptible to external economic forces, with the regime unable to stem the negative economic crisis. In addition to this, was the shift of the transition date from 1990, 1992 and then to June 12, 1993, which according to Osaghae (1998), undermined the credibility of General Babangida's transition programme. With the elections taking place on June 12, 1993, and its subsequent annulment, 'Babangida was forced to transfer power to an Interim National Government (lNG)' on the 27th of August 1993, which was later overthrown by General Sani Abacha (Leith and Solomon, 2001, p.7).

General Abacha's tight grip on the country, saw increasing political repression and the arrest and detention of political leaders as well as activists, who were rooting for a return to civil rule as well as the struggle for the reinstatement of the MKO Abiola presidential mandate. But Abacha's death from a heart attack in June 1998, cut short his Intended succession plan as an elected civilian president and speeded up the transition to a civilian regime which was carried out by General Abdulsalami Abubakar following elections in late 1998 and early 1999 (Paden, 2005). The transition to civil rule in 1999, witnessed President Olusegun Obasanjo, being elected as president (Leith and Solomon, 2001). The transition to civil rule has not stemmed the tide of conflicts in the Nigerian socio-political sphere, with the country still bedevilled by the inability of its previous civilian and military leaders to adequately address issues which boarder on the national question (Osaghae, 1998).

The transition to civilian rule in 1999 witnessed civil society gradually shift its focus from politics and the defence against the state's repression to the ‘economic management and the need for transparency and accountability in the use of public funds' (Essia and Yearoo, 2009). The idea of most of the population and civil society groups was that the transition would reposition Nigeria on the path to good governance and a corrupt free society, but unfortunately, that has not proved to be the case as good governance has been eroded and corruption has taken centre stage (Ukase and Audu, 2015). For Omede and Bakare (2014) civil society has contributed to national development since the transition to civil rule by protesting the third term elongation agenda of ex- president Olusegun Obasanjo, which was considered divisive and likely to cause political uncertainty in Nigeria's nascent democracy. Additionally, the state that organisations and groups such as the National Civil Society Coalition against Third Term (NACATT), Right to Know Movement, Media Rights Agenda (MRA) and the Open Society Justice Initiative have been prominent. As a promoter of good governance, civil society groups such as the Save Nigeria Group (SNG) embarked on street protests in major cities in Nigeria, which forced and ensured that the then vice president Goodluck Jonathan became president through the doctrine of necessity clause in on the 9^{th} of February 2010 (Gberevbie, 2013).

Civil society organisations also defended the rights of the poor and ordinary Nigerian, when they organised one of the largest and most coordinated protests against the removal of fuel subsidies by the Nigerian government in 2012 (Omede an Bakare, 2014). The subsidy removal which increased the price of petrol from NGN65 to NGN141, in addition to the corruption in Nigeria's petroleum corporation NNPC was adjudged to be out of touch with the economic realities (Gberevbie, 2013). The media has also been important as they have provided knowledge to citizens which they can use to hold the government accountable, while collaborating government anti-corruption agencies to expose corruption of individuals like the former

Inspector General of police Tafa Balogun and the former governor of Delta state James Ibori (1999-2007), who pleaded guilty to laundering and embezzlement in a London court in 2012 (Ukase and Audu, 2015; Gberevbie, 2013). Civil society also has given support during elections and to the Justice Uwais Electoral reform committee (ERC) 2007, by suggesting on how Nigeria can embark on electoral reform and gain some credibility in its elections (Omede and Bakare, 2014).

Indeed, it can be stated that there is a history of conflicts in Nigeria and that they revolve around the same issues of socio-economic and political marginalisation, the contestation for state power and resources organised around regional, ethnic and religious interests (Osaghae, 1998). In this, Nigeria's socio-economic and political problems can be traced back to the foundations which the colonial authorities laid for the Nigerian elites to build on during the country's independence. The politicisation of ethnicity and identity by the colonialist precipitated divisions between ethnic groups especially in isolating the north administratively from the rest of the country. This undermined socio-economic and political structures, which would have enabled the various tribes and ethnicities to live a more harmonious and conflict free society. As a result, pre-colonial civil society organisations made up of associational groups contested against the colonial states repressive policies.

At the dawn of independence, because of intense ethnic competition and regional imbalances inherited from colonialism, civil society also carried out roles that involved contesting against the states repressive policies, emphasising social and economic development as well as engaging in community initiatives at the local level. This carried on to the Biafran civil war where the emphasis changed to reconciliation and reconstruction. From the end of the civil war right to the transmission to civil rule in 1999, civil society has been active in mobilising against military dictatorships and their harsh socio-economic and political policies such as the restriction of the political space, the alleviation of poverty, defence of citizens' rights, transparency and accountability and also democratisation. Undoubtedly, it can be attested that civil society has historical roots in Nigerian society and could be valuable in mitigating against conflicts, while

ensuring sustainable peace in the long-run.

3.3 Conflicts in Nigeria

3.3.1 Herdsmen and Farmers Crisis

The problem

The Fulani herdsmen crisis which has been in existence for decades can be traced to the problem of Land, and land rights. According to Conroy (2014, p.2-3), the crisis is 'multi- faceted and complex', with links to colonialism, as the formation of a 'British protectorate in 1901 and the administrative boundaries' did not consider the cultural and ethnic realities, of the various ethnic groups within Nigeria. The problems which these pastoralists face, can be further linked to the post-colonial policies, like the 1978 Land Use Decree which was entrenched in the 1979 constitution of Nigeria by the Military government of General Obasanjo, as their rights to land and insecure tenure has affected their access to land, in view of the degradation of the environment (Graf, 1988).

The issue of access to land is complicated, by the non- existence of grazing land, which would provide protection and a future for the pastoralists and their cattle, especially with the degradation and desertification of grazing land in the north of Nigeria (Ajaero et al., 2015). According to Muhammed et al. (2015, p.25), the pastoralists are in competition with 'large-scale agricultural schemes' and other developments, which has seen the disappearance of grazing lands and 'Burtalis (cattle pathways)', therefore creating competition for scarce resources, which leads to conflict.

Presently, according to Ajaero et al (2015, p.470-471), the 'effects of desertification in the Sudano- Sahelian region of Nigeria has forced stronger and larger waves of the migration of herdsmen' towards the south of the country, to areas where they can feed their cattle's, which is 'their wealth and way of life'. The migration to the south has been a source of conflict between the pastoralists and farmers, as the pastoralists do not recognise 'conventional boundaries', and farmers who place Importance on their land, which is a sign of 'inheritance' and wealth (Ajaero

et al., 2015, p.471). The impact of climate change has seen Nigeria lose about 23% of its arable land to desertification, with the erratic and unpredictable rain patterns turning the south eastern part of the country into gully erosion sites (Medugu et al., 2014). Therefore, climate change has a great impact on food insecurity, which is further exacerbated by the clashes between the herdsmen and farmers and at the same time poses a threat to the Nigerian state, as people are killed, and the population becomes displaced especially in the conflict- affected regions which cause a refugee crisis (Eme et al., 2014).

Rural banditry and cattle rustling/theft are also adding to the downward migration south of herders, as the trade has grown in scale and organisation in several northern states of Nigeria (International Crisis Group, 2017). According to Higazi (2016) cattle rustling has become a source of insecurity given that it has contributed to the spread of inter-communal violence in communities in Plateau state. As regards rural banditry and cattle rustling, it is estimated that in 2013, more than 64,750 cattle were stolen, with 2,991 herders killed, while from 2011 to 2015, bandits, cattle rustlers and other criminals killed 1,135 people in Zamfara state alone. There are issues of citizenship as the Fulani and Hausa communities in Plateau believe that the cattle rustling and killing of their youths is an agenda to encourage Fulani migration away from the state (Kuna and Ibrahim, 2015). And vice versa, the Birom community believe there is an agenda of by the Fulani to take over their Land, even though both communities acknowledge that their ancestors used to live together in peace and harmony in the past.

How much violence?

As Olayokun (2014) explains in his analysis of cattle grazing violence across Nigeria from 2006-2014, there have been 615 (1%) violent deaths out of a total of 61,314 violent fatalities in Nigeria. He further adds, that these violent deaths have been recorded across various states in every region in Nigeria, not just the middle belt and the north, where climate change is having the most effects on grazing land and involves various protagonists (armed gangs/bandits, the police, communities, Fulani herdsmen, farmers and the military). As regards rural banditry and

cattle rustling, it is estimated that in 2013, more than 64,750 cattle were stolen, with 2,991 herders killed, while from 2011 to 2015, bandits, cattle rustlers and other criminals killed 1,135 people in Zamfara state alone.

According to Nigeria watch (2017, p.12), cases of land disputes are on the rise in 2017, with communal violence killing 1149 people in 100 incidents across the country in the same year, with many of these conflicts being fuelled by clashes between herdsmen and farmers. This spike in violence, has affected food insecurity and the relations between the farmers and herder's communities, making local authorities in some states to take various measures like expelling '700 pastoralists from Bornu state in the northwest in May 2009, and some 2000 from Plateau state in April 2009', which has also led to the impoverishing of the pastoralists as they have lost not only their lives but also their means of livelihoods (Odoh and Chigozie, 2012, p.113). In all, as of January 2015 to February 2017, it is estimated that 62,000 people were displaced in Kaduna, Benue and Plateau states, with the government losing at $13.7 billion dollars in 2015 from 4 states (Benue, Kaduna, Nasarawa and Plateau states) (International Crisis Group, 2017).

Who is causing the violence?

Recently, some Fulani herdsmen have been classified as Boko Haram collaborators by the Nigerian government and political actors, but this just goes to underline the complexities embedded within the historical and ethno-religious dimensions of the conflict, making stakeholders in the conflict vulnerable to manipulations by politicians both during elections and while politicians are in office (Olayoku, 2014). Kuna and Ibrahim (2015) while carrying out case studies in Kaduna and Plateau states, mention that recurrent rural banditry attacks tend to be carried out by criminals and groups committed to the teachings of Boko Haram and occur primarily for cattle and other valuables. Furthermore, there are instances where the banditry is perpetuated by criminals from both the ‘Birom, Hausa, or Fulani communities’ forming coalitions with the sole aim of stealing and sharing loot (p.143). As Muhammed et al. (2015)

add, politicians' benefit in creating divisions between farmers and pastoralists to gain political advantages in these communities, therefore exacerbating the issue and making it deadly and more about religion and ethnicity, which it is not.

Looking at the Farmer and pastoralist conflicts in the Plateau state context, Higazi (2016) explains that the local responses to the conflict are motivated by ethnic and religious differences. He further identified that from 2007 to 2015, the Governor of Plateau State Jonah Jang an ethnic Birom and Christian, heavily politicised the 'Birom and Fulani and Hausa' conflicts, with some indigenes seeing the conflict as part of an Islamic agenda, rather than competition for land (Higazi, 2016, p.368-370). Mohammed et al. (2015) mention that ethnic jingoists have used this narrative to cause acrimony between the farmer and pastoralists communities, especially in those communities where there is a high level of illiteracy. However, as Higazi (2016) points out, these narratives ignore the politics of riots and the history of Muslim-Christian relations in Jos, where both communities lived in peace while ignoring cases of violence instigated against Muslims. Rather, drawing on the global discourses of the 'war on terror', which they aim to appropriate with the local experiences and understanding of communal violence (Higazi, 2016, p.370).

What is being done to deal with it?

To stem the tide of the conflict, the Nigerian government carried out many measures to resolve these tensions one of which was a bill presented on the 3rd. of July 2012 to the Nigerian senate, 'the National Grazing Route and Reserve Bill' (Mohammed et al., 2015, p.26). The bill eventually was not passed owing to disagreements between senators over if the federal government, is constitutionally empowered to create grazing reserves in any of the 36 states of the federation. In the case of Plateau state, the federal government's decision to use military personnel to intervene in the conflict has been an unpopular policy, given that the troops are alleged to have committed various human rights abuses (Higazi, 2016). This has necessitated the need to involve local vigilantes, who could help coordinate activities with the security forces,

given their knowledge of the local terrain, the language and the customs (Hegazi, 2016). In 2014, former president Goodluck Jonathan inaugurated an inter-ministerial technical committee on grazing reserves, which recommended the recovery and improvement of all grazing routes encroached on by farmers, with the release of $317 million to the 36 state governors to construct ranches (International Crisis Group, 2017).

The recommendations were approved, but Goodluck Jonathans defeat in the 2015 elections meant that the implementation of the recommendations was stopped. Recently, the National assembly attempted to pass the National Grazing Reserve Bill 2016, but this was not passed due to the fact that the Land Use Act of 1978 vested all powers relating to land ownership and its management onto state governors (Kwaja and Ademola-Adelehin, 2018).

Resolving the herdsmen and farmer crisis is important for Nigeria, as the herders contribute significantly to the growth of local economies and the GDP (gross domestic product) of Nigeria, especially through the agricultural sector (Mohammed et al., 2015). Similarly, Eme et al. (2014), states that the clashes between herders and farmers in predominantly the middle belt regions of Nigeria, has resulted in the destruction of lives, farmlands and is a threat to efforts to increase food production. Apart from the threat of food insecurity, the rising prices of food and its unstable supply, makes it difficult for the common Nigerian man to afford their basic dietary needs, especially since the northern part of Nigeria is the main source of food supply to the country and especially the southern part of the country (Eme et al, 2014).

3.3.2 Boko Haram

The problem

The introduction of the radical Islamic insurgency in northern Nigeria, can be traced to the 1804 Jihad carried out by Uthman dan Fodio, against the un-Islamic vices of the political class at that time, which eventually led to the creation of the Sokoto caliphate (lyekekpolo, 2016). Uthman dan Fodio was a reformer, whose philosophy involved a political dimension to his religious

goals, which aimed to control the political state and encouraged Muslims to reject religious and political affairs that coincide with Islam (Badejogbin, 2013). As well, the Maitatsine sect in the 1980s led by Muhammad Marwa was another wave of radical Islamic insurgency to hit Kano state in Northern Nigeria (Iyekekpolo, 2016). Marwa built his reputation on the widespread economic hardship in Kano with his message being to 'purify' northern Nigeria of the corrupt ruling elites and western cultural values (p.2214). Though the sect's insurgency was ended in the 1980s by Nigerian security forces, the socio-economic conditions that triggered the insurgency has helped Boko Haram to flourish in the north east of Nigeria.

Boko Haram was officially founded in 2002 by Mohammed Yusuf in Maiduguri, as the term Boko Haram means 'western or non-Islamic education is a sin', using a combination of Hausa and Arabic languages (Khan and Hamidu, 2015, p.23; Salaam, 2012). Similarly, Walker (2012, p.8) points out, that the group looked to withdraw from the mainstream of society, which they perceived had been corrupted, and 'western society had gone wrong.....in deviating from the principles of sharia'.

The group maintained and carried out its activities mainly in northern states and cities like Maiduguri, Yobe, Damaturu, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Bauchi, and Abuja, the capital of Nigeria (Aghedo and Osumah, 2015), although it carried out some cross-country attacks in Cameroon, Chad and Niger Republic (Montclos, 2016). The group's leader Mohammed Yusuf, a Salafists influenced by Wahhabi teachings was looking to establish a sharia-based government in Bornu state and the Nigerian nation at large, which was a threat to the political stability of the nation and the political class (Khan and Hamidu, 2015). After repeated violent confrontations between 2003 and 2005, the group went underground and resurfaced in 2009, which culminated in Mohammed Yusuf and his followers were killed in violent confrontations with Nigerian security forces (Badejogbin, 2013).

According to lyekekpolo (2016, p.2213), three factors are responsible for the rise of the Boko

Haram insurgency namely, 'economic, religious ideology and political opportunity factors'. Economically, there is widespread poverty, unemployment not just in the northeast of Nigeria but nationwide; and a lack of education in the north of Nigeria which stems from the mistrust the northerners have in western education (Salaam, 2012). Looking at the religious angle of the insurgency, and with the inclusion of politics, the Boko Haram insurgency has been able to fester, as the public has been frustrated with unfavourable government policies, and the failure of the Nigerian government to effectively act against groups like Boko Haram. As lyekekpolo (2016) posits, the power tussle between the state governor of Borno state and a senator looking to unseat the governor, as well as the governments indecisive and ineffective counterinsurgency measures, which gave Mohammed Yusuf the opportunity to capitalise on the political environment in northern Nigerian, to call people to jihad.

These various factors overlap each other, as inter-ethnic rivalry in Nigeria has been aggravated by the growth of religious extremism and the political culture of grabbing power at all costs, while poverty/ unemployment in conjunction with the crippling education system, have made it difficult for youths to gain quality education, rather providing Boko Harm with enough foot soldiers to carry out attacks within Nigeria and in neighbouring African states (Khan and Hamidu, 2015). Following the National Bureau of statistics report on education in 2018, the literacy rate of most young women and men in the southern part of the Nigeria, was higher at over 90%, compared to the percentage of literate people in the northern part of the country, which is 38-62% for women and 53-76.4% for men (National Bureau, of statistics, 2018).

How much violence

It is claimed that collaborations and links with Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and other organizations in Africana and the middle east, have provided Boko Haram with access to training, weapons and financial support (Aghedo and Osumah, 2015), but despite these allegations, there is no evidence of any alliances or cooperation given that they could not be

proved in any of the trials of Mohammed Yusuf before his execution or in any of the accusations made by Bok Haram members who had been captured (Montclos, 2016).

Following the death of Mohammed Yusuf, his successor Abubakar Shekau took over and brought a violent onslaught on the Nigerian state and culminated with the kidnapping of over 275 Chibok schoolgirls in April 2014, which took the Nigerian state and international community by surprise (Khan and Hamidu, 2015). Using sophisticated weapons and the adoption of suicide bombing (women and Koranic (Almajiri pupils used as insurgents), Boko Haram has been able to target both soft and hard spots like churches, markets, banks, traditional institutions, strategic government offices and the United Nations building in Abuja, which was bombed on the 26th August 2011 (Aghedo and Osumah, 2015). According to Iyekekpolo (2016), 7711 deaths occurred because of Boko Haram's attacks in 2014, and there were 2146 deaths between the 1st and 11th January 2015. Furthermore, he states that 9 million people have been directly affected by the insurgency, with over 24 million people indirectly affected by the activities of the Islamic fundamentalist group. It is estimated that over 2 million people have been internally displaced since the beginning of the insurgency, and of this amount, 80 per cent live in host communities in Nigeria, with 170,000 refugees being hosted by Cameroon, Chad and Niger (Buchanan-Clarke and Knoope, 2017).

Who is causing the violence?

Salaam (2012), mentions that the ingrained culture of corruption, has influenced Nigeria's leadership, which in turn has made a lot of citizens to be sceptical about the benefits the Nigerian state can confer to them. He adds further that issues such as repression by the police and security forces, intelligence failures, the availability of weapons, occasioned by a porous border have helped the radicalisation process in the country. Abuses by security forces, have been crucial in the radicalization process as 'the authorities themselves approved of violence and extrajudicial

killings', thereby making it a norm and in the process is responsible for half of the fatalities recorded, which showed that out of 32,292 victims reported as being killed between June 2006 and March 2016, 16,133 were killed by security forces (De Montclos, 2016, p. 884).

The past government were accused of playing ethnic politics when the former president Goodluck Jonathan, a southern minority accused and blamed his political opponent and current president Buhari a northerner as being a sponsor of the sect (Badejogbin, 2013). These issues coupled with, the 'Terrorism (Prevention) Act 2011' and the extreme use of force by security agents, highlights some of the state's failures in addressing the Boko Haram insurgency (Badejogbin, 2013, p.244). Though the act proposes closer collaborations with other nations on counter-terrorism and the enforcement of international treaties, it fails to address the root causes of the socio-economic conflict. Rather it gives the government more powers to tackle terrorism. The failure of the Nigerian state to mitigate socio-economic and political issues, which have preceded the present insurgency, has given the group the right circumstances to take advantage of a large number of illiterate populations, wallowing in poverty and unemployment, and in turn carrying out attacks on both Muslim and Christian populations. This has caused over 50,000 deaths and left many injured and made others internally displaced persons, therefore making the group one of the deadliest terrorists' organisations in the world (Dugguh, 2016).

What is being done

The Nigerian government on its part, has been initiating various peace-making measures to ensure that the insurgency comes to an end and that citizens can go about their various activities. The Nigerian government has passed several bills on combating terrorism, as well as an engaged foreign nation like America, France, the United Kingdom and Israel to help with training and assistance to fight terrorism (Chinwokwu, 2012). The government has also made several overtures to negotiate a cease-fire and even have mooted the idea for an amnesty package for

the group, but they have failed, owing to issues like the impracticality of some of the groups demands, and the fictionalisation and splits of the group (Walker, 2012). They have also instituted and established Almajiri schools in Northern states in a bid to educate the teeming illiterate youth population in the north, thereby halting the recruitment process of Boko Haram (Chinwokwu, 2012) and making it necessary for the introduction of mass compulsory basic education in all northern states (Salaam, 2012).

Having won the presidential elections of 2015, President Mohammadu Buhari relocated the military command centre to Maiduguri the capital of Borno state, and got the support of Chad, Cameroon and Niger to push out Boko Haram from many towns they had captured in the region (Dugguh, 2016). Furthermore, President Buhari also set up a committee to help with the reconstruction, rehabilitation and reintegration of IDPs (Internally displaced persons). The government also negotiated the release of 82 out of the 276 Chibok schoolgirls kidnapped by the Boko Haram sect, leading to the hope of a renewed reengagement with the group to end the hostility (Stephanie Busari and Kelly McCleary, 2018). Despite the Nigerian government's initiatives to end the conflict, there are still dilemmas which must be dealt with by the state to bring about sustainable peace. Such initiatives include, effective intelligence sharing, the lack of rule of law and corruption, selective settlements that reject the needs of the general population, the proliferation of illegal arms, and the prosecution of terrorists (Chinwokwu, 2012).

3.3.3 The Niger-Delta Militancy

What is the problem

The Niger-delta, located in the southern axis of Nigeria, has been plagued by conflicts and violence, stemming from the competition for resources (oil), which the regions citizens believe exploited and should be used equitably to develop the region (Ajibola, 2015). Successive governments in conjunction with international oil companies (IOC's), have aggravated the situation as the peoples of the Niger-delta perceive that they are being marginalised and

exploited, going by the lack of development, the high levels of poverty, declining agriculture and severe environmental degradation (Ifedi and Anyu, 2011).

The discovery of crude oil, which was an important commodity, shaped the politics of the Niger Delta, given that the colonial rulers decided in 1914 to enact the 'Colonial Mineral Ordinance', which first formalized the Nigerian state's control of oil exploration and then granted concessions to British oil companies like Shell BP (Ibeanu, 2006, p.21). This was followed up by the discovery of oil in 1956 and by 1959, the colonial authorities passed the Petroleum Profit Tax Ordinance, which shared the proceeds of oil between the government and producers (50/50), therefore giving the Nigerian state greater proceeds of the exports of oil and heralding its emergence as a rentier state (lbeanu, 2006). The fear of political/ economic marginalization and exclusion (owing to the domination of Niger Delta ethnic minorities by majority groups within the region) prompted the regions leaders to persuade the colonial government for local autonomy within Nigeria's federal structure (which failed) as well as the publication of the 1958 Willink Commission report ((Ifedi and Anyu, 2011). The Biafran civil war (1967-1970) marked Nigeria as an emerging petro-state, as the increasing dependence on oil, saw the Petroleum Decree of 1969 passed by the government of General Yakubu Gowon, which vested the ownership of petroleum products in the Nigerian state and 'abrogated the 1914 Ordinance', while imposing OPEC Conditions on petroleum producers (Ibeanu, 2006, p.22; Nwajiaku- Dahou, 2012). This decree followed by others (Nigerian Enterprises Promotion and Indigenisation Degrees), did not only restrict foreign ownership in the economy, it also centralised the state's revenues as the goal was to use the oil revenues to develop the nation after the civil war, but such goals have been thwarted because of systemic corruption and marginalisation which has been the hallmark of successive governments (Nwajiaku-Dahou, 2012). This has therefore, denied the people of the Niger Delta their cultural assets and deprived them of the needed developmental benefits and inclusion in political and economic activities in society (Idemudia, 2009).

Crude oil is an important denominator in the Niger Delta, as communities are 'interlocked in sporadic violence over the allocation of petrol dollars and the damaging environmental impact of oil spills and pollution in the region' (Ifedi and Anyu, 2011, p.80). The damaging environmental impact and oil spills have destroyed the ecology of the region and the livelihoods of many especially women, whose traditional role is to sustain their families through farming, fishing and trading (Ifedi and Anyu, 2011; Ajibola, 2015). This therefore destroys marine life and agricultural crops, making the water in the region unsuitable for fishing and drinking, and the land unusable to for farming owing deforestation, acid rains and the destruction of wildlife (Ibeanu, 2006).

Who is causing the violence?

The years of military authoritarianism, coupled with the marginalisation and impoverishment of the region, led to protests by law activists, who wanted to be included in the political life of the Nigerian state. Isaac Adaka Boro and his Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF), were the first group to agitate for ljaw political consciousness, which culminated in his attempt in 1966 to create the 'Republic Niger Delta' a month after General Aguiyi Ironsi carried out Nigerians first military coup (Wapmuk, 2012, p.155). These protests and agitations continued until the emergence of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) led by Ken Saro-Wiwa in the 1990s, who adopted a non-violent approach and 'demanded political and economic empowerment based on resource control, ethnic rights, and environmental justice' (Ifedi and Anyu, 2011, p.87). But the Nigerian military led by General Sani Abacha, cracked down on the group leading to the arrest and execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and other members of MOSOP on the 10th of November 1995 (Wapmuk, 2012).

Following the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa, it was realised that non-violent protest was not an effective approach in advancing the interests of Niger-Deltans to the state. Therefore, militant

groups were formed, leading to the proliferation of militant groups within the region (Aghedo and Osumah, 2015). Various groups have emerged, such as the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), Ijaw National Congress (INC), Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger-Delta (MEND), Ijaw Youth Council (IYC), agitating for the rights of the region and spearheading attacks on oil installations (Ajibola, 2015; Idemudia, 2009). Although some of these militant groups were formed to advance the interests of the region to the state, some of these groups were criminally minded and 'engaged in militancy for pecuniary gains' (Wapmuk,2012, p.157). From this it can be understood that initial agitations in the 1970s onwards adopted legal instruments, party formation and dialogue as strategies to quell the conflict, but the early 2000s saw the change of tactics to guerrilla warfare with increased armed rebellion, hostage takings and attacks on oil facilities as new strategies to fight against exploitation and marginalization, which also heightened the fears as to the motivations for these militant groups (Aghedo and Osumah, 2015).

How much violence has there been?

In 1999, following the restoration of civil rule, president Obasanjo ordered security troops to Odi, Bayelsa state, in retaliation to the kidnapping and killing of police officers by youths, and also to Odioma, Bayelsa state, which the military claimed their troops had come under fire from militants (Ifedi and Anyu, 2011). The government's reaction was harsh and brutal, culminating in the massacre, rape and killing of many people, as well as the razing of buildings to the ground. In 2003, the government of President Olusegun Obasanjo, set up the Joint Task Force (JTF) in the Niger-Delta, with the aim of protecting oil production and oil installations, as well as to deal with any protests or activities from the communities that threaten the production of oil by the international oil companies (Ajibola, 2015). This move by the federal government was met with violence by militant groups, led by Asari Dokubo of the Niger-Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF) and Ateke Tom of the Niger Delta Vigilantes, who are perceived to be products of politicians and are 'motivated by the rent-seeking associated with oil' (Wapmuk, 2012, p.157;

Ajibola, 2015).

It is said that the death toll from the Niger Delta conflict between the years 2003 and 2004, killed over 500 people while displacing over 20,000 people in the region (Ikelegbe and Umukoro, 2016). Such attacks attributed to the militants are said to have caused critical damage to major oil infrastructure, decline in the production of oil, decline in oil prices, increase in criminality, kidnapping and oil bunkering, which is said to lead to Nigeria losing $61,6 billion dollars between the year 2006 and 2008 (Aghedo and Osumah, 2015). MEND, on the 19th of June 2008 attacked Royal Dutch Shell's Bonga oil field, which was reputed to be Nigeria's biggest oil field, with an estimated production capacity of '200,000 barrels of oil and 150 million standard cubic feet of gas per day' (10% of the countries, 2 million barrels of oil per day) (Wapmuk, 2012, p.157). According to Montclos (2016), the death toll from oil-related violence between June 2006 and May 2014, accounted for over 6,125 lives, with oil production, which is concentrated in the Niger Delta region accounting for 1,550 lives within this same period.

What is being done?

Successive governments have tried to address the problem of marginalisation and militancy without any result, as policy mistakes by the government as well as the high-handed responses to the agitations of the Niger Delta people have contributed to the conflict being protracted. Ibeanu (2006) maintains that the Nigerian state has failed to allocate a fair revenue allocation system which makes the people of the region feel marginalised economically and politically which in turn, short-changes them as to the oil rents the region should be receiving. Similarly, Ikelegbe (2001) adds that the states inability to provide basic infrastructure and the use of force has led to the underdevelopment of the region, leading to unemployment and a rise in militancy, which the youths see as the way out from their poverty and other structural problems. One of the first attempts to resolve the Niger-Delta conflict was immediately after independence in

1960 when the Nigerian government attempted to implement the recommendations of the Willink Commission of 1958, which accepted the recommendation that called for the creation of a Niger Delta Development Board (NDDB) (Ifedi and Anyu, 2011). But the efforts of the board to implement these recommendations were disrupted by the Biafran civil war.

In 1993, General Ibrahim Babangida, established the Oil Mineral Producing Area Development Commission (OMPADEC), charged with ensuring that the development and rehabilitation of the Niger Delta, as well as the federal government committing 3 per cent of oil revenue to it (Ibeanu, 2006). But this also failed to owe to the high level of corruption, which then prompted the government to set up an interim management board and wind down the responsibilities of the board (Ifedi and Anyu, 2011).

The transition to civil rule in 1999, saw the establishment of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) with the goal of reconciling the various interests in the region and facilitate the transformation of the region into a peaceful and stable region (Ibeanu, 2006). But this attempt is said to have failed to owe to the allegations of corruption, distrust and mismanagement levelled against officials of NDDC (Ifedi and Anyu, 2011).

But as of June 25th, 2009, Nigerian President Umaru Yar Adua initiated an Amnesty program, which though was not a new approach, aimed to tackle and manage the violence and address youth militancy, and which was subsequently continued by his successor President Goodluck Jonathan (Nwajiaku-Dahou, 2012). The DDR program involved about 15,260 militants, who accepted amnesty and surrendered weapons by October 2009, but this figure increased to about 20,192 militants registered for the amnesty program by 2011 (Wapmuk, 2012). Although the program is considered a success given the reduction in attacks on oil facilities, kidnapping, decline in youth restiveness, the program is also criticised for not addressing the root causes of militancy and violence in the region which are associated with 'federalism and revenue allocation, poverty and general underdevelopment of the region (Ifedi and Anyu, 2011, p.92). As Ikelegbe and Umokoro (2016) explain, the amnesty program had many flaws, as it excluded

some ex-militants, victims of the militancy, the reconstruction of the region, the absence of a peace agreement, structural framework for peacebuilding at the regional and community levels and a general exclusion in the implementation of the program.

From the various conflicts which have been explored, it can be observed that the Nigerian government's inability or lack of political will to mitigate economic, social and political factors has led to their proliferation over time, causing death and destruction to lives and properties, as well as stunting the nations socio-economic and political development. The Herdsmen and Farmers crises, owing to the states failure to address issues of land rights, cattle rustling and rural banditry, climate change and desertification, protection of already divided communities, as well as providing the right infrastructure for animal grazing, has made the conflict protracted for decades without any solution in sight. In this conflict, civil society could play major roles in advocating for land reforms which are inclusive as well as for the improvement and establishment of ranches and grazing reserves (International Crisis Group, 2017). This will reduce the incidence of herders encroaching unto the land of farmers which tends to lead to violence and conflict in the long run. Dialogue would also be important in between both communities so that a lasting solution will be negotiated to avert future violence. Also, civil society could provide early warning signals to improve security and prevent attacks on both farmers and herder communities, and also prevent cattle rustling and rural banditry. Civil society could also help to bridge divides between these communities, by building cohesion between and improving the parameters in which these two communities can live and co-exist with one another. Civil society will also have to socialise people so that they would be more tolerant and respectful towards Fulani Muslims and their culture.

As for Boko Haram, the inability of the government to pursue a comprehensive strategy that 'targets the economic, social and cultural roots of the crisis' has made the conflict linger on for decades (International Crisis Group, 2014, p.42). The failure of the state in addressing issues such as poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, extremist religious ideology, abuse of human rights, corruption and also wrong policy choices, has allowed terrorism to flourish in northern Nigeria.

By advocating for socio-economic policies to tackle the high rate of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy civil society can make sure that the youths do not easily get attracted to radical Islamic fundamentalism. Civil society can also monitor the state for transparency, to curb the abuse of human rights, socialise people into behaviours of tolerance for other religions and cultures, facilitate dialogue between moderate factions of the sect and provide services to citizens.

In the Niger-Delta militancy, economic and political marginalisation of the region, corruption and the mismanagement of oil revenues, environmental degradation, lack of development and abuse of the people's rights are factors that have coalesced to cause the militancy in the region. Civil society's role would include advocating for the economic, social and political inclusion of the region in Nigerian society. As well, they could advocate for the development of the region, advocate for youth employment, provide services and help tackle poverty. Therefore, using Paffenholz's functional approach to peace building, we can see that civil society in Nigeria would have to play roles which would normally be carried out by the state and which would include helping to protect communities by monitoring against state abuse, advocacy campaigns to clean up the environment and attract socio-economic development, peace education and mediation to help with post-conflict rehabilitation. As mentioned in the last section, these functions are mutually dependent on one another in order for sustainable peace to be achieved.

The next section will look at what civil society in Nigeria looks like, as well as justifications for or against the organisations involved in the three conflicts that have been discussed in this section, being part of civil society. As has been stressed already in the literature chapter, when we say civil society we could talking about many different things and actors. Furthermore, there may be an automatic assumption that certain actors would automatically be excluded. But yet again, as the literature has pointed out civil society in the context of Nigeria includes both formal and informal organisations who carry out civil functions towards the state.

3.3.4 Civil society in Nigeria

As has been stated earlier, Nigeria's socio-economic and political problems can be traced back to the country's colonial history under British rule. The causes of the country's various conflicts are numerous and presently, these conflicts are raging as a result of religion, economic and political power, division of wealth (especially in the Niger-Delta), land, renewable resources, environmental damage, gang violence, rural disputes and police related violence (McCandless et al., 2001). Additionally, it can be observed that these conflicts have roots in 'structural factors' (social hierarchies), 'economic factors' (resource control), 'institutional factors' or political factors (authoritarian regimes and civilian control over military institutions) and 'cultural and identity factors' (dominant and oppositional value systems) (p.3). These problems have prompted civil society to get involved in order to address the myriad of problems.

The question as to who civil society in Nigeria is, should be one that does not reflect the processes of political and economic development of capitalism and the uniqueness of European societies within the context of absolute monarchical rule (Woods, 1992). Rather, it should be understood within the context of British colonialism, which excluded the private sphere (primordial associations) and created challenges for governance for most African nations and Nigeria in particular. It is a space comprising of organisations and networks that lie outside the states apparatus but has the function of mediating between the individual and the state in order to construct, define values, norms and rules by which the society is governed (Akinyemi, 2016). As stated by Ikelegbe (2005, p.243), it is a private realm of the citizenry, in close proximity with the state and the capital markets, where citizens 'organise materially, organisationally and ideologically in relation to their problems, interests and needs'. Also, its activities are to articulate, mobilise and contest usually making use of engagements that involve protests and mass actions. This contrasts the conventional idea of the term as a sphere of collective voluntary associations, which are civic and stand beyond the boundaries of the private, state and market spheres (Orji, 2009).

Regarding civil society's relationship with the state, Adejumobi (2004, p.213) posits that civil society in Africa is not in contradistinction with the state, as there is no 'binary opposition' between civil society and the state. He argues further that the relationship between civil society and the state is in a 'flux' in that it can co-operational, conflictual, integrative or non-existent (p.213). Therefore, this means that in Africa, civil society organisations who do not have a relationship with the state cannot be included into the definition which this thesis holds. Similarly, Ikelegbe (2005, p.244) adds that this relationship can be confrontational and include mass actions, challenges and protests, as well as being 'complementary, supportive and collaborative' in some instances. Moreover, it is a context where organisations relate and interact with the state 'to influence, moderate and cooperate or to oppose, resist, challenge and struggle against it' (p.244). This also contradicts the notion of civil society being an alternative to the state, given that the conventional view fails to address the nature of social processes in Africa.

As Ekeh (1975) explains, the concept of the two publics (primordial and civic publics), which is tied to colonial dual identities in Africa with the civic public being amoral and the primordial public being moral, has acquired a western connotation. But he adds that both publics should have a generalised morality, making what is morally right in the private sphere, right also in the civic sphere. And with that, actors in the primordial public can still operate in the civic public realm, carrying out the same functions (as a result of the generalised morality), therefore showing a unique dialectical relationship between the two publics. For Makumbe (1998), the existence of civil society in Africa should be seen from the perspective of their functions in transforming African societies and political systems for the common good of citizens. Undoubtedly, we can see that civil society in Nigeria is rooted in the historical context of British colonialism, which created challenges for governance and led to citizens exiting the colonial state. It should be regarded as a space comprising of both civic and primordial organisations that lie outside the realm of the state but relate with the state in order for citizens needs and interests to be addressed by the state. Here, civil society is not recognised as an alternative to the state, rather there is some form of relationship between the state and civil society associations, which

can wither be confrontational or collaborative. Also, primordial organisations operate in the civic public realm to carry out functions which will mitigate direct, structural, and cultural violence.

Specifically, in the case of the herders and farmers, groups such as Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association (MACBAN) and All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN) would be included in this thesis definition of civil society regardless of their inefficiencies. Though members of these organisations (both farmers and herders) have been involved in violent killings and criminal activities such as cattle rustling and rural banditry (and as such these violent activities are excluded from Nigerian civil society), both associations do not carry out and condone violent acts themselves. MACBAN aims to function democratically by operating a simple governance structure, whereby elections are held every four years (Kuna and Ibrahim, 20105). Also, their specific objectives are 'the promotion and protection of the interests of herders and grazing facilities in the country' (p.229). Similarly, AFAN aims to carry out functions that help 'to enhance the skills of farmers and other related stakeholder to advocate and contribute towards technology and (an) agribusiness approach focused on wealth and job creation' (p.230). As such, both associations have functional/cordial relationship with both the federal government and states government, as well as the communities they look to represent. This criteria also holds for associations and groups in the Niger-Delta, who carryout criminal or violent activities with no interests in advancing the needs of the citizenry, and are hostile towards engagements with the state, they will therefore be excluded from the definition of civil society in Nigeria.

Although this thesis has set a criterion by which organisations can be categorised as civil society in Nigeria, it also aims to point out that organisations that fail to meet this criterion will not be considered as part of civil society. Associations such as 'Oodua People's Congress' (OPC), 'Boko Haram', 'Arewa Youth Forum' (militia wing), 'Egbesu' amongst other militant violent groups would not be considered to be part of Nigerian civil society because they propagate the use of violence to achieve their goals (Omede and Bakare, 2014, p.210). In the case of the OPC for example, the groups relationship with the Nigerian government and security officials has

been one fraught with serious hostility (Adekson, 2004). At the group's inception, their objective was to fight for the actualisation of the June 12 1993 presidential election won by Moshood Abiola, a Yoruba man whose landslide election victory was annulled by the military dictatorship of General Ibrahim Babangida (a northerner). The OPC was meant to be a socio-cultural and apolitical organisation that protected the interests of Yoruba people and agitate against 'repression, injustice, victimisation and gross underdevelopment of Nigeria' (Adekson, 2004, p.113). However, the group became a shadow of itself and resorted to hooliganism, extortion, arson, defiance of constituted authority and open confrontation with law enforcement authorities (Adekson, 2004).

On a similar note, Boko Haram would not be considered to be part of civil society in Nigeria. This is because the group carries out violent activities with the general aim to create a state like body run on the interpretation of sharia that will take over northern Nigeria (Walker, 2012). As well, the group does not aim to have a relationship with the Nigerian government, rather they look to set a up parallel 'state-like organisation', which will be small in scale at first and then overtime replace the Nigerian state (p.9). This can be seen by the groups actions of constructing a 'state within a state' with its own cabinet, religious police, a large farm, welfare handouts, food, and shelter to people (p.3). Furthermore, the group carried out many criminal activities such as robbing banks, which they claimed was sanctioned by the Quran and were considered to be the spoils of war. Therefore, this thesis will take the position that groups like MACBAN, AFAN (herder and farmers associations) and Niger-Delta groups who are non-violent and aim to take on functions that advance the socio-economic and political needs of Nigerian citizens and their communities, as well as willing to engage the state constructively will be part of Nigerian civil society. While Boko Haram and other violent associations such as the OPC and Egbesu who have a hostile relationship with the state and do not seek to carryout functions that mitigate direct, structural and cultural violence, will not fit into the criteria of civil society in Nigeria.

Appendix 1 gives details about some civil society associations in Nigeria and below, types of organisations that can be considered to be part of Nigerian civil society are listed. However, Ikelegbe (2013) mentions that many of these organisations work in several areas and very few of them are specialised in one specific area:

- Democracy and Human Rights Organisations: These organisations have played key roles in the enthronement and consolidation of democracy and have been very instrumental in the restoration of civil rule in the country (Omede and Bakare, 2014). Also, they have been helped in monitoring and protecting civil rights and liberties, improving the conditions of citizens, agitating and struggling for accountability from the state and resisting the states aggression (Bradley, 2005; Ikelegbe, 2001). These organisations developed capacity for 'advocacy, training, research and outreach', also having the capacity to engage the govt and other special and economic institutions in 'dialogue and collaborative work' (McCandless et al.,2001, p.14). Amongst these organisations are Community Action for Popular Participation (CAPP) and the Civil Liberties Organization (CLO), Constitutional Rights Project (CRP), Centre for Law Enforcement Education Nigeria (CLEEN), Media Rights Agenda (MRA), United Alliance for Democracy (UAD), the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), National Democratic Coalition (NADECO), Campaign for Democracy (CD), Committee for the Defence of Human Rights (CDHR), Association of Democratic Lawyers (ADLN), Democratic Alternative (DA), United Democratic Front of Nigeria (UDFN) and National Liberation Council of Nigeria (NALICON).

- Professional and Labour Organisations: These organisations tend to be large mass-based organisations that mobilise key sectors of the population to lobby or force the government in a desired policy direction (Kew, 2016). In addition, they are partly motivated by 'socialist ideals of income distribution and vigilant government regulation (if not control) of business and economic activity' (p.160). Furthermore, in this type of civil society organisations, business associations seek a relationship with the government

so as to construct a bargaining process for business input on government economic policies such as budget and trade policies. Academic, student and trade unions on their part aim for better wages through organised actions against the state, as well as equity, fairness and justice (Adejumobi, 2004). This group includes Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS), Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), Women in Nigeria (WIN), Community Women and Development (COWAD), Market Women Association of Nigeria (MWAN), Federation of Business and Professional Women (BPW), Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF), Women Advancement Forum (WAF), Nigerian Medical Association (NMA), Trade Union Congress (TUC), Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ).

- Issue Oriented and Gender Based Organisations: Organisations in this category protect and project certain issues, needs and interest in the Nigerian society (Ikelegbe, 2013). They work on specific issue such as police reforms, media reforms, human rights, conflict management and prevention, free speech and women in politics, poverty alleviation, AIDS campaigns, National Program in Immunisation, trafficking in women and children, and campaigns against negative cultural practices in women (McCandless et al.,2001). Again, these organisations often work with the government in areas relevant to their specific interests and carry out programmes that reach a broad section of the population. They include organisations like Society for Women and AIDS in Africa (SWAAN), Journalists against AIDS (JAAIDS), Interfaith Mediation Centre (IFMC), National Council of Women Societies (NCWS), Federation of Muslim Women Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN), Academic Associates Peace Works (AAPW), Peace, Reconciliation and Development Association (PREDA), All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN), Peace and Development Organization (PEDO), Centre for Population and Environmental Development (CPED), Women Health and Action Research Centre, Environmental Rights Action (ERA), Girls Power Initiative (GPI),

Constitutional Rights Project (CRP).

- Religious and Ethnic or Traditional Associations: Organisations here (especially ethnic and traditional associations) are active parts of Nigeria's social and political life, in that they participate in community development initiatives, as well as assuring social welfare for their members (McCandless et al., 2001). Moreover, in the past, these organisations carried out functions such as 'initiating young men and women into adulthood, while others managed security, healthcare and various crafts that were essential for smooth community life' (p.13). But presently, because of the social discontent following the politics of domination and marginality of various governments, these groups have been mobilising for democracy, good governance, equity, justice and identity-based interests such as self-determination and in some instances secession from Nigeria (Ikelegbe, 2001; Ikelegbe, 2013; McCandless, 2001; Bradley, 2005). In the Niger-Delta for example, various ethnic, community and environmental organisations have emerged to agitate against the neglect of the region, as well as the degradation of the environment and the abuse of rights by the state (Ibenau, 2006). Also, in the herdsmen and farmers conflicts, some organisations have carried out roles which has united all Fulani herders in order to protect their interests and also their grazing facilities in Nigeria (Kuna and Ibrahim, 2015). Religious organisations also have been playing roles which aim to forge peaceful relationships between Christians and Muslims, as well as carrying out various socio-economic functions (Haynes, 2009; Ikelegbe, 2013). These groups include Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association (MACBAN), Afenifere, Ohanaeze Ndigbo, Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF), Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Nigerian Inter-Religious Council (NIREC), Muslim Rights Concern (MURIC), Pan Niger Delta Forum (PANDEF), Movement for the Survival of Ijaw Ethnic Nationalist (MOSIEN) and Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), Ijaw National Congress (INC), Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger-Delta (MEND), Ijaw Youth Council (IYC), Egbema

National Congress, Movement for the Reparation of Ogbia, Isoko Community Oil Producing Forum, the Urhobo Political Stakeholders Forum, Ndokwa Aborigines Rights Protection Council, Oron National Forum, Ijaw Elders Forum, Izon National Development and Welfare Association, Ibibio Nation Coalition for Self Determination, Akpabuyo Bakassi Green Movement, Isoko Positive Agenda.

3.4 Civil Society and Conflict in Nigeria

3.4.1 Civil society in ethno-religious conflicts

Nigeria's ethno-religious problems are said to be caused by a mixture of non-exhaustive overlapping issues such as the competition for the control of state power, agitations for the control of resources, land disputes and the settler-Indigene Crisis (Uzuegbunam, 2013). Given the nature of violent conflicts in Nigeria and the mistrust/ suspicions between the different ethnic groups, it can be said that conflict management is a useful tool in ameliorating the different conflicts besieging the nation (Osaghae, 1998). But for the root causes of the various conflicts to be dealt with, the political leaders from the conflicting ethnic groups and nationally, must come together in conjunction with civil organizations to implement inclusive socio-economic and political changes, which in turn will instil confidence in the Nigerian citizenry that there is a lasting solution to their grievances, rather than a situation where conflict is partially resolved (Chima and Alokpa, 2015).

Regarding the roles civil society plays in violent conflicts, Thania Paffenholz (2009, p.5) in her article Civil Society and Peacebuilding, identifies seven key functions which civil society plays in peacebuilding, namely 'protection of citizens against violence, monitoring of human rights violations, advocacy for peace, socialization to values of peace and democracy, inter-group social cohesion, facilitation of dialogue and service delivery'. She further adds that the context in which civil society operates is important to its ability to act and fulfil its role in building peace, that is if certain factors (the state, level of violence, media, behaviour and compositions of civil

society, external political actors and donors) can help increase or reduce the space for civil society activities.

For lbeanu (2006), Nigerian civil society has a history of violence and aggression towards the Nigerian state, because of the state's autocratic characteristics and history of use of force as a conflict management tool. He further states that during the military era, the role of civil society during the Niger-delta conflict, was the management of conflict and mediation in inter-communal and intra-communal violence, but during the civilian era, civil society's role has expanded to issues beyond these two roles to peace education, training, post-conflict rehabilitation, and early warning. lkelegbe (2001), adds that civil society can monitor the state's abuse of rights and advocate for the greater share of the oil revenues to help develop the region, therefore dealing with the socio-economic anomalies which besiege the region. Mostly, civil society must advocate for clean-up of the environment also, repair of ecological damage and structural changes which could help mitigate the structural inequalities which affect the region (Idemudia, 2009). As Anugwom and Anugwom (2008) posit, women and women groups are important in trying to ameliorate the conflict in the Niger-delta. They explain that, though women within the region have been marginalised in discussions with communities on how to mitigate the conflict, they are able to raise awareness of their plight. This has made women groups a force in the Niger- delta conflict, concerned with issues such as 'marginalisation in the economy of oil, corporate mis governance, state abuse, the behaviour of other groupings, the pervading insecurity and violence, and in pursuance of stronger voices, participation, empowerment and a better and safer society and environment', through which they relate to their welfare and that of their community (Ikelegbe, 2005, p.268).

Civil society's response to the herdsmen and farmers conflict can be an important factor in the mediation of conflict between these two conflicting parties. Here, traditional leaders have important roles to play in the peacebuilding processes, as can observe from the actions of Dr Danladi Atu, former chairman of Jos north local council between 2000 and 2007, who constituted a council of chiefs, to sit and deliberate on community issues (International Crisis

Group, 2012). These are important as through traditional and community leaders, victims have been able to have their cases adjudicated on quickly compared to formal courts, as well, the use of information technology has allowed for the tracking and monitoring of the movement of cattle by the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Associations (MACBAN), and interventions through dialogue and mediation to build social and cultural bridges through the conflicting groups (Kwaja and Adelehin, 2018). Chima and Alokpa (2015) identify that in the case of Plateau state in northern Nigeria, civil organizations played the role of providing relief materials to victims and service delivery, the training of Victims in first aid treatment, held peace education, enlightenment workshops, conflict assessment, dialogue and mediation between warring parties by faith-based organizations. They add, that for civil society organisations to get to the root causes of the conflict, it must collaborate with the stakeholders in the conflict to make socio-economic and political changes which are more inclusive. Although ethnic and community-based groups have sometimes taken partisan positions in defending both the pastoralists and the farmers, non-governmental organisations have focused their attention on post-conflict reconciliation and peacebuilding, early warning and strengthening relations between communities and security agencies through mediation and dialogue (International Crisis Group, 2017).

In the case of the Boko Haram Insurgency, civil society needs to respond to the extremist violence, by engaging youths to reduce the recruitment drive of the group, and also offering alternative avenues for youths to pursue positive opportunities and leadership roles in their communities (Peace Direct, 2016). Furthermore, civil society can be useful if it focuses on creating livelihood opportunities for women, youths and the excluded, as well as involving locally influential religious/traditional leaders to establish effective messaging and narratives, especially when trying to create religious literacy against the narrative of violent extremists (Peace Direct, 2016). The excluded, like women in the north, should be supported, given that the historical context of gender discrimination is rooted in law and cultural practice, and the fact that women caught up in the conflict have gone through sexual abuse and lost economic

opportunities (International Crisis Group, 2016). Therefore, initiatives which provide the essential care for female victims, as well as empowerment and reintegration of female victims into community life, can be effective at meeting the immediate needs of women (International Crisis Group, 2016).

As mentioned earlier, peoples trust in public institutions in Nigeria is low, especially in the north; therefore, religious and traditional leaders can act as negotiators with Boko Haram, grounding their discourse in philosophical and theological frameworks that are relevant to the local context (Buchanan-Clarke and Knoope, 2017). Not only in negotiations with the extremist groups, interfaith dialogue can be useful in encouraging and bridging the gap between both Christians and Muslims communities to work towards peaceful coexistence in the north (Haynes, 2009). This being the case, the question is if civil society does have an important role to play in resolving these conflicts? It can be stated that civil society has a major role to play at tackling the high level of poverty, unemployment and economic deprivation through activities which help with education, employment, the fight against corruption, help in building communities, the abuse of human rights, service delivery and the mediation of conflicts in Nigeria. In Nigeria, because structural violence has led to direct physical and cultural violence, it is important that formal and informal organisations should be focusing on resolving direct violence as well as those aspects that bring forth indirect violence leading to social disadvantage and injustice.

3.5 Strength and Weaknesses of Nigerian Civil Society

According to Ikelegbe (2013), civil society in Nigeria has had some relative successes in certain areas such as coordinating and mobilising on public issues of interest, advocacy, support in the areas of social welfare and humanitarian assistance, conflict resolution/transformation, and electoral reforms. The organisational and mobilisation skills of civil society, really came to the fore during the military dictatorships of General Babangida and Abacha, where civil society's

vibrancy during the structural adjustment program (SAP) of General Babangida and the tenure elongation of General Abacha led to pro-democracy and human rights groups demanding for political reforms (Osaghae, 1998). This gives the ordinary Nigerian citizen a voice to advance their interests and grievances as coalitions against the state which eventually ended up in the fall of both regimes and the restoration of civil rule.

Civil society is also seen to have made some progress in advocating for the constitutional provisions of political rights, by fighting for the entrenchment of multi-party democracy, passing of the Freedom of Information Bill (FOI), and the legal recognition of civil society's recognition (Action Aid, 2007). Such advocacy campaigns have led to civil society influencing public policies like the enactment of child rights laws and the establishment of the National Agency for the Prohibition in Trafficking of Persons (NAPTIP), which goes a long way in ensuring that children are not exploited and forced to work, while hindering their educational development (Mercy, 2012). The media has also had some successes in advocating for the right to free expression and an uncensored media (Mercy, 2012). Through the constitutional protection for the freedom of expression, civil society has been able to carry out investigative and incisive reportage regarding the abuse of power by public office holders, as well as provide knowledge for citizens to the state accountable (Buchanan-Clarke and Knoope, 2017; Mercy, 2012). As regards electoral reforms and credible elections, civil society activism has facilitated the placement of issues such as electoral reforms on the agenda, embarking on the mobilisation of citizens to vote, participate actively in voter's registration exercises, as well as embarking on voter's education (Mercy, 2012). By carrying out these activities, the hope is that the outcomes of elections can be acceptable and credible in the eyes of Nigerian citizens (Omede and Bakare, 2014; Uadiale, 2011).

Civil society has also made some strides in providing social welfare services, such as health, education and social policy, therefore acting as a substitute in place of the Nigerian state-run activities in social provision (Olufemi and Adewale, 2012). This has meant that civil society does not just provide safety nets, they also have had successes in alleviating poverty and

empowerment (microcredit and skills development), and the provision of relief and humanitarian assistance (distribution of food, water and basic medicine), which have been important in advocating for the inclusion of women into the political sector (Ikelegbe, 2013; Action Aid, 2007). As a result of this, civil society has also been able to build strategic partnerships with the Nigerian government institution and agencies in dealing with issues like HIV/AIDS and the alleviation of poverty in the country (Action Aid, 2007).

About the management of conflict, civil society has emerged as focal actors in the pursuit to get to the root causes of conflict. By mediating in the settler-indigene violence going on in the middle belt of Nigeria and negotiating amnesty with the Niger Delta Militants, civil society has made sure that the issues which underlie these conflicts are taken up and discussed to bring about a lasting solution (Muhammed et al., 2015; Muzan, 2014). Religious organisations, like the Nigerian Inter-Religious Council (NIREC), have been important in making sure that interfaith mediation and dialogue is carried out to negotiate peace talks and prevent inter-religious conflicts in Nigeria (Haynes, 2009). Civil society has also had successes in analysing conflicts and combating the proliferation of small arms, as organizations like the West Africa Network for Building Peace (WANEP) have been instrumental in monitoring conflict, and the Academic Associates Peace Works (AAPW) have played important roles in the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) circulating within Nigeria (Olufemi and Adewale, 2012). On the other hand, in highlighting the weaknesses of civil society Omede and Bakare (2014) mention that civil society suffers from some weaknesses which have affected its ability to impact the Nigerian citizenry and carry out its activities effectively. They state that such weaknesses include and are non-exhaustive, the disconnection from rural organisations, lack of unity, inadequate funding, government patronage, lack of internal democracy, lack of skills for civil organisations, corruption and the lack of state support.

One of the most serious weaknesses which civil society faces in Nigeria is that they lack funds and the capacity to generate funds. This means that these civil society organisations have to fall

back on the ‘government', ‘politicians', and ‘corporate organizations' to fund their programs and activities (Ukase and Audu, 2015). This, therefore, disconnects these civil organisations and local groups from those they are meant to represent, therefore making them unaccountable to citizens (Arisi, 2015).

Civil society's disconnection from rural organisations has been a major concern, given that they face challenges tailoring programs to local needs and realities because of the competitive donor-driven funding environment, which excludes citizens and grassroots participation, therefore making civil society not accountable to Nigerian citizens (Banks and Hulme, 2012). Omede and Bakare (2014), also add that since civil societies activities are mostly restricted to dealing with the federal government they lack national spread (given that most of them are concentrated in the major cities), which inevitably makes it hard for rural dwelling Nigerians to appreciate civil society's roles in developing a political consciousness and resist inducement from politicians. Civil society's limitation in designing community-driven and participatory development strategies as well as its lack of nation spread means that their interventions will mirror the social, political and economic agendas of external actors, rather than those of local communities whom civil society is meant to represent (Banks and Hulme, 2012).

According to Ukase and Audu (2015), most civil society groups in Nigeria have failed to overcome ethno-religious and regional cleavages, as attempts by some civil society organisations to check the activities of public office holders, is usually interpreted by other sections of civil society as based on ethnic and religious bias. An example is the case of the former speaker of the federal house of representatives, Salisu Buhari, who was removed from office for falsifying his age and educational qualifications, civil society groups defended him and described the allegation as a fabrication (Ukase and Audu, 2015). Omede and Bakare (2014) add that this division along ethnic and religious lines by civil society, causes disunity and disagreements, as the internal contradictions within these organizations makes it difficult to

agree on common positions that can be of benefit with their engagement with the state, and it makes it difficult for the organizations members to learn democratic norms and values.

There is the fear that the funds and monies donated to civil society organisations in Nigeria, end up being syphoned and embezzled, leading to issues of accountability and trust (Ukase and Audu, 2015). This, in turn, has led to accusations of corruption, a lack of transparency in the utilisation of donor funds, and the conversion of funds to personal use by Nigerian civil society's, which therefore weakens civil society's morality in engaging the government and dampens citizens believe in the integrity and value of such organizations (Mercy, 2012). Although civil society has been able to get the Freedom of Information Bill signed (FOI) passed into law, they still face barriers to accessing information from government institution and agencies. This is because the relationship between civil society and the government in Nigeria is characterised by suspicion, as civil organisations are viewed by state officials as competitors for power and legitimacy, rather as development partners (Omede and Bakare, 2014). This was the case when a shareholders group, took the former Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Governor, Mallam Sanusi Lamido Sanusi to court alleging that he ignored their request to provide information on processes of one of the banks' subsidiaries liquidation (Ukase and Audu, 2015). This, therefore, makes it difficult for civil society to engage the state, and in the case of counterterrorism, it limits their ability to tackle the menace of extremism and extremist ideologies (Muhammad, 2016).

Civil society faces the challenge of having poor knowledge of how the government and other sectors works, as many of its personal are not properly trained and lack the ‘experience, competence, contacts and confidence to liaise and work with ministries, departments and agencies of government at the state and federal levels’ (Ikelegbe, 2013, p.40). This capacity gap is evident in relation to activities and engagements of civil society organisations, given the expectation is that such groups must be equipped with superior knowledge and be capable of articulating stronger points (Mercy, 2012; Omede and Bakare, 2014).

Regardless of the various weaknesses which civil society is faced with in Nigeria, civil society is important and has a role in these current ethno-religious conflicts. These organisations would

be focusing on direct violence as well as indirect structural violence in order to mitigate against conflicts in Nigeria. But more research will need to be carried out on much recent events and conflicts, which this thesis will be looking to do as organisations (those in appendix 1) such as advocacy organisations, community-based groups, think thanks, NGOs, religious organisations, gender-based organizations and the media will be interviewed on finding out the role civil society can play in mitigating violent conflict.

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, Nigeria's socio-political history has been examined, showing that right from the colonial British rule to the present day, the country has been dogged by various ethno- religious cleavages. The failure of the colonial rulers to create a structure and foundation that caters for the country's diverse ethno-religious groups set the stage for the ethno-religious conflicts and the fight for power which led to the incursion of the military into Nigerian public life. The illegitimacy of the Nigerian state and its failure to provide a sense of security and equality to its citizens, has led to conflicts like the Herdsmen/ Farmer crisis, the Boko Haram insurgency, and the Niger- Delta militancy with the failure of the Nigerian state to resolve these conflicts and provide citizens with their rights. This has pushed civic and ethnic organizations to fill the void in carrying out mutually dependent functions and providing the platform for citizens to advance their rights and interests towards the state. The chapter further considers the factors that have made civil society effective in its fight to enthrone justice, as well as some issues that affect its ability to carry out its engagements. The next chapter will focus on the methods and processes that were employed to gather data, which will be analysed to answer the research questions of this thesis.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The last chapter gave an insight into the Nigerian socio-political context, detailing the country's history of conflict and how civil society organisations can be effective actors in mitigating the conflicts that have preceded the creation of the nation since 1960. When conducting research, it is important for the researcher to decide on the best methodological approach, and whether the study will best present its results qualitatively, quantitatively, or employ a mixture of both. Therefore, this chapter discusses the process that has been employed to gather data for this research, the means by which the analysed data supports this research by answering key questions and objectives posed by this study and will validate the choice of research design undertaken.

The chapter is divided into eight sections, starting with the main philosophical assumptions and the justification for adopting interpretivist social constructivism for this study. Secondly, the research was conducted using a qualitative research methodology, which involved inductive reasoning as the researcher hopes to develop an existing theory. Next is the research strategy of this study which is qualitative in nature and focuses predominantly on qualitative research interviews, as the researcher is interested in making meaning of a phenomenon. Following the research strategy, research sampling and data collection procedures take place, which document the different methods used for gathering data relevant in answering the research question, and the procedures used to pick the relevant participants for this study.

This study made use of semi-structured interviews (the primary source of data), which was accompanied by documentation and online web pages (complimentary sources), books and journals for triangulation. Furthermore, convenience sampling was used to generate a sample of the civil society organisation in Nigeria, which would have been difficult to access for the study without this method. Thematic analysis was employed as a form of data analysis, in order to get

meaningful interpretations of social phenomena, which this study aims to achieve before looking at the research trustworthiness/ credibility. Finally, the chapter concludes by focusing on the ethical considerations of the research study and a reflection on the researcher's personal experience during fieldwork.

4.2 Philosophical Assumptions

To enable the researcher to adopt assumptions on how they view the world, it is important that the philosophical position of the study, which consists of both ontological and epistemological considerations are laid out. In deciding on the best paradigm, the researcher must carry out the study depending on 'their beliefs about the nature of the social world and what can be known about it (ontology), the nature of knowledge and how it can be acquired (epistemology), the purposes and goals of the research, the characteristics of the research participants, the audience for the research, the founders of the research, and the position and environment of the researchers' (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003, p.1). The philosophical paradigm the researcher adopts should reflect the lens through which they view the world and generate knowledge from the researcher's view (Mills and Birks, 2014). The researcher should, therefore, be interested in 'how' and 'why' social phenomena occurs in the world and must understand the ontological concepts of 'existence' and 'reality' (Mills and Birks, 2014, p.21).

Ontology according to Mills and Birks (2014) is the study of being, which explores the concept of reality. Bryman (2012, p.32) states, it concerns 'whether social entities can and should be considered objective entities that have a reality external to social actors, or they can and should be considered social constructions built up from the perceptions and actions of social actors'. As well, Bryman (2012, p.27) states that epistemology concerns 'what are (or should be) regarded as acceptable knowledge'. It concerns our belief about how we should understand the real world, especially about the research validation and the methods used, and consists of empiricism (knowledge gained by sensory experience using inductive reasoning) and rationalism

(knowledge gained by reasoning, using deductive reasoning) (Ryan, 2018; Walliman, 2011). To understand these concepts further, four key philosophical positions will be examined.

As Riley (2007) explains, positivism has three meanings namely social evolution, philosophical tradition (logical positivism) and scientific research practices (methodological positivism). The latter meaning is that which is relevant in the present; it is not only associated with experiments and quantitative research but also highlights the ontological belief that there is only one single reality because it is the same reality for each person ‘and observation and measurement tell us what that reality is' (Ryan, 2018, p.15). With regards to positivist epistemological beliefs, they attempt to develop knowledge of a reality that exists beyond the human perception. More specifically, the experiences one gains of the world, reflects an objective reality, which, in turn provides the basis for human knowledge (Weber, 2004).

Although positivism allows for an objective reality and focuses more on the belief of a single reality, the philosophical position fails in that it does not acknowledge the fact that the world is complex and the objectivity of the positivist's reality excludes ‘emphatic understanding of the social phenomena from the individual point of view' (Hasan, 2014, p.321). This study does not consider the positivists' paradigm as appropriate, considering that it relies on the scientific knowledge of a single reality, which coincides with the goal of this study thus contributing to theory.

Alternatively, realism denies that we can have objective knowledge of the world rather, it accepts that there are alternative accounts of any phenomenon (Maxwell, 2012). According to Saunders et al. (2009, p.115), realism is related to scientific investigation and is based on the belief that there is the reality that is independent of the mind, and ‘what we experience are sensations, the images of the things in the real world, not things directly'. In simple terms, it states that reality exists independently from the researcher's mind and that there is an external reality, which consists of abstract things that are born of people's minds, but is autonomous of that person, although created by the person (Sobh and Perry, 2006). As Maxwell (2002) adds, a common feature of the realist position is that the ontology of this approach (a real world exists beyond our

perception) integrates with the epistemology of the constructivists' approach (our knowledge of the world is constructed from our own perspectives). Furthermore, this, in turn, rejects the positivist's arguments that there is only one single reality and way of understanding our world. This study does not consider this approach appropriate given that the study does not aim to develop answers which cover several contexts and relative participants.

In contrast, critical theory aims to challenge worldviews and the power structures that create these views, as the approach looks to comprehend the relationships between societal structures (political and economic) and ideological patterns of the mind that restrains human imagination, therefore, limiting the opportunities for challenging these unjust social systems (Clark, 2010; Ryan, 2018). It argues that the world is constructed by people and that 'each person's constructed reality is more powerful influencing their behaviour than any external reality; there is no way of comparing the multiple constructed realities of different people' (Sobh and Perry, 2006, p.1198). Ontologically, Mill et al. (2001, p.113) add that critical theory takes a mediated position between subjectivism and objectivism in that, although reality is independent of our thoughts 'empirical claims about its nature are always situated, contingent, and potentially fallible; an absolute representation of objective society cannot be achieved'. Therefore, this theory focuses on challenging existing domination and exploitation in social structures. For this research study, it is not a suitable philosophical paradigm to adopt, given that this study looks to investigate civil actors' roles in mediating conflict, and not how these actors can challenge the existing structures of exploitation in Nigerian society.

In comparison, social constructivism is a theory of knowledge that assumes that humans generate knowledge and meaning from an interaction between their experiences and their ideas (Mogashoa, 2014). For Kim (2001), it is a theory that assumes that reality is constructed through human activity, while knowledge is a human product that is socially and culturally constructed. This emphasises that the knowledge we build reflects our 'goals, culture, experience, history' and in trying to make sense of the world, we should realise that our 'sense-making activities' occur within the framework of our lifeworld and our goals (Weber, 2004, p.vi). Therefore,

constructivism is based on the understanding that language constitutes reality, and this language, as well as social processes, impacts on our ability to know an objective reality comprehensively given that it focuses on interaction and social practices (Kim, 2001; Kham, 2013; Losantos et al., 2016).

As Weber (2004) mentions, the lifeworld in the constructionist's sense has both subjective and objective characteristics, making it an intersubjective reality. According to Kim (2001), intersubjectivity is shared understanding amongst individuals whose interactions are based on common interests and assumptions, which makes it easier for them to understand new information and activities that come up in a community. Kham (2013) holds the belief that language, as a tool of communication, is part of the interaction process between people which helps them understand and view the world they live in. The subjective character considers that reality is not separate from the individual who observes it, in that the individual reflects on their meaning of the world which they are inextricably bound to (Weber, 2004). Moreover, the objective characteristics here reflect that we constantly negotiate this meaning with others with whom we communicate with. Communication is part of the interaction process that helps the researcher examine the lifeworld of the research participants (civil society organizations), in order to understand the interpretations and meanings of each individuals' participants reality on the roles they play in the resolution of conflicts in Nigeria, as well as the researcher's interpretations which aims to generate knowledge (Kham, 2013).

Therefore, having appraised the different philosophical paradigms, this thesis presents justification for an interpretivist social constructivist paradigm. Evidently, we can see that this research reflects the realities and experiences of civil society groups in Nigeria, particularly the roles which they play in mediating peace and in post conflict reconstruction. In addition, a social constructivists view is appropriate for this research because it looks to highlight the goals, cultures, experiences and history of civil society organisations within the Nigerian contexts and not in the conventional liberal democratic context of western Europe (Weber, 2004). As well, the inter- subjective nature of the social constructivist paradigm makes reality not separate from

the researcher who observes it and its meanings, which are constantly negotiated with the participants he communicates with. Civil society can only be understood through the lenses and lifeworld of those organisations that are involved in and are part of the social processes in Nigerian. Therefore, in understanding these organisations and making meaning of their experiences, the researcher interacted with them making him an integral part of this research, which aims to generate knowledge (Kham, 2013).

As stated earlier, the positivist position reflects an objective reality that is associated with experiments, measurements, and quantitative research, which this research does not adopt. And in quantitative research, the researcher is perceived to be absent from the research process as they are less concerned with understanding the lifeworld of civil society organisations. In the next section of this chapter, the researcher will discuss the appropriateness of a qualitative research methodology and an inductive approach to this research study.

4.3 Qualitative Research Methodology

As explained by Mills and Birks (2014, P.32), the methodology chosen by the researcher, determines the way the researcher 'thinks about the study, how they make decisions about a study, and how they position themselves to engage firstly with participants and then with the data generated/collected'. This is because different methodologies present different assumptions about what type of knowledge is important (Hancock et al., 2007). For Bryman (2012), quantitative research employs measurement, in that it incorporates the practices and norms of natural science and positivism in particular. It ‘uses statistical techniques that allow us to talk about how likely it is that something is true for a given population in an objective or measurable way’ (Hancock et al., 2007, p.6).

It is believed that researchers who adopt this form of inquiry examine the relationships between variables, which can be measured and analysed using statistical processes (Creswell, 2009). Furthermore, quantitative researchers ‘have assumptions about testing theories deductively,

building in protections against bias, controlling for alternative explanations, and being able to generalise and replicate findings' (Creswell, 2009. p.4). By testing theory deductively, the method of inquiry requires the research process to be defined in advance and focuses on the cause and effect of a phenomenon rather than the interpretation of the phenomena (Hancock, 2007). According to Rahman (2016), quantitative research has the advantages in that the results of the research are easier to generalise than qualitative research, as a result of the larger randomly selected samples and the analysis of data is less time consuming because it makes use of statistical software. However, he mentions further that quantitative research has limitations such as the failure to account for deeper meanings and explanations, as it leaves out the common understandings of social phenomenon. Further, 'it has tendencies of taking a snapshot of phenomenon' measuring variables of specific moments in time, therefore failing to take information deeply (Rahman, 2016, p.106).

Qualitative research, on the other hand, is concerned for developing explanations of social phenomena, by helping us understand the world we live in and the way things are the way they are (Hancock et al., 2007). As Merriam (2002, p.4) posts, 'the key to understanding qualitative research lies with the idea that meaning is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world', which is not fixed (single), rather it consists of multiple interpretations of reality that are changing over time. This form of research inquiry is a way of exploring and understanding the meanings individuals or groups give to social and human issues (Creswell, 2009).

However, this research strategy does not go without its own limitations. For one, Rahman (2016) mentions that qualitative research approaches sometimes leave out contextual sensitivities and focuses on meanings and experiences. Additionally, it tends to focus on the participants' experience, rather than any other imperative issues in the context. Merriam (2002) adds that qualitative research strategy is also criticised for not being generalised to a larger population, as a result of small sample group and the non-random nature of sampling. But Hancock, et al (2007, p.7) counter this by stating that 'if the original research question sought insight into a specific

subgroup of the population, not the general population, because the subgroup is ‘special or different from the general population and that specialness is the focus of the research, the small sample might have been appropriate'. Yet, as Ritchie and Lewis (2003, p.14) mention, regardless of the differences between qualitative and quantitative research, ‘this distinction is not clear-cut: some qualitative approaches have sought to emulate natural science models, and not all quantitative studies are based on hypothesis testing but can produce purely descriptive and inductive statistics’.

As Saunders et al. (2009) mention, the degree to which the researcher is clear about the theory at the beginning of the research raises critical questions about the design of the research study. This would depend on if the researcher's goal is to ‘infer theoretical concepts and patterns from observed data’ (inductive researchers) or if ‘the researcher is to test concepts and patterns known from theory using new empirical data’ (deductive research) (Bhattacherjee, 2012, p.3).

Qualitative research methodology involves an inductive approach to conducting research, concerned with generating theories and focusing on individual meanings in complex environments (Bryman, 2012).

For Walliman (2011), inductive reasoning involves sensory experiences or observations, which then can develop conclusions. On a similar note, Pierce (2008, p.32) states that it is used to build theory, and traditionally used in the natural sciences ‘where observation of phenomena is followed by a search for new explanatory theory’ through interpretative methods. It aims to help us understand the nature of issues, by making sense of interview data that has been collected and analysed, which would lead to the formulation of theory (Saunders et al., 2009). For Bhattacherjee (2012), the theory building nature of inductive reasoning is more valuable when there are few prior theories or explanations for a phenomenon. However, Walliman (2011) explains that induction does have its limitations especially the question of how many observations need to be carried out before we draw out a conclusion that is generalizable. As well, he adds further, under what conditions should observations be conducted so that real conclusions can be made? Nevertheless, for researchers to rely on the conclusions from

inductive reasoning, they must make sure that they carry out large numbers of observations, which will be repeated under a large range of circumstances, that no observations contradict the generalisation we have made from the repeated observations (Walliman, 2011).

Deductive reasoning, on the other hand, generates proportions and hypothesis theoretically through logical processes, that aim to 'seek inferences from the general to the particular' (Pierce, 2008, p.33; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Also, Bhattacherjee (2012) mentions that it is a theory testing research that is more productive when there are many competing theories of the same phenomenon and researchers want to know which theory is better and under what circumstances. It is adapted from positivist and empiricist researchers, who are associated with quantitative enquiry, and also to get scientific rigour in the testing of theory, the researcher is expected to be independent of what is being observed (Pierce, 2008; Bryman, 2012). But Walliman (2011) posits that deductive research could be problematic if the theory is falsified and rejected because it makes observations which are not consistent with the hypothesis. In this process, scientific research is carried out on a trial and error basis to pick out the fittest theory.

This research was conducted using a qualitative research methodology, which does not apply the use of measurements, unlike quantitative methods. The adoption of qualitative research as opposed to quantitative research methodology is mostly due to the fact that it allows the researcher to analyse civil society in the Nigerian context by focusing on the socio-economic and political functions they play in mediating peace from the perspective of these organisations. As Hammarberg et al (2106) mentions, qualitative methods are used to answer questions about experiences, meanings and perspectives mostly from the standpoint of the participant, therefore the data from this method is not amenable to measurements. Qualitative research enabled the researcher to explain the experiences of these organisations by exploring and understanding the meanings these organisations construct as to their roles in peacebuilding in Nigeria. Since a qualitative research methodology has been adopted, this research study took on an inductive approach. The research aims to build theory by making sense of the individual meanings of Nigerian civil society organisations functions in conflict resolution through data that has been

collected and analysed. By understanding the nature of their contradictory roles in relation to conventional civil society theory, the hope is that it will lead to a reformulation of the theory on civil society in Nigeria. And in order to rely on the conclusions of this inductive reasoning, a large number of interviews will be carried out (Walliman, 2011).

4.4 Research Strategy

According to Creswell (2009), strategies for research inquiry are types of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods design that provides specific direction to researchers for procedures in a research design. As Saunders et al (2009) mention, what is important is if the strategy we seek to employ will help the researcher answer any particular research questions and meet the aims and objectives of the research. In addition, the researcher's choice of research strategy is driven by the research questions, objectives, existing knowledge, the time, resources on hand and the philosophical paradigm of the research. Furthermore, the strategies should not be thought as mutually exclusive. An example being that a survey strategy can be used as part of a case study. An overview of the different strategies of inquiry are presented in the table below:

Different Strategies of Inquiry

Quantitative Strategies	Qualitative Strategies	Mix methods Strategies
Experimental design	Narrative research	Sequential
Non-experimental designs (e.g surveys)	Phenomenology	Concurrent
	Ethnographies	Transformative
	Grounded theory	
	Case study	

	Qualitative Research Interviews	

Source: Creswell (2009, p.12), Brinkmann and Kvale (2015), Kvale (1996).

As explained by Saunders et al (2009), though many different research strategies are available to a researcher, these strategies often overlap one another. Therefore, as explained earlier, the researcher should employ a strategy that helps him or her to answer the research questions and meet the objectives and aims of the research study. Having looked at the various research strategies, this research study aims to make use and employ qualitative research interviews as a strategy to conduct this research. The research strategy and its justifications are explained below.

4.4.1 Qualitative Research Interviews

Qualitative research interviews seek to discover and understand a phenomenon, a process, the perspectives, and worldviews of people involved in a study (Merriam, 2002). By this, the research is interested in understanding how participants make meaning of a phenomenon. The meaning is mediated through the researcher as an instrument. Similarly, Kvale (1983) defines qualitative research interview as interviews with the aim to gather descriptions of the lifeworld of the interviewee and making interpretations and meanings of phenomenon. Therefore, qualitative research interviews make use of conversational skills, which are a basic mode of everyday human interaction (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015). It takes different forms such as professional conversations, which includes interviews.

According to King (2004), the goal of qualitative research interviews is to see the research topic from the perspective of the interviewee and to understand how and why they come to hold a certain perspective. Therefore, there are reasons for choosing to study the roles which civils society organisations play in mediating Nigeria's ethno-religious conflicts. In this research study, qualitative research interviews are appropriate because it helps the researcher through

conversation to understand descriptive interpretations of civil society organisations and their roles in the mitigating ethno-religious conflicts Nigeria. These organisations, although some of them are involved directly in the resolution of conflicts, most of them tend to be involved in indirect activities and initiatives that help to mediate Nigeria's structural, social and cultural problems, especially with the state's inefficiency in providing basic necessities and rights to its citizens. The reason for researching these organisations is that the conventional conceptualization of civil society is based on a western liberal worldview and context, which excludes the functions and roles of some organisations especially since they have had long histories of mediating the interests of Nigerian citizens towards the state.

As explained in the literature review, civil society is an independent sphere composed of various formal and informal associations outside the state and market but is intricately linked the spheres of the state and market in order to influence socio-economic and political development in society. This definition depends on the context and functions these organisations carry out which should be understood to be civil functions just like those organisations recognised in the conventional definition of the term. Conveniently, there is the need to understand the worldview of these organisations and their functions in the Nigerian context, with the researcher being the instrument in which meanings can be construed.

4.5 Data Collection Methods and Sampling

4.5.1 Sampling

It is believed that qualitative approaches to data collection most times involve direct interaction with individualist on a one to one basis (Hancock, 1998). By interacting face to face, the researcher gathers evidence, which enables them to interpret the meanings and experiences of participants in regard to the roles of civil society organisations in mediating conflicts in Nigeria. Towards this end, this research study aims to utilise various sources of data collection such as semi-structured interviews and documentation. In addition, this research adopted convenience

sampling in selecting participants with reference to the research aims.

According to Etikan et al (2016) a sample is a portion of a population or universe, which does not mean a number of people but the total quantity of the things that are the subject of our research. Bryman (2012, p.416) posits that probability sampling is not feasible in qualitative research, owing to ‘constraints of ongoing fieldwork', and because it will be hard to create a sample frame that maps the population from which a random sample may be taken. Furthermore, non-probability samples are samples where not every member of the population has an equal chance and cannot give generalisable results.

A convenience sample is a type of sample where participants are selected based on their ease of availability, where the most ready, willing and able are available to participate in the research study (Given, 2008). It is a non-probability sample where members of the target population that meet certain criteria’s (easy accessibility, geographical proximity, availability at the time or willingness to participate) are included in the research study (Etikan et al, 2016). It is the least costly to the researcher in terms of cost, time and effort with the assumption that subjects of the target population are similar. (Etikan et al, 2016; Marshall, 1996). Though this sampling technique would save money and time, it does have some drawbacks. One important drawback is that if the sample is broad, it would be hard to generalise from the sample (Robinson, 2014). And because of the lack of generalisation, convenience samples can lack transferability or external validity in qualitative research (Given, 2008).

As Etikan et al (2016) mention, the result from convenience sampling should not be take to be representative of the population as there is a risk getting poor research outcomes. Therefore, the best way of justifying convenience samples in qualitative research, is by ‘defining the sample universe as demographically and geographically local and thus restricting generalisation to that local level, rather than attempting to decontextualise abstract claims (Robinson, 2014, p.32).

In relation to the sample size, qualitative research tends to face problems in ascertaining the number of respondents to be interviewed. Bryman (2012, p.425) states that as a rule of thumb, ‘sample sizes in

qualitative research should notbe too small as to make it difficult to achieve data saturation, theoretical saturation, or informational redundancy'. At the same time, they (sample sizes) must not be too big that it will make analysis difficult. For Bryman (2012), what is important in choosing a sample size, is for the researcher to make sure they do not generalise inappropriately by justifying the sample size, by being clear about the sampling method being employed, the reasoning behind its use and justification of the appropriateness of the achieved sample. Furthermore, he adds that although saturation is an ambiguous concept, 'the criterion for sample size is whatever it takes to achieve saturation' (Bryman, 2012, p.426).

The research sample of this study consists of thirty-five participants, who participated in semi-structured interviews and are drawn from different civil society organisations. These organisations consisted of democracy and human rights organisations, professional organisations, issue oriented and gender-based organisations, and religious organisations. The recruitment process involved the researcher contacting potential participants who were knowledgeable and understood the topic being researched. The initial idea was to recruit participants purposively, but as a result of the unavailability of most of the participants and their unwillingness to take part in the interviews, convenience sampling was employed based on the ease of availability of participants and their willingness to participate in the research (Given, 2008).

After obtaining ethics approval, the researcher contacted civil society organisations who were available for interviews. From there, these organisations referred and the researcher get in contact with other civil society organisations that were available and willing to participate in the research study. Although the study aimed to also interview ethnic and traditional organisations because of their importance in the social and political life of Nigerians and their capability in mediating peace, the researcher was not able to interview them. This was because most of them were located in areas where there was high insecurity and the researcher could not contact or

communicate with them directly and on time as a result of time constraints and having to travel to four different states. As well, most of these organisations do not have formal ways in which they could be contacted (either by phone or email): they have to be contacted through informal networks which can take time. But regardless of these limitations, the researcher was able to gain access to organisations who have played prominent roles and functions in helping to mediate in Nigeria's various socio-economic and political problems. Therefore, this helped the researcher in gaining relevant data on the experiences of these civil society organisations without looking to generalise to the larger population. Rather this research aims to restrict the generalisation to this specific subgroup of the larger population.

4.5.2 Interviews

Qualitative approaches to data collection usually involve the interaction of the researcher with individuals one-to-one or in a group setting (Hancock, 1998). The term 'qualitative interview' is used to capture the various types of interviews used in qualitative research, and is the most common method of data collection (Bryman, 2012: King, 2004).

The main aim of the qualitative research interview is to dissect the research topic from the interviewees perspective and to understand how and why they have those perspectives (King, 2004). It is a flexible tool that involves assumptions and understandings about the phenomenon and goes beyond having a conversation as the researcher 'gains insights into people's opinion, feelings, emotions and experiences' (Denscombe, 2010, p.173). As King (2004) explains, an important feature of qualitative research interviews is that the researcher believes that the interview cannot be conducted without the active participation of the interviewee, who actively shapes the course of the interview rather than answering pre-set questions. The researcher is the facilitator of the process, playing a more active than a passive role, 'managing the interview process to ensure that the required subjects are covered to the required depth, without

influencing the actual views articulated' (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003, p.147). It includes structured interviews, which is prepared and given to the interviewees using a strict predetermined order (Hancock et al., 2009).

According to Walliman (2011, p.99), 'standardised questions read out by the interviewer according to an interview schedule' with answers most likely written in a closed format. It involves the researcher having tight control over the format, questions and answers, with it being more for qualitative data collection like surveys (Denscombe, 2010). Furthermore, although it has the advantage of using software to eliminate errors in the data collection, and allows for quick analysis of data, it is an expensive data collection method in small-scale research (Denscombe, 2010). Bryman (2012) also adds that unstructured interviews are inflexible because of the need to standardise the way that each interviewee is dealt with.

Unstructured interviews, on the contrary, do not have a structure and the researcher aims to discuss a limited number of topics while framing the questions on the basis of the interviewee's previous response (Hancock, 1998). For Walliman (2011, p.99), this is a flexible format based on a guide with the interviewer determining the format and allowing the 'interviewer to rumble' in order to get some meaning into the ideas of the interviewee. As Bryman (2012, p. 471) observes, the researcher uses an 'aide-mémoire' to help prompt him to deal with a range of topics. Denscombe (2010) adds that what is common and different between unstructured and structured interviews, is that interviewees are allowed to use their own words and develop their own thoughts, allowing interviewees to speak their minds, which in turn allows the researcher to discover complex issues.

On the other hand, semi-structured interviews 'contain structured and unstructured sections with standardised and open type questions', which defined the topic being researched and

provided opportunities for both the interviewer and the interviewee to discuss the topic in detail (Walliman, 2011, p.99; Hancock, 1998). For Pierce (2008) in semi-structured interviews, the researcher uses a limited number of questions related to the topic, and also pre-determined alternative supplementary questions. Bryman (2012) states that what is important is that the questions allow the interviewer to get an understanding of how the participants/interviewee view their social world, coming from the flexibility of the interview process. As King (2004) adds, the researcher must also reflect on the nature of his involvement, just as he considers the meaning of the participant's contribution. Also, the researcher can use various strategies to facilitate reflection, such as the researcher putting their presuppositions down at the start of the study, keeping a research diary to record the researcher's feelings about the process, and listening to some of the interviews with a focus on the researcher's performance (King, 2004).

According to Denscombe (2010), in order for the interviews to be considered valid and credible, the researcher must make sure to corroborate the interview data with other sources of information. And to corroborate the interviews, triangulation should be used, as interview data should not be taken at face value instead, alternative sources can be used to either confirm or dispute the statement (Denscombe, 2010). Although interviews have the advantages of being flexible, the ability to address focused questions and suitability to examine topics at different levels of meanings, it also has the disadvantages of being time-consuming and tiring, as well as having the difficulty of recruiting participants and data overload from the huge volume of rich data produced. On a similar note, Denscombe (2010, p.193) posits that interviews have the disadvantage of being time-consuming in the analysis of data and transcribing, as well as producing data that is not pre-coded and not reliable, as the impact of the interviewer and the context means that consistency and objectivity are hard to achieve.

According to Walliman (2011), there are many types of secondary data with documentary sources (written, non-written materials and survey data in the form of statistics) being the main

source of secondary data. For Hancock et al. (2009, p.19), written materials can produce qualitative information and include ‘policy documents, mission statements, annual reports, minutes of meetings, codes of conduct, websites, series of letters or emails, case notes, health promotion materials etc. Documentary data can be treated as a source of data in its own rights, as website pages can be analysed ‘in terms of the texts and images they contain' (Denscombe, 2010, p.219). it is important to mention however, that documents should not be taken at face value, rather the authenticity, representativeness, meaning and credibility of the document needs to be considered when looking for how valid the document is (Denscombe, 2010; Bryman, 2012).

Walliman (2011) on his part mentions that to decide on the authenticity of a document, you have to examine the source of the data, ‘checking on the person or the institution responsible for the data. Bryman (2012) adds that a researcher can employ documents as a means of understanding aspects of an organisation and its operations if the researcher buttresses the documents with other sources of data regarding the reality and contexts within which the documents are produced. Denscombe (2010) mentions that documentary data has the advantages of having access to data, being cost-effective and having a permanence of data in that it is permanent and available to be checked by others. On a different note, Denscombe (2010, p.233) states that the disadvantage of documentary data is that the research has to evaluate the credibility of the source and the ‘procedures used to produce the original data in order to gauge the credibility of the documents. Furthermore, documents are subject to the social constructions of those that produce them, then being an object of reality.

This research was conducted using semi-structured interviews, with the aim to gain in-depth knowledge about civil society organisations role in the conflict in Nigeria. Semi- structured interviews are more flexible, in that the researcher was able to address specific issues and

emphasis was placed on how the 'interviewee frames and understands issues and events' (Bryman (2012, p. 471). Conducting semi-structured qualitative interviews allowed the researcher to use open questions and follow up leads, which helped to gain meanings from participants interpretations of civil organisations role in the mediation of ethno-religious conflicts and post conflict reconstruction (Bryman, 2012). The researcher had a list of specific questions (interview guide) they wanted to ask, with the interviewee given the opportunity to answer the question, as well as follow up questions by the researcher (Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2009). For Pierce (2008), questions are a means to an end, as information is given in the form of answers. This allows for a flexible and interactive conversation between the interviewer and the participant, as the questions are modified, and the participant probed further to gain a detailed understanding of the phenomenon being researched. For this to be done, an interview guide that contained specific questions, which could be amended according to the situation at hand was used to give the researcher the flexibility to ask questions, as well as follow up questions.

Clearance to carryout fieldwork for the research was approved on the 24th of June 2015 by the ethics committee of the researcher's university, with some participants already giving setting out dates for the interviews to be carried out. The interviews for the research were carried out from April to July 2016 and held in the premises of offices of these civil organisations. The research involved thirty five participants such as issue-oriented organisations, democracy and human rights organisations, faith-based organisations and professional organisations (see Appendix 2) cut across 4 states out of the 36 states in Nigeria (Nassarawa, Lagos, Abuja and Akwa Ibom). These 4 states also cut across the south west, the south, the central and northern regions of the country. The reason why these locations were chosen is because in the northern and central regions, Boko Haram and the herdsmen/ farmers conflict are the most prominent conflicts in that region. In the south west and central Nigeria, the herdsmen/farmer conflict is more prominent. While in the south the Niger Delta militancy and herdsmen/farmer conflicts are issues faced in that region. The researcher booked appointments with 10 senior management

of these civil society organisations and 25 medium and lower level employees of these organisations (comprising of senior programme officers, chairpersons, executive directors, programme managers, implementation officers, programme officers, chief executive officers, and community mobilisation and networking advisers) gaining consent to carry out the research interviews, while presenting the ethics approval and participant information sheets that highlighted the objectives of the research.

Though some participants had given the go ahead to participate in the research, some other organizations requested that more details of the research and the interview guide be furnished to them to get a better understanding of the research study. As well, some organizations that had been enthusiastic about participating in the research later opted out without any reason and, in some cases, without correspondence. The participants also gave consent for the interview to be recorded with interviews lasting between 20 to 60 minutes. The participants were also informed that they could stop or withdraw from the interview at any time they want. Only 1 participant declined to answer and provide information during one of the interview sessions. He later decided to carry on with the interview after the question he was asked was ignored for the next question in the interview guide. After the interviews were concluded and transcribed, the researcher sent some of the transcribed interviews to some organisations which had requested to view the information they gave out during the research interview. The researcher was also presented with documents by participants ranging from bulletins, official publications, and posters. Furthermore, other documents open to the public related to the roles of these civil organizations in conflict resolution were assessed by the researcher. This helped the researcher to gain more insights and understanding of the roles of these organisations in the resolution of conflicts in Nigeria.

But these interviews did not take place without some challenges. The first challenge

encountered, was how the researcher was going to conduct the interview given that he had never carried out an interview before prior to embarking on field work. To overcome this challenge, the researcher first read up and watched videos on how semi-structured interviews are conducted. The researcher also practiced this phase with a colleague and family members. The second challenge was how many participants should the researcher interview especially since there were problems getting access to participants and time was a constraint. Although there were no specific numbers of participants at the beginning of the research, the researcher discussed the issue with his supervisors and also determined the numbers based on the availability of participants. This was the case in Lagos state, where most of the participants outrightly decided not to participate in the interviews because they were busy and did not have time.

The third challenge was how the researcher was going to recollect what was said during the interviews without making any errors. The researcher made sure to audio record the interviews so as to playback and understand the perspectives of the interviewee. As well, the researcher took notes during the interviews to get down important points and for clarification where necessary. And while taking notes, the researcher made sure to pay attention to what the participant was saying without getting distracted. The researcher made sure that the interview questions were developed from literature and not from the researchers own views and perspectives. The questions were later adjusted as interviews progressed to take into consideration emerging themes. A fourth challenge was how the researcher would transcribe and analyse the data findings. This is the case as transcribing and coding of interview data are considered a major time-consuming task for the researcher after data has been collected (Denscombe, 2010). As proof of the research authenticity, the researcher took about five months to transcribe and analyse the data on N-vivo. The transcribed data was cross-checked before the analysis to make sure there were no mistakes prior to the analysis.

Finally, because interviews are based on what people say rather than what they do (Denscombe, 2010), the researcher decided to corroborate the participant interviews in order to assess the trustworthiness of the information they provided. The researcher triangulated the data with complementary data sources such as e-books, websites and reports. Documents included those produced by think tanks, government and non-governmental organisations such as How to Prevent: Extremism and Policy Options, produced by the Tony Blair Faith Foundation, which gives some insights into strategies to counter violent extremism in Nigeria, as well as how religious leaders are being mobilised to prevent extremism. Reports such as the National Security Strategy of Nigeria 2019, produced by the office of the national security adviser also outlines the major security concerns of the country, as well as strategies and policies that have been set out to tackle these security concerns. Websites like Reliefweb and the International Centre for Countering Terrorism (ICCT, 2014) also contain publications of civil society's role in rehabilitation and reintegration, and the role of women as agents in peace processes and conflict resolution in Nigeria.

4.6 Data Analysis

According to Bhatacherjee (2012, p.113), qualitative data analysis such as text data from interview transcripts, is heavily dependent on the researchers 'analytic and interactive skills and personal knowledge of the social context, where the data is collected, and presenting the results in a way that's the major findings are communicated appropriately (Hancock et al, 2009). Bryman (2012) mentions that one of the common approaches to qualitative data analysis, is thematic analysis, although it does not have an identifiable cluster of techniques. Thematic analysis according to Flick (2009, p.318-319), is a 'multi-stage procedure' in the interpretation of data, which aims to preserve 'the meaningful relations' the researcher works with in research.

For Nowell et al. (2017, p2) it can be used across a range of epistemologies and research question

and is a method for identifying, analysing, organising, describing and reporting themes found within a data set. It organises and describes the data set in rich detail and interprets various aspects of the research topic (Braun and Clarke, 2006). A rigorous thematic analysis is thought to produce trustworthy and insightful findings, but there is no clear agreement as to how to go about conducting a thematic analysis (Nowell et al., 2007; Braun and Clarke, 2006). The strategy a researcher can use in conducting thematic qualitative analysis is to have a framework, which involves constructing themes and sub-themes from transcripts of the data, then applying the framework to the data, 'which are organized initially into core themes and the data are then displayed in terms of sub-themes' within each case (Bryman, 2012, p.579). As Braun and Clark (2006) mention, that thematic analysis is not wedded into any pre-existing theoretic framework, as it can be used to examine the ways realities affect the discourses operating within our society. As Nowell et al. (2017), refer to thematic analysis has the advantage that it is a flexible approach that can be modified for the needs of the researcher's study. Additionally, they add that it is accessible, easy and quick to learn, useful for examining many perspectives, and useful for summarising key features of research.

On the contrary, it has problems in that there is not enough literature on thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This lack in literature has left some ambiguity on how the thematic analysis technique should be carried out. As well, the flexibility of the approach ‘can lead to inconsistency and lack of coherence when deploying themes derived from research data (Nowell et al., 2017, p.2). But despite these issues, this research analysed interview data using thematic analysis because ‘a rigorous thematic approach can produce an insightful analysis that answers particular research question' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.97). And in that sense, this approach produced very detailed understandings and meanings to the research question on the role which civil society can play in the mediation of conflicts and the reconstruction of Nigeria.

This research adopts thematic analysis because it enables the researcher gain insightful findings

on civil society in Nigeria, as well as interprets participants understanding of their organisation's roles in mediation and post conflict peacebuilding. The flexibility in the approach allowed the researcher to generate a comprehensive narrative of the data by trying to understand themes from data sets (Braun and Clarke, 2006). However, the approach had a challenge for the researcher since there is a lack of literature on techniques to use, it led the researcher to continuously review codes in order to develop categories and themes. The researcher overcame this by grouping codes together not because they are alike, but because they might have common similarities and differences (Saldana, 2009). Therefore, in analysing the data using thematic analysis, the researcher followed the six phases of analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006); familiarising one's self with the data, generating initial codes and categories, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing a report.

- The researcher familiarised himself with the data through listening to the recordings, transcribing and re-reading the translated data from the thirty-five participants. The aim was to make sure the researcher got an accurate translation of the data, and then to understand the meanings each participant placed to the research questions asked. The transcription was carried out using Microsoft Word, which was immediately carried transcribed after undertaking field work to Nigeria.
- The transcribed data were imported into NVivo and coded. But before this, the researcher listed and noted ideas about what is in the data and what was interesting about it. The coding process was guided by the researcher assigning key words and segments of the data that best represents the information derived. The aim was to make sure the codes were collated in a systematic fashion, that fit with the research questions, and in the process, the researcher identified meanings in the coded data that explained the participants understanding of civil society and its roles.
- The next stage involved the researcher searching for categories, reviewing themes and naming the themes. The theme development process started by reading and trying to

understand the codes, so as to get some broad understanding and identify potential themes from the categorisation of the codes. It involved combining codes to form categories, which were then also reviewed and then collated for these categories to form themes. Criterion's which can help discover themes in data, according to Bryman (2012, p.580), are the 'repetition of topics' that reoccur, finding 'indigenous typologies', finding 'metaphors and analogies', 'transitions', through 'similarities and differences', 'linguistics connectors', missing data and through theory related material. The themes identified in this research were first coded, the codes were reviewed to see if they fitted with the categorised data by making sure it made sense in order to develop a coherent account of the data.

- The analysis of data involved using strategies to understand data from the field and then making sense of the data through its interpretation. Thematic analysis was employed by the researcher to analyse the data. The process of transcribing the data from the research field work, took five months to conclude before the transcribed data, was read and reviewed to make sure the right accounts from participants In-depth interviews are expressed. Chapters five and six give written accounts of participants interpretations of civil society and its role in mediation and post conflict peacebuilding.

4.6.1 The coding process

This section will explain the process which the researcher used in coding using the N-vivo software (appendix 3 gives an overview of the code, categories and themes for each of the questions). The researcher first began by reading through the transcripted interview data and in the process began identifying key words in relevant pages and sections therefore, he began assigning codes to these sections and pages. The researcher then imported the transcripted data into N-vivo, where he started identifying the already manually coded sections, which were dragged and dropped into nodes inductively. As already mentioned, this research aims to build theory as the codes identified

emerged from the transcribed data and not from the literature on civil society in peacebuilding. Silver and Lewins (2014) state that nodes are containers (like codes) which are applied to data to help organise data. Furthermore, they are based on conceptual ideas that can be inductively or deductively generated. Some of the data the researcher dragged and dropped in the nodes were the keywords which had already been identified in the transcripted data and which fit the research questions being asked.

The researcher also placed child nodes (sub-codes) under parent nodes (codes) to show the familiar relationships to one another. The codes (parent and child nodes) were then combined and separated according to their similarities and differences, reviewed, and had memos linked to each node so that relevant analytical notes could be made. Word clouds were also used to identify frequently occurring words in order for nodes to be named appropriately and to understand what was relevant in each node. As a result of the combinations of the nodes, meanings were derived from participants statements, leading to these nodes being categorised. Categorisation involved the groupings of similar coded data into families because they share the same characteristics (Saldana, 2009). After refining, comparing and reviewing the contents of each category to see if relationships exists, the researcher developed themes, which had to be clarified to make meaning and develop coherent accounts of data.

The coding process in this research is consistent with the technique put forward by Silver and Lewins (2014). N-vivo was appropriate in helping the researcher analyse his data as it helped to store, organise and manage the data (Saldana, 2009). It also allowed the researcher to create nodes which identified patterns and allowed for the linking of data segments from the stored dataset. However, coding in N-vivo is time-consuming and it is a data management software that does not interpret the research data for the researcher. As well, it is not really flexible especially when the researcher has to identify a contradictory statement earlier made by a participant and which is saved in the same node (code). The statements might be about the same topic, but they communicate

different things, therefore having them in the same node will not elaborate the differences they have (Silver and Lewins, 2014). Example will be when civil society organisations say they are independent from external agents, but they are dependent on the state and donors in order for them to access funding. These contradictory statements will have to be placed in different nodes highlighting the internal independence in their daily activities and processes but also highlights their reliance on donor funds which is an external factor to their independence. Regardless of these limitations, the software was useful to the researcher as he could store large datasets and organise them in a way in which patterns could be identified in the data.

4.7 Research Credibility

For research to pass the integrity test, there are certain criteria which need to be considered when evaluating social research. According to Bryman (2012), we have to focus on the credibility of the findings generated from research, and by this, research needs to be generalised beyond the context being studied. The credibility of this research stemmed from the rich descriptions of findings, which were conveyed to share and understand the experiences of participants in the study. Also, it was derived by triangulating the interviews with credible sources of information such as e-books, reports and websites. Reliability is the degree to which we can depend on the data presented in research, which will include indicators like 'proximity to events',' impartiality' and 'an eventide reflection on the day's events' (Pierce, 2008, P. 83). In other words, reliability aims to check if the study will give the same results if another research is undertaken. To check if qualitative research was reliable, the researcher fully documented the steps of the procedures used (Creswell 2009). To ensure that the results of the research were reliable and authentic, the researcher reviewed and crosschecked the transcribed data to make sure no mistakes were made in the analysis and interpretation of the data. He also made sure that the research questions were prepared from literature and not from the researcher’s perception. In addition, the researcher gave explanations for the experiences analysed and also identified alternative patterns in the data.

Also, the researcher gave a self-reflection of how the study has shaped the social, political and religious beliefs of the researcher. As Malterud (2001) explains that the researchers' background and position will affect what was chose to be researched, the methods used, the findings and the communication of the results. In being reflective, it starts with the researcher 'identifying preconceptions brought into the project by the researcher, representing previous personal and professional experiences, pre-study beliefs about how things are and what is being investigated, motivation and qualifications for exploration of the field, and perspectives and theoretical foundations related to education and interests' (Malterud, 2001, p.484).

In this case, the researcher was aware that in conducting interviews with participants, he had to project the voices of each participant, as the interview process did give the participants the feeling they were contributing to enhancing these voices so as to impart knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon. Also, the researcher was aware that by inviting respondents to participate in this study and allowing them to set the scene for the interviews, this gave the participants the sense that they controlled the entire interview process, making them more open and relaxed to answer questions which the researcher felt were pertinent to the research study. It was important for the researcher to note that conducting research using qualitative studies do face criticism. Much of the criticism revolved around the issues of measurement, causal analysis and generalisation (Mills and Birks, 20I.4; Flick, 2009). Similarly, Hancock et al. (2007, p.7), point out that qualitative research does face criticism, from its inability to be 'generalisable to a larger population because the sample group is small, and the participants are not chosen randomly'.

But they further add that the research question was looking to get a detailed understanding of a specific subgroup of the population, not the whole population because of the special nature of that subgroup, then that speciality is the core of the research. Bryman (2012, p. 405-406), points to several criticisms of qualitative research like the difficulty to replicate the study, since 'there are hardly any standard procedures to be followed; issue of generalization; and lack of transparency,

which looks at 'what the researcher actually did and how he or she arrived at the study's conclusion. Therefore, just as Bryman (2012) and Hancock et al. (2007) have mentioned, the aim of this research is not to generalise to larger populations, rather, to look at civil society organisations as a specific subgroup of the population.

4.8 Ethical Considerations

Before embarking on field work to Nigeria to gather data, the researcher obtained the Human and Health Sciences School Research Ethics Panel approval. A researcher must consider ethical issues which may arise from carrying out research. As Creswell (2009, P. 88) states, one of the main features of participatory research is that the researcher will not 'further marginalise or disempower the study of participants'. The premise is that the research should be meaningful and benefit both the researcher and the participants, not just the researcher alone. Burnham et al. (2008), state five ethical principles a researcher should be guided by as, beneficence; veracity; privacy; confidentiality and consent. According to Creswell (2009) and Flick (2009), in the collection of data, the researcher should make sure they do not put participants at harm's way and respect the needs of vulnerable populations.

As Burnham et al. (2008) suggest this ethical principle involves the researcher making difficult judgements about events that may be out of the researcher's hands, therefore putting the researcher in a dilemma, where 'weighing the risks and benefits is often rather relative than absolute and clear' (Flick, 2009, p.40). Bryman (2012) argues that it is not possible for the researcher to make judgements on when harm is likely or not, though the researcher still has the duty to protect the participants. Creswell (2009) adds that to make sure that the researcher does not put the participants of the research in harm's way, the researcher must make his participants anonymous, which gives them the right to limit the information given out about themselves. For Bryman (2012, p.142), the issue of privacy is linked to the issues of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality because, 'to the degree that informed consent is given based on a detailed understanding of what the research

participants involvement is likely to entail, he or she is a sense acknowledges that the right to privacy has been surrendered for that limited domain'. In this research study, participants names were anonymised. Quotes from the participants were not used in a way that revealed their identity. The researcher was aware that the use of specific names and local geographic area was capable of compromising the participants anonymity.

When interpreting qualitative research data, the researcher should use 'aliases or pseudonyms' to protect the identity of participants (Creswell, 2009, p.91). This is so, as to prevent the identities of the participants from being known, as well as keeping their personal information confidential. Informed consent forms need to be signed by participants, before they take part in the research, so as to accept that their rights won't be infringed on during the collection of data (Creswell, 2009). The researcher should inform participants about the study, so the participants can reflect and decide if to consent or not (Flick, 2009). Also, the researcher should convey the real intent of their research to participants, in order not to deceive the participants (Creswell, 2009). By being honest and presenting the full reports of the research study to participants, the researcher is aware of their duty to the participants, and future researchers (Burnham et al., 2008). Bryman (2012, p.143) explains that 'it is rarely feasible or desirable to provide participants with a totally complete account of what your research is about'.

While preparing to gather interview data participants, gathered through convenience sampling were first given the information sheet which informed them what the research study is about. And the consent form was given to each participant to read and sign before the interviews commenced. Each participant was accorded some confidentiality so as not to put them in harm's way, as well as respect the privacy of each respondent. Most of the respondents were approached face to face, which in turn meant the researcher did not have to send invitation letters. The researcher made sure that personal information from each of the participants was stored in a secure folder and kept in the boot of the car the researcher was driving. The researcher was the only person with access to

information such as participants names, contact details, audio recordings, interview transcripts and notes made during interviews. The participants were also advised before the interview commenced, not to divulge information about any unlawful activities so as not to compromise their confidentiality.

While carrying out qualitative research, it might be difficult to predict the consequences of carrying out the study as there could be positive or negative outcomes. As Barham et al. (2008, p.284) argue, the researcher's choice between right and wrong is influenced by 'cultural traditions' and individual choices. During fieldwork, a respondent demanded a token for the researcher to conduct the interview, but this demand was rejected, rather than give a token, refreshments were provided to allow for the smooth conduct of the interview. Giving a bribe to get things done is not an uncommon, but giving an alternative to money, is a more acceptable and less confrontational strategy to employ, so as to help the appease the respondents and make them more receptive to participating in the research. Apart from having to appease respondents, the researcher also had to deal with respondents declining or cancelling their appointments to carry out the interviews. The positive outcomes are that the researcher was being helped out by certain individuals to network with potential participants for the research study.

4.9 Reflections

Over the course of the field work in Nigeria, the researcher was faced with both good and bad situations in the various locations visited. However, regardless of the bad experiences, the researcher was able to conduct and gather data for the research study. While in Nigeria, the researcher made enquires and visited various civil society organisations to introduce and explain the rationale for the research. Although some organisations were willing and enthusiastic about taking part in the research, others outrightly rejected participating in the interviews for one reason or the other. Even though this was frustrating and stressful taking into consideration the limited time available to conduct the research, the researcher exercised patience and decided to recruit more participants.

One advantage the researcher had while on fieldwork was that being a foreign PhD student made the participants and their organisations more receptive, respectful and open to engage on the research topic. An example was when the researcher went to one organisation and introduced himself as a PhD researcher. At first the researcher was dismissed but after showing his student and business cards, they changed their approach and were a lot more eager to conduct the interview. The reason for this was that some of them viewed the researcher as an external and neutral person (compared to a local PhD student) who they could open up on the problems facing the country and how their organisations could be very important in mitigating some of these problems. Some others perceived that the research was studying a PhD in an organised foreign society, therefore he could easily find solutions to the variety of problems. As well, one participant believed that an interview with the researcher will give their organisation more exposure and the ability to attract more international funding for their activities.

Another advantage the researcher had was that since he could speak and understand the Ibibio dialect of Akwa Ibom state, he was considered as an insider who understood some of the problems facing the state and the region. They also were willing to speak the language without feeling like they were rude to the researcher, as well as make some explanations which they could not do in English. Being a Christian was also an advantage as the Christian organisations believed the researcher understood their social and political perceptions on issues, therefore they were more relaxed in how they explained their roles and functions. These positives influenced the research as the participants were more receptive and open to give account and their perspectives on civil society's role in mediating peace and post conflict reconstruction. It presented more insights to the research findings and helped the researcher in organising more interviews with other participants who would have been difficult to reach.

On the other hand, being a foreign based student had some negatives, as it deprived the researcher

the connections and networks with people who could have organised interviews with ethnic and traditional organisations. In the UK, the researcher started off by trying to formally contact these organisations through emails and phone calls, but was not successful in getting to them. In Nigeria, time constraints and the researcher travelling to four states made it difficult to also contact these associations. Some of these organisations were located in states or regions that had high insecurity, making it difficult for the researcher to also visit. Another negative was that the researcher being viewed as a foreign based PhD student gave the impression that he was wealthy, as one participant expected the researcher to buy breakfast for her first before the interview could commence. Being a Christian also did not help when the researcher went to a northern Muslim dominated state of the country as he found it difficult to speak to traditional Muslim women's groups. The researcher did not understand the Hausa language and some of the cultural conventions about men and women's relations in the majorly sharia state. Working across 4 different states in four different regions (except Akwa Ibom) was a challenge because various language factors, cultural factors and religious factors also played roles in scuttling/ hampering the researcher from meeting certain traditional groups and organisations.

As already mentioned, the reason for visiting these various states (Nassarawa, Lagos, Abuja and Akwa Ibom) and regions is because in the northern and central regions, Boko Haram and the herdsmen/ farmers conflict are the most prominent conflicts in that region. In the south west and central Nigeria, the herdsmen/farmer conflict is more prominent. While in the south, the Niger Delta militancy and herdsmen/farmer conflicts are issues faced in that region. Although the researcher was able to penetrate the non-civil world of Christian religious organisations, he was not able to speak to Muslim organisations and ethnic organisations. This limited the research to being a specific sub-group of the larger population but it allowed the research to produce a partial picture and made the researcher understand that civil society has a role to play in resolving Nigeria's socio-economic and political problems. And from the triangulated sources of information, it can be seen that religious and ethnic organisations do have important roles play in

mediation and post conflict reconstruction. Therefore, in order to have a full picture of the organisations that could help resolve conflicts in Nigeria, the perceptions and experiences of ethnic and religious organisations would have to be captured by future studies in order to generalise to larger populations.

4.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, the methodological processes used to gather data was discussed, as well as how the gathered data was analysed, so as to understand the meanings to a certain phenomenon. The research followed a social constructionist philosophical paradigm because of its inter- subjective nature, making reality not separate from the researcher who observes it, and also meanings are constantly negotiated with whomever we are communicating with. Also, since the research investigation does not look to make use of measurements and test theory, a qualitative research method was adopted. This positioned the researcher as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis. The research strategy, qualitative research interviews had the advantage of allowing the researcher (the instrument) through conversation to understand how participants make meaning of a phenomenon. Through convenience sampling, the researcher was able to recruit participants based on their ease of availability. Data were gathered using semi-structured interviews which aimed to gain in-depth knowledge about civil organisations in Nigeria, with documentation being used to complement and triangulate the interviews. The analysis of the data was conducted using thematic analysis, which produced insightful analysis into a phenomenon — the trustworthiness of the research focusing on the researcher's intersubjective nature as well as the reliability and generalisation of the study. Finally, the researcher explained their ethical considerations during the research process, focusing on the anonymity, confidentiality, and the safety of the various participants. The next chapter will analyse data gathered as to who is and isn’t civil society in Nigeria. As well, the data will analyse how effective these civil society actors are and if they fit existing models of civil society in literature.

Chapter 5: Analysis of who is civil society in Nigeria and their effectiveness.

5.1 Qualitative Thematic Analysis, Findings and Discussions

The last chapter explained the process that was used to gather data for this research. It explained that data was gathered primarily by semi-structured interviews. This chapter analyses the data gathered, and answers two research questions, 'Who is and isn't part of Nigerian civil society', and 'How effective are these civil society actors and do they fit into existing models of civil society literature'. As we can observe in this chapter, the organisations who participated in this analysis concentrate on delivering services that aim to mitigate against socio-economic factors that lead to conflict. From the conflicts explored in chapter 3, we can see that the lack of political will by the Nigerian state to resolve socio-economic and political issues has led to the present state of insecurity and conflict in the country.

This chapter challenges the notion that civil society is a sphere of civic associations with formal structures that are independent of the state and markets. The chapter also challenges the idea that the state is no longer the key vehicle for the delivery of essential social services as primacy is understood to now reside with civil society and its organisations. Instead, the chapter seeks to argue that civil society is an independent sphere composed of formal and informal organisations outside the state, who are intimately linked to the conflictual spheres of the state and capital markets to influence socio-economic and political development in society. Furthermore, this conceptualisation of civil society here is based on the functions and contexts of the actors as it also includes formal and informal structured organisations who perform the same functions as civic organisations in the conventional understanding of the concept. The chapter will further establish that the relationship between civil society and the state is characterized by civil society being critical of the Nigerian state without really opposing the state, although it is done in a

tense and suspicious environment. Here, civil society is understood to work closely with the state to meet the socio-economic needs and aspirations of diverse groups. After presenting the results and findings from these analyses, discussions will be carried out with triangulated sources of data such as e-books, websites and reports to highlight and compare the findings to see if it either supports or differs to what obtains in literature.

5.1.1 Semi-Independent Community Organisations

To answer the research question 'who is and isn't part of Nigerian civil society', participants during the interviews discussed various issues and ideas, which featured prominently in the data. The theme that was obtained from the data was that Nigerian civil society consists of semi-independent community organisations and explains that participants have a good understanding of what civil society in Nigeria is and are comfortable with the term, but in the context of Nigeria, it takes a different understanding from what is observed in western Europe as it includes formal and informal groups with both formal and informal structures, who take on non-specialised-functional roles in mitigating socio-economic problems. By non-specialised, it means that they take on a broad range of functions in order to meet the needs and interests of Nigerian citizens. The data referred to topics such as donor influence, state influence, internal revenue and board, and socio-economic needs, which are related to the influence of external actors and the functions of these civil society organisations given that they impact programs and activities they embark on. An example can be seen from a participant who explains that the state has influence on the projects his organisation embarks on: "We seek permission form government to carry out our activities".

5.1.1.1Partially Independent

In the interviews, the data revealed that many organizations are independent to some extent especially in their internal decision-making processes and are mostly influenced externally by

factors outside their control such as donors funding and the state who they need to consult to carry out initiatives and apply for grants from donors. As seen from the conversation with a participant, they view their organisation as independent because the influence of external actors does not hinder them from deciding what programs they wish to participate in therefore; allowing them to implement policies they consider to be of interest to Nigerians. This idea is highlighted in the statement below:

> "We are independent to the extent that we take decisions based on our policies – gender, human resources code of conduct, conflict of interest. External actors are influential but where our values are contradictory, we shun such assistance. For example, organisations that promote same-sex marriage are not likely to be accepted by our organisation. Or those who want legalisation of abortion or perhaps promoters of gay relationships. No matter the amount of money they have, we show no interest in their funding. We watch out for funders, but we make sure they do not dictate to us" (Interview, Participant 9).

As the comment of the participant above shows, they do not allow donors dictate to them especially on contradictory issues that rest on society's values given that it leads to a conflict of interests. However, some other organisations' actions also show that they are not really independent as they mention that donor organisations are really influential on their activities given that they report back to these donors which brings up issues of accountability and representation. Taking a similar position, Williamson and Rodd (2016) explain that donors tend to view civil society organisations as apolitical and not as independent actors that compete for political space. Furthermore, they do not emphasise the democratic and rights-based functions of these organisations, rather focusing on their service delivery roles and cutting funding for their advocacy roles:

> "It depends on what you mean. We have development partners who give us funding. We report back to them. The money is used to further fund our activities here in Nigeria, so it also brings up the issue of accountability. Are we accountable to our donors? Yes,

> because we have to submit our reports to them. Are we accountable to the citizens? Yes, because the money we are given to do a project is held in trust for the population we are supposed to serve in terms of capacity building, training for police officers, training for security agencies like vigilantes creeping up in Nigeria. So, for us, our relationship with the donors is important. We try to maintain this relationship. When we see a need, we can fill, we go back to them for assistance" (Interview, Participant 8).

By accepting funds and reporting back to donors, this organisation becomes accountable to the funding organisation, as they implement projects and initiatives which the donors deem to be important to the Nigerian populace rather than from the perspective of Nigerian citizens. Similarly, another participant explains that their organisation is heavily influenced by implementing partners and donors both directly and indirectly because their organisation's lack of funds and capacity, although the funding they accept or reject is based on the organisation's values:

> "Our external actors include our funders, the grants making organisations. They impact seriously on us. The implementation of our programmes can be very limited without funds. They may include USAID, UNDP indirectly but implementing partners directly. Sometimes the grants making bodies may think we are not big enough, so they deal with grantees while we become sub grantees. Another level of influence is capacity strengthening (Foundation for Partnership for initiative in the Niger Delta) is an example of an implementing partner. Mentoring in accounting best practices is another kind of influence. Institutional strengthening is yet another way external actors deal with us so they can build our capacity to obtain funds and retire them accordingly. We are independent as an NGO. Even when funds are provided, they are so done based on a contract. If the terms are counter to the policy of the NGO, the fund can be rejected" (Interview, Participant 3).

Generally, these responses indicate that although these civil society organisations consider themselves to be independent because of their ability to accept or reject funds that don't meet their organisations values, donor agencies are very important actors for these organisations. This is because these organisations find it difficult to raise funds and implement initiatives as well as strengthen their capacities without the funds provided by these agencies. As other participants mention, the state influences them to some extent either positively or negatively, especially since they work with the state and need the state to carry out their functions. In Nigeria, civil society organisations are required to register with the federal governments Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) with the government acting as an intermediary between donors and civil society organisations (USAID, 2018; Williamson and Rodd, 2016). These grants are managed by the government who set the disbursement requirements and compliance mechanisms, which in turn allows them to control funding (Williamson and Rodd, 2016). Furthermore, the government co-opts these organisations into service delivery roles that are 'government-directed and donor-demanded' thereby, making them apolitical actors and weakening their advocacy/policy making functions towards the state (p.9):

> "They exert influence on us to some extent. Though we are non-governmental, we do not act independently from government. We seek permission form government to carry out our activities. So, I can say that we work hand in hand with government. They influence us one way or the other. They sometimes add to the growth of the organisation. This happens in areas such as granting us permission to get into some communities, we use resource persons from government institutions. On the other hand, government influences are sometimes anti-progressive to us when they delay granting approvals to our request for permission. So, their influence could be described as both positive and negative" (Interview, Participant 32).

As can be seen from the response of the participant, civil society organisations seek the approval of the government to operate and fund their initiatives, which could either help them grow or be averse to their activities in Nigeria. Although civil society organisations have enjoyed some

degree of autonomy from the state, there is concern that their autonomy may be curtailed by the government's legislations (Civicus, 2017). This is because the state looks to regulate how these organisations are funded, as majority of civil society organisations mention that they are not adequately funded and have challenges in accessing funding (Firmin, 2014). Similar to what was said by the last participant, because these organisations register with the state, they tend to follow the guidelines and regulations set by the state in order to gain access to funding and abide by the government's policies:

> "We register with the government and receive approvals for our activities from the Ministry of Education without them we cannot get external grants because they insist that we register with our home governments though the registration process is tedious. We also have to tailor our activities in line with government's policies which keep changing by the day" (Interview, Participant 28).

However, a participant who works for a HIV and AIDS network organisation explains that they don't have external influences as they raise funds internally from members' dues as well as partner with local organisations and state agencies, which enables them carry out their activities. Most HIV and AIDS networks tend to focus on advocating for the needs of their members (Williamson and Rodd, 2016). But they often receive majority of their funding from donors, which poses identity challenges as the donors ask these networks to focus on donor priorities therefore, creating the same problems civil society organisations face of 'de-politicisation' and 'co-option' (p.3):

> "Apart from the partners that we work for such as SACA (State agency for the Control of AIDS), we do not have external actor influences. We generate our funds internally. Our members and board pay dues and from there we build up our activities. We are a network of organisations. We supervise other organisations that network with us. They include Bridge of Life Uyo; BrookLine Ikot Ekpene; and Vine Initiative in Oron. They report here at month end, and we give them small grants to execute projects in their local

areas. These small financial empowerments are usually for mobilisation and education" (Interview, Participant 7).

Similarly, another participant from a faith-based organisation also established that they generate funds internally and partner with other local organisations to carry out their development initiatives:

> "But we also strive to generate money from within for expansion. We also partner with Society for Family Health (SFH) – they help supply drugs, reagents etc, to help prevent mother to child transfer of HIV. An arm of SFH is also involved with us by helping with malaria test kits. These helps further our work and do subsidise our services" (Interview, Participant 12).

A similar position is echoed by Davies et al (2011) and Olarinmoye (2012) who explain that faith-based organisations have greater levels of financial independence and autonomy in setting their own responsive development agendas. This partial financial independence depends on 'religious mandated giving from their members and associated congregations', which is significant (Davies et al, 2011, p.4). It therefore shows that informal organisations such as these faith-based organisations are much more independent from the influence of the state compared to the traditional civic organisations that exists in Nigeria.

These responses show that these organisations are independent to the extent that they are in-charge of their internal processes and activities but are influenced to some extent by the state's policies and mostly donor funding. However, it can also be seen that some of these organisations actually report back to donors, which calls into question who they are accountable to. But these organisations mention that they are accountable to their citizens because the funds which these donors give are invested back into the populace through empowerment and development schemes. These statements highlight that though most of these formal civil society organisations interviewed mention that they are independent, in reality these organisations are not independent of actors such as the state and donor funders, similar to Williamson and Rodd (2016). This is

important because it shows that these formal organisations which make up the majority of the organisations in the sample of this thesis, appeal to the state in order for them to carry out their activities. This is significant because it shows that these formal organisations, which make up the majority of the organisations in the sample of this thesis appeal to the political and economic centres of authority in the globalised public realm so as to privatize service delivery towards the state (Lewis, 2002). However, what can be observed is that similar to Davies et al (2011) and Olarinmoye (2012), informal organisations such as faith-based organisations are more likely to be independent and have greater control over their development initiatives compared to their formal counterparts as a result of their non-dependence on external funding. These differences are important as it shows that the activities of informal organisations are not situated in the global arena like formal organisations therefore, creating issues of accountability. Rather, these non-civil organisations aim to have a long-term sustainable presence and look to be more accountable to people in the grassroots (Olarinmoye, 2012).

5.1.1.2 Non-specialised community organisations

Another revelation in the data was that civil society in Nigeria is made up of both civil and non-civil organisations who carry out a broad range of functions that impact and fulfil the needs and interests of communities in Nigeria. What can be observed from these civic and a few non-civil organisations is that they are developmentally service oriented towards Nigerian communities in the hope that it allows peoples voice to be heard as to their socio-economic needs and interests. However, what was also observed was that faith-based organisations do not only focus on the material needs of people but also their private spiritual needs. What emerged from a conversation with a participant is that civil society includes both civil (formal) and non-civil (informal) organisations that get grants from donor agencies or raise their own revenues which, helps them to implement projects that enhance community development:

> "They are not-for-profit bodies encompassing FBOs (Faith based organizations), CBOs (community-based organizations), NGOs (non-governmental orgs), trade organisations,

professional bodies, traditional associations etc, who receive grants or raise funds to meet their objectives of community service and life enhancement" (Interview, Participant 20).

Similar to the statement of the participant above, Onimisi et al (2017) mention that civil society involves both formal an informal association with both formal and informal structures, who aim to impact its members and the generality of the Nigerian population. As well, the ONSA (2017, p.19) state that faith-based organisations and leaders are considered to be part of Nigeria's rich history as a nation. Additionally, it adds that community-based leaders and traditional leaders play important roles in creating a strategy against violent conflicts in the country as they preserve peoples 'cultures, traditions, values, morals, and beliefs. Furthermore, they are regarded as cultural gatekeepers who are respected by citizens in communities. Therefore, as Scott and McLaughlin (2014) explain, it is important to recognise that much of political activity in developing countries and, in this case, Nigeria take place according to informal norms and systems which are embedded in socio-cultural institutions, norms and standards. A participant from a think tank organisation based in the north of Nigeria, posits that his organisation focuses on preventing conflicts such as the Boko Haram insurgency which is presently ravaging the north eastern part of the country as well as keeping track of developmental initiatives in the region.

He also adds that since the organisations is a non-profit organisation, they do not generate their own revenue since they are not a profit-oriented organisation:

"We are non-profit organisation, who focus on countering violence and terrorism, issues of conflict, security and development in Nigeria and W/Africa. We focus on issues of conflict, security, countering violence, and extremism. These are global issues. I also do security sector reform. I also provide reports of different projects that am implementing including monitoring and tracking, quarterly monthly report, engagement with supply and demand sides. We pride ourselves as a think tank organisation. Generating revenue

implies a profit-oriented organisation" (Interview, Participant 6).

A faith-based organisation also mentions that though they are a development arm of the church that is registered to the state and aim to help communities materially and spiritually. This is observed in the statement below:

> "We are a faith-based organisation, the development arm of the Bible Church. This arm caters to the needs of the less privileged, and communities in need. The gospel is not only preached in the pulpit. So, this initiative is a way of giving back to the people. We are registered at the Corporate Affairs Commission since 2009 as well as with the State Ministry of Women Affairs" (Interview, Participant 17).

This is similar to the explanations of Olarinmoye (2012) who states that faith-based organisations mission statements are religiously oriented as they are influenced in their development initiatives by the philosophies of their sponsoring religious organisations. Davies et al (2011) also adds that though conventional civil society organisations and faith-based organisations provide platforms for Nigerians to exit the state, faith-based organisations are not just concerned with the material needs of people but also their spiritual needs. A media organisation also states that they aim to enhance the voice of the grassroots and also build their capacity in order for locals to participate and voice out societal ills:

> "Our organisation focuses on local reporters, citizen journalists and civil society activities in crises-ridden countries, giving voices to local actors to speak out. We train, mentor and provide platform for professional and citizen reporters. We build capacities for civil and media groups" (Interview, Participant 18).

By providing experienced trainers, the aim is that these experts will work side-by-side with media practitioners to train, coach and mentor these journalists so as to enhance their skills (BBC, 2019; Egwu, 2019). These organisations also engage in a mixture of social and economic programs that are based on the material needs and participation of communities such as food, water, security, eradicating poverty, education, health, governance and microcredit:

> "Our organisation engages in medical missions involving combating malaria with drugs

and bed nets, deworming children, distributing essential vitamins etc. We are also into governance now. We obtain grants from the state government and give micro loans to widows. So, we have become a credit administrative entity. We have diverged to income earning activities and governance. As an organisation we are responsible for the citizens and their development. Our interventions are need-based and follows consultations and subsequent participation of the involved communities –an example is given of a community that was provided with a borehole, so children can be spared long treks to the stream. The borehole was practically abandoned because parents insisted their children should go to the stream to afford parents enough private time for lovemaking. If the community were consulted, it would have identified a more pressing need" (Interview, Participant 3).

Following from the statement of the above participant that their socio-economic programs are needs-based, another participant mentions that their socio-economic programs are concentrated in southern Nigerian states and they are looking to expand to south western states:

"we focus on health, education, and poverty eradication. It has done several programmes in several Nigerian states including Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Abia, Benue, Imo, Enugu and Ebonyi States. We are also expanding into Lagos, Oyo, and Edo States. In our education programme, we have provided scholarship to bright but indigent students, made book grants to school libraries and are involved in research. In our health programme, we have a medical mission where we carry out comprehensive HIV intervention and capacity building for healthcare workers. Under poverty reduction, we have been involved in provisional cash transfer and skill acquisition. There are CSOs for health, education, orphans and vulnerable children, governance, drug and relate crimes, etc" (Interview, Participant 11).

Similarly, a participant that is based in the southern region of the country also explains that their organisation focuses on the health of vulnerable groups. They hope to educate these groups on

methods that would help mitigate their health challenges but they need the support of community stakeholders in order for their initiatives to be successful:

> "It is an organisation that is made up of people who come together to provide services for their community. For now, we are involved in HIV programme. We commenced in June 2016 with advocacy calls to stakeholders and then training of peer educators and then went on to the HIV Testing Services (HTS). Our thematic area is on prevention. Our target groups are female sex workers, homosexuals, out of school youths, long distance drivers and the men and women of reproductive age. Seven LGAs will be covered in the advocacy visits. After that, there will be training of female peer educators to attend to commercial sex workers in the brothels. We educate them on what HIV is, its mode of transmission and the means of prevention. We are also involved in Malaria Programmes. This was lasted between July-December. You need to seek permission from the stakeholders before getting into any community. Seeking permission will go along with incentives to elicit corporation from them. We cannot work without them. The stakeholders wield influence on the people and their consent is vital to our activities" (Interview, Participant 27).

This statement from the last participant is corroborated by Avert (2018) and Williamson and Rodd (2016) who explain that the roles of civil society organisations extend to services delivery and HIV education, including prevention, testing, care and treatment. They also add that these organisations advocacy efforts focus on community mobilisation related to change of behaviour, such as peer education and rallies but not to a change in government policies. As well, Gruber and Caffrey (2005) mention that communities are central to the response to HIV/AIDS especially in the identification, planning and implementation of HIV/AIDS prevention, care and mitigation activities. However, another participant mentions that they are focused on gender and peacebuilding programs mainly in conflict affected areas in northern Nigeria (the Boko Haram insurgency, banditry and herdsmen/farmer conflict) and in the south (Niger-Delta militancy and herdsmen/farmer conflict). The add that they provide oversight functions for society, keeping

the state in check and making them accountable to citizens:

> "other organisations bring special expertise in gender, peace building and conflict. We work in eight States across the country – states that are prone to violent conflict in Nigeria – Yobe, Borno, hopefully Adamawa, Plateau, Kaduna, Kano, Rivers, Bayelsa and Delta. At the inception of the programme, through our mapping, (you know conflict dynamics are always changing), these were the states prone to violent conflict then. Within those states we work in 3 local government areas giving us a total of 24 local government areas. Organised group, not aligned to the state but registered by the state to engage in action from the demand side, holding government accountable, highlighting issues of importance and significance in the state, providing oversight and watching function for the society. They engage in activism and demand for reform" (Interview, Participant 32).

In my observation, it is also evident that civil society includes both formal and informal organisations who both carry out functions that aim to impact Nigerian citizens socio-economically similar to Onimisi et al (2017), ONSA (20170 and, Scott and McLaughlin (2014). It is also evident that the few informal organisations that were part of the sample for this study such as faith-based organisations, follow a similar pattern to Olarinmoye (2012) and Davies et al (2011) in stating that these organisations do not only provide material services that cater for the public needs of communities, they also provide for spiritual needs that caters to the private interests of people and communities. This means that they cater to the private and public interests of their constituents, which contradicts the ideas of conventional civil society literature. This study accepts that there is a limitation to the sample for the thesis as a small number of informal organisations were spoken to, while most of the respondents for the study emanated from the classical understanding of civil society in literature. It is noticed that these informal organisations are amongst the strongest examples of civil society in Nigeria as they have a different perspective in comparison to these classical organisations. But these faith-based organisations are just an aspect of this private public as it also includes ethnic and tribal

organisations. This suggests to me that the two publics as argued by Ekeh (1975) is important in understanding civil society organisations in Nigeria in the post-colonial context.

5.1.2 Effective in the delivery of services in partnership with the state but weak at impacting policy

To answer the research question 'How effective are these civil actors and do they fit into existing models of civil society literature', participants during the interviews discussed various issues, which featured prominently in the data. The theme that was obtained from the data was that these organisations are effective in the delivery of services in collaboration with the state but not as effective and innovative in impacting policy. It means that these organisations are critical of the state's actions without really opposing the state, but they complement the state to provide socio-economic services with little impact on policy that will change how the state functions. Most of the organisations interviewed tended to exhibit a more conventional civic understanding of civil society and its relationship to the state, as opposed to the more traditional/ informal actors which the sample of this thesis did not include a lot of these type of informal organisations. The data referred to topics such as partnership with the state, conducive environment, policy, state and donor influence, failure of governance and corruption.

5.1.2.1 Cordial and suspicious relationship

For participants, the relationship between civil society and the state is characterised by these organisations complementing the state to provide socio-economic services that align to the states policies. These organisations also apply to the state for external funds from donors as well as receive funding from the state. Although these organisations mention that they have cordial relationships with the state, the state still views them with suspicion and mistrust therefore,

leading to the state restricting their activities using tools such as legislations and restricting their funding. A participant mentions that they work with the three levels of government (federal, state and local government) to implement health initiatives, while seeking the governments support for its initiatives and capacity building to fill gaps in implementing their activities:

> "We relate with the Niger Delta Support Programme facilitated by the National Planning Commission of the Federal Government. We implement community mobilisation component of the Malaria Programme facilitated by Malaria Elimination Programme – an arm of the Federal Ministry of Health with units at the state and local government levels. We also work at the local government level with government health facilities. We liaise with local governments to provide technical support for programmes beyond our funding limits when we pull out. This is to enhance sustainability. As an organisation, we may not have the capacity to address some of the funding challenges. If the federal government can provide capacity building for our volunteers and send in human resources to see how they can help to address the gaps among our beneficiaries, that would be great" (Interview, Participant 1).

Another participant also mentions that they have a good relationship with the three arms of government for support and funding for health-related services. As well the state subsidises medicine and have provided funding for their activities but more funding will be needed:

> "We relate with all three levels of government, some with the federal government, more with the state government, the most with the local government. If we need a recommendation letter for the grant making body, we approach the local government because we are a grassroots organisation working directly with communities. A local government in Akwa Ibom State has for example given us 2 million naira for our medical mission. The Local Government Areas also support us with health staff and mobility. At the state level, we have a pronounced relationship with Akwa Ibom State Committee for the Control of AIDS. We are current working on a World Bank project anchored by the

> State. We also obtain recommendations from the federal government when we apply for external aid. We have been visited by the Community Development Division of the Ministry of Health and obtained letters of commendation from federal capital authorities to be able to access subsidised medicines for widows and orphans. Support can be in the form of technical support such as condoms, and test kits for HIV intervention programmes. Funding is another form of support apart from commodities such as insecticide treated nets. They could also do institutional strengthening, grade our capacities and gaps and bring us at far with other international organisations. This is necessary because when intervention organisations pull out, what would be our fate? A system of check are balances are important in curtailing the excesses of the state making sure that they are accountable to Nigerian citizens" (Interview, Participant 3).

USAID (2016) states that the Nigerian government understands the role civil society plays in the promotion of good governance and continues to show its willingness to collaborate with them at both the federal and state levels. In addition, civil society's partnership with the government is robust at the level of the state, because some state governments see the partnership as a lucrative source of funding for development projects. Furthermore, the state houses of assembly have also worked together on issues pertaining to violence against women. As well, the ONSA (2019) mentions that needs to encourage a broad-based partnership that accommodates the participation of civil society, local communities and community-based organisations to mitigate problems. Generally, these civil society organisations provide services in a range of fields such as health, education, gender, governance, environmental sustainability and humanitarian relief for communities (USAID, 2016). Additionally, the government also calls these civil society organisations to bid on grants, since their roles are valued highly in the development process. However, many of these organisations still find it hard to influence the legislative process. Therefore, civil society organisations do have a cordial relationship with the different levels of government to provide services to Nigerians but are still lagging in trying to influence and impact policy. For a participant civil

society also needs to impact policy making, which will further improve their relationship between the state and organisations:

> "Civil society organisations need to have a voice in policy making, in placing projects, in impact evaluation. Research capabilities of CSOs are critical to these voices and will help strategic plan succeed as well improve relations with government. Implementation of projects should not be based on old data. A good example of a cordial relationship was when former Special Adviser on MDGs – Mrs Amina Mohammed created forum engagement with CSOs and the same is happening under SDGs where long term plans are set. A system of checks and balances if developed between government and CSOs would help to curtail some of these excesses i.e. the stinking corruption within the CSOs where cabals even operate. Giving us funds for the implementation of social projects can also improve relationship" (Interview, Participant 4).

Another participant also explains that the state should involve them in governance because they are the agents of Nigerian citizens who help in influencing policies that address societal problems:

> "We expect government to involve us – think tanks and CSOs in the design and implementation of policies. They should increase the spaces for consultation to improve decision making process because CSOs connect with the people while think tanks lead in researching on pressing societal issues. Governments can also be supportive by being open to research. They should value it and gain more access to data" (Interview, Participant 10).

As Firmin (2014) explains the policy impact of civil society organisations in Nigeria are rare, as sixty three percent of the organisations he surveyed, stated that they have not advocated for policies in two years and their impact is limited. He adds that this limited impact might be as a result of the 'constrained relations' between these organisations and the government, 'limited political space', the lack of an enabling legal and regulatory frameworks (p.14). Furthermore,

although sixty one percent of the organisations surveyed see the Nigerian legal environment as moderately enabling, some organisations have difficulties registering with the state especially if their goals and objectives are related to human rights and contested areas like the Niger-Delta. Bertlsmann Stiftung (2020) similarly explains that civil society organisations in Nigeria are weak as majority of the organisations have minor impact on the political system. Although they add that private media and religious organisations, trade unions and broad coalitions of NGOs may be able to influence political processes and decision making if given the support. A participant adds that they have a cordial relationship with the state and their interventions have to complement and align with the ideas of the state in critical areas. He also mentions that registering with the state also helps to keep organisations who do not adhere to the rule of law out of work:

> "As is typical of NGOs, our role is to complement government efforts in development – a holistic development. Our intervention programmes must align with the vision of the government, be it in education, health; democracy and governance. For instance, during elections, because of the size of the population, we complement government's efforts at sensitising people to vote, register, and choose right. We are registered with the state ministry and always liaise with the relevant government agency in carrying out our projects such as sending our HIV and malaria reports quarterly to the Ministry of Health. Our relationship is cordial. Again, we carryout microcredit programmes, we register with the Corporate Affairs Commission. We also register with the National Planning Commission. These processes are armed at weeding out CSOs without good standing. They provide technical support if we are patient enough such as asking for data to carry out say the gender and vulnerable person's data" (Interview, Participant 9).

However, a participant mentions that they collaborate with all levels of government and are funded by the government. They also have their budgets done by the government, which calls to question their level of independence and accountability to Nigerian citizens:

> "We work with seven Local Government Areas, namely Ibeno, Ikot Abasi, Oron, Uyo, Itu and Abak. The federal government also provides funding, the state provides counterpart funding. They do the budget for us. We are collaborating with all levels of government. We need funds and means of transportation" (Interview, Participant 27).

By aligning development initiatives to the states vision, the issue of accountability and representation of social interests becomes visible. As Williamson and Rodd (2016) mention, the incentives of the federal government of Nigeria and donors are often aligned, given that the government acts in support of these donor's goals, disburse service delivery grants and monitor these organisations progress. Additionally, because of the service delivery grants from the state, these organisations have little incentive to promote the demands of their membership. Therefore, their interventions mirror the demands of the state and donors, which in turn ignores the needs and interests of Nigerian citizens. But a faith-based organisation states that they do not have relationships with certain levels of government although they have worked with the state government in the health sector and in providing aid to the vulnerable. They also state that they would be open to extra funding opportunities outside their internal revenue sources:

> "We have partnered with a few organisations such as SACA – State Action Committee on AIDs. This agency has supported us by providing aid which we extend to war-torn people, e.g. those who may have been raped. We are also applying for funds. As of now, we do not have a partnership relationship with the federal government. But we do have with the State government through the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development. We have collaborated with it to help displaced children. We identify them, register them, get them a home and foot the bill for their up keep. We have already written to the Ministry on this. We would be grateful to receive funding for the establishment of a big skill acquisition centre to help create jobs for people, to empower displaced people, and to lessen the pressure on the church for assistance" (Interview, Participant 17).

As the response from the participant above shows, faith-based organisations do cultivate relationships with the state to provide some socio-economic initiatives. Although this is not in collaboration with every level of the government. As Davies et al (2011) argue, the state's response to faith-based organisations has depended on the state's perception on the threat these organisations pose to the national interests and on the state's legitimacy. They add that the states relationship with these organisations have fallen within the range of cooperation, competition and conflict, with cooperation occurring when these faith-based organisations are involved in areas such as education and health provision. This means that both formal and informal organisations have a very important role in the socio-economic development in Nigeria, which is also recognised by the state. And for them to carry these roles efficiently and be accountable to Nigerian citizens, they have to be externally and internally independent. From the respondent's statements, we can see that these organisations have been cooperating with the state to provide services that are community based. Although most of these organisations say they have relationships with the state, they also complain about the lack of enabling environment and restrictions in carrying out their activities:

> "The relationship is good but giving us more audience would improve it a lot. It is not really smooth-sailing when it comes to collaboration with government. Government sees CSOs as attack agents and so does not create the enabling environment for an established relationship. Again, since CSOs are on ground, they know specific needs of the people. So, government needs to create sufficient spaces for ideas for social project implementation to be picked up" (Interview, Participant 4).

Another participant also corroborates that though they have a good relationship, it is not always cordial although they would like the state to provide grants for organisations to carry out their activities:

> "As a member of the National Network for Procurement, we always interface with government. The relationship is good, it may not always be cordial. We are also involved

> in the bidding process as part of ensuring transparency in procurement. We also undertake policy engagement with government ministries, parastatals, and agencies. Government can also give us grants to implement our strategic plans" (Interview, Participant 16).

Similarly, another participant talks about the government restricting spaces through different organs of government and through laws:

> "We need the government to keep the space open for our operation rather than try to restrict NGOs from saying what they want to say. Several moves are made by the National Assembly to muscle NGOs, check their funding from abroad, and who the trustees are. My research on the operation of NGOs in West African shows that the regulation is strongest in Nigeria. There are many regulatory laws and government is bringing out more without even most of the NGOs being aware of all the laws. NGOs should not be seen as opposition. We represent the progressive minds of the citizens" (Interview, Participant 8).

As the USAID (2016) highlights, civil society organisations have continued to enjoy a favourable environment in Nigeria, as they are able to express criticism of the government openly. But they also add that in some states, the government has accused civil society organisations of support opposition political parties and at the national level some of these organisations have been harassed by the police for asking the federal government to account for some funds. Similarly, Firmin (2014) explain that sixty one percent of the civil society organisations that they surveyed see the Nigerian legal environment as moderately enabling, with eleven percent of these organisations reporting that they have been victims of illegitimate restrictions by the government. Furthermore, although there is recognition that the space for playing an oversight role has expanded since the country's return to democracy, is should be noted that to some extent this space has been externally defined and policed by donor organisations, which makes the situation potentially volatile. In addition, though the

collaboration with the state has grown, the relationship is poor, as the ‘government is accused of trying to shield information’ from civil society organisations in order to curtail their watchdog roles (Firmin, 2014, p.16). A participant addresses this issue of the state hiding information as they mention that the lack of transparency, corruption and restrictive practices by the government officials affect her organization's health programs. She calls for transparency in Nigerian society.

> "we are constrained by the lack of transparency in the activities of government. For instance, one finds it very difficult to get information from relevant institutions without being asked for bribes; government officials refuse to provide information that the civil society organizations need, such as figures or data for HIV infection. Also, leaders should be transparent in their dealings with the masses. So, lack of accountability, transparency, and poor ethical standards are the major challenges we face” (Interview, Participant 32).

From this, it can be inferred that although civil society in Nigeria is critical towards the state, they have a cordial relationship with the state in proving socio-economic services to communities. It also can be seen that they are weak at impacting state policies as a result of their dependence on donor funded programmes that make them accountable to these donor agencies, and the state who control the disbursement of donor funds and restrict these organisations activities.

5.1.2.2 Influencing state governance

For participants, civil society organisations influence state governance by carrying out some evidence-based research, which broadly impacts policies and the debates of policy makers. But what was also observed was that most of these organisations’ activities are concentrated on providing socio-economic services that have direct impact on Nigerian communities. These organisations impact on governance can be observed when a participant states that his

organisation is development orientated and creates spaces for issues and grievances to be discussed, as well as monitor the states policies:

> "We strengthen democratic issues within the region and Nigeria. Creating a platform for people to come in and share experience and learn beyond ourselves (peer learning). Bringing in people outside Africa to share experiences with us and how we can localise experiences of others. We are into development issues – how man can be described as developed, human aspiration for a sense of prestige (people aspiring to become what they want to be and live a good life) that is because you cannot separate development from security as core part of our work. This is related to conflict as part of human existence at individual, governmental and other levels and stages to as to create an enabling environment for democracy to thrive. We provide community need for government institutions and civil society organisation. We create platform for discussing burning issues in the country by engaging practical/theoretical experts. We create platform for people to air grievances and those to address them. We build confidence and trust between government and civil society. In terms of development, we track government policies and provide analysis to make them digestible by people about the situation in the country e.g. the implications, gaps in government policies, government success and weaknesses in what the government is doing" (Interview, Participant 6).

The participant also adds that civils society fights for accountability in governance in order to mitigate against issues such as banditry, cattle rustling, Boko Haram, porous borders, herdsmen/farmers conflicts and also political conflicts. The failure of governance on the part of the Nigerian state has hindered the provision of services by the state, radicalised people to violence and led to conflicts proliferating over time:

> "This country is embroiled in a multiplicity of crises now. We have food crisis, Boko Haram crisis, herdsmen are attacking everywhere, there is cattle rustling, there are community crises and clashes, which didn't just start happening. They are manifestations

of underlying factors. Other issues like IDP issues, refugee management issues to determine post conflict consequences, e.g. Nigeria has urgent security border issues with four other nations within the block of the MJTF with these countries intruding into Nigeria is moving away from conflict I doubt if we are we going to have neighbours who continually harass our people. Our borders are porous, people get into our communities from outside and kill our people. How is it possible that people attack the police without minding what happens to them? There is failure of governance and proliferation of small and light weapons. There is failure of governance and provision of facilities even to the hinterland. People in the interior parts lack police protection Social insecurity, poor governance, and poor management of state resources at different levels culminate in violence. This state of things radicalises the psyche of citizens and push them to violence, anger, anarchy. Government can learn to crack down on crime, violence in civil manner. Minor infractions that are not addressed converge to create grievances. How we respond to political disagreements matter a lot" (Interview, Participant 6).

Another participant states that they contribute to judicial reforms by working with the state's security institutions and disseminates relevant information that has impacted the government to change its policies on crime prevention:

"I think we have contributed a lot in developing a civil society template for justice sector reform. We worked with police on a project in violence against women working with National Endowment for Democracy (NED) on fostering civil-military relations. We feel we have impacted the community where we live. Our reports done in 2006 -2013 published the Crime – Victimisation Survey which was a perception on crimes that occur in Nigeria. The report was cited by government agencies" (Interview, Participant 8).

Another participant mentions that they conduct research and disseminating the results to policy makers in order to contribute to debate and impact decision makers is also important for another participant:

> "We conduct researches which are of public good and disseminate the outcomes to policy makers. These researches are policy-relevant and focus on pressing societal issues. Thus, we contribute to debates and discourses to guide decision/policy makers" (Interview, Participant 10).

Similarly, a participant adds that they engage in advocacy measures to influence government policies and decision making, while providing accurate data for such measures:

> "In the case of Nigeria, we need to ensure that resources are made available to effectively execute the interventions. We ensure better and improved data, and that there are participatory approaches to all programmes. We engage in advocacy efforts to achieve our aims and also provide technical assistance/support to the entire planning process and ensure that in all our strategic plans and annual plans developed at national or sub-national level, they are able to respond to what the critical issues are. Part of our responsibility is to also improve on the data quality in the country and that such data are used to improve decision-making. We also ensure that decision-makers and policy planners have sufficient data to guide their procedures" (Interview, Participant 31).

As stated already, although these organisations engage in some advocacy functions, their impact on policy making in Nigeria has been limited given that these civil society organisations have failed to develop effective strategies to mobilise citizens (Firmin, 2014). This also stems from these organisations responding to available funding from donors for services, which shifts their focus from advocacy to implementing large scale service delivery projects with little policy influence (Williamson and Rodd, 2016). Court et al (2006, p.8) explain that though the engagement in service delivery can have a direct pro-poor impact, effective engagement in government policy processes can lead to a broader innovative pro-poor impact, as it can 'identify new problems, develop new or better strategies, and make government implementation more effective'. A participant from a media organisation also mentions that with investigative journalism, they are able to contribute to and highlight important issues in Nigerian society such

as corruption. They also state that they also engage in services that train journalists to expose corrupt practices:

> "Over the years we have contributed to society through investigative journalism and Open Minds Projects. It helps equip journalists with skills to unearth corruption especially in the energy sector bringing to Nigerian what they ought to know. This gives room for robust citizen engagement/debate. With development, I can say that we have contributed to society. Through investigative journalism, forging civic-military relationship. We work for improved journalism practices as well as better understanding between the military and civilians" (Interview, Participant 18).

Because government officials don't follow the rule of law, transparency in governance tends to be eroded. But implementing initiatives that aim to improve transparency in governance will lead to more accountability on the part of the state:

> "there are no checks and balances or the resolve to allow Nigeria's beautiful laws to reign. By implementing the FOI Act (Freedom of Information) and the NEITI (Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiatives), a lot of things will go well. These laws make room for transparency, accountability, honesty, etc. With them, there should be no issues of ghost workers, inflation of overhead, non-declaration of assets, etc" (Interview, Participant 18).

Corruption is eating through the entire fabric of Nigerian society and causing unwarranted conflicts. Therefore, fighting the menace through the rule of law would help with addressing the problem:

> "Tackling corruption is key. If rifts through the entire fabric of Nigeria – business, government, schools, etc. Driving it down in one fell swoop is not possible – strict application of the rule of law – with no place for sacred cows – will do Nigeria good. Take the Niger Delta militancy – it has roots in perceived corruption and injustice. So, once corruption is dealt with, Nigeria might straighten out" (Interview, Participant 24).

Corruption has also stunted development in Nigeria. Issues of resource control needs to be addressed. But politicians rather than resolving these problems have concentrated on increasing their salaries and pensions to the detriment of the Nigerian society:

> "Again, the issues of corruption, selfishness, greed which are pervasive have stymied development in Nigeria. The use of population as the yardstick for resource allocation has created room for corruption of the demographic processes. This leads to the question of resource control. Our organisation believes that these matters ought to be addressed. Unfortunately, rather than address themselves to these issues, our law makers concentrate on fattening their emoluments and scheming to provide life pensions for themselves" (Interview, Participant 24).

By imbibing cultural values which seem to have been lost, it is hoped by a participant that the country would be able to stem the tide of corruption in governance:

> "Nigeria has a good Constitution, beautiful sets of policies and programmes. But the development challenge is the status of implementation of these policies. There is the issue of corruption which is the reason for the non-implementation of policies. The entrenchment of cultural values is also critical to development. This also would help fight corruption. We should look at ways of modernising our culture rather than imbibe foreign cultures to the detriment of our development" (Interview, Participant 11).

It can be seen here that these organisations engage in activities that aim to fight corruption, as some of them carryout out investigations to expose and make the government transparent, while others engage in programs that aim to equip Nigerians with the skills to combat corruption. However, in practice, these organisations and in particular the media find it difficult to impact policy as they focus on sensationalising news coverages, which has the effect of detracting from the developmental effects of corruption in Nigeria (SOAS, 2019). Furthermore, the combination of hype and interested party agenda setting has led to a fatigue in anti-corruption reportage and taken attention away from key issues of accountability. Similarly, Abba-Aji et al (2019)

referring to newspaper reports on corruption in the Nigerian health sector, explains that corruption is framed as a political issue, as coverage is episodic and focused on the details of the particular case without looking at the underlying causes. For Tonwe and Oarhe (2015) civil society through policy analysis and advocacy, regulation and monitoring the state, civic norms and mobilisation of popular participation in public life can promote effective corruption management in Nigeria.

A participant whose organisations focuses on peacebuilding also states that they carryout research that aim to mitigate conflicts and also carryout advocacy that aim to influence policy making. They engage state institutions on issue of conflict management and de-radicalisation:

> "We ensure that all researches cut across our output areas. We commission, coordinate, and validate research findings and ensure that stakeholders use our research in policy making aimed at mitigating violent conflict. We contribute to society through our programme streams such as security and governance, economic resources, women and girl's involvement in conflict and peace building and lastly using research media and advocacy in mitigating violent conflict. We also influence policy and practice – influencing decision making through empirical research/data for peace building and stabilisation in Nigeria. At the federal level, we engaged with the office of the National Security Adviser, Human Rights Commission, Institute for Peace; Defence Ministry, NOA, Police, Civil Defence that play key role in peace – we contributed to the drafting of the first Consultative National Security Strategy including food security. Another contribution is our research on radicalisation, de-radicalisation and counter radicalisation based on the insurgency in the North which findings were used to design counter extremism measures - the research was conducted by Oxford University Research Network. So, our role is non-violent management of conflict to reduce incidence of death, destruction. We contribute to debate using media platforms, to help in building

peace" (Interview, Participant 21).

The participant further adds that her organisation works with government agencies to create jobs and empower youths in regions such as the Niger-Delta. They do push the state to do this in an accountable manner that dispels grievances and social exclusion:

> "Because we have been able to contain our conflict within our borders, it has not assumed the international dimension. We have experienced bouts of conflicts, insurrection and insurgency in such a way that a post conflict situation hardly arises because there has not been a total breakdown of law and order. Take the Niger Delta violent eruption with all its political nuances leading up to Amnesty Programme itself a conflict management strategy. But when the Niger Delta militancy hibernated, it was not gone but bubbling under the surface. We didn't see it as a post conflict reconciliation. It was palliative. Many thoughts that the stability noticed is the Niger Delta was a "political" stability. We are not as a country confronting the issue of post-conflict reconstruction in the Niger Delta. We work with government agencies, and departments that distribute opportunities for employment and empowerment in ways that are transparent, accountable and fair. This is necessary to dispel grievances, marginalisation and social exclusion" (Interview, Participant 21).

These statements by these participants explain that some of these civil society organisations are involved in advocacy roles through research on peacebuilding, while the bulk of these organisations are fully engaged in socio-economicservices which aim to mitigate conflicts in Nigeria. As the ONSA (2017) states, with the threat of extremism civil society has been involved in addressing socio-economic 'push and pull' factors such as education, health, religion, peacebuilding, and career development, while stating that they aim to continue their partnership to address 'grievances, strengthen governance, empower our youths, women and girls, and create platforms for conflict resolution' (p.21). But these organisations are considered to be more focused on providing services, as their involvement in policy advocacy is low stemming from local community actors being overlooked in policy design and practice (Okenyodo, 2020; Mahdi,

2020). However, as mentioned some organisations are observed to be mostly focused on providing services as farmers are also assisted in getting agriculture grants:

> "On governance, in 2011 we started assisting farmers to access Agric grants through a proposal we had written. FADAMA is a world bank-funded agriculture programme involving counterpart funding from local, state, and federal government. We were able to advocate for farmers in a certain local government whose chairperson did not pay a counterpart fund of 2 million naira to access 20 million naira to benefiting say 2000 persons in the LGA" (Interview, Participant 3).

In addition, some other organisations mention that they aim to make the state more transparent in their decision-making process by engaging in anti-corruption initiatives exposing corrupt practises and making the state work for its citizens:

> "Our vision is to promote good conduct, transparency, integrity and accountability in the public life of Nigeria. We have annual, short term and long-term goals. Our long-term goal is to reach 10 million Nigerians with anticorruption activities and address some unethical practices and to restore of sustainable development in Nigeria. Currently, because the Nigerian nation depends solely on oil, there is need to diversify i.e. think beyond oil. We should think industrialisation. We should move from a civil service country, to an entrepreneurial one that provides jobs and is technologically-driven" (Interview, Participant 1).

By training people, it is the hope that they will be able to participate in governance and the government can be more accountable to Nigerian citizens. Also, inclusive governance allows for accountable and transparent leadership to emerge:

> "Our goal is to train people to fend for themselves as well as take part in governance process or their community, state and national levels. Therefore, when there is a better participation where people's opinion count, we will have a better quality of the governance system and people will be able to hold government accountable. The

> agitators we have today is as a result of people's yearning to be part of the process and to be able to hold their government accountable. Inclusive governance, review of electoral processes that will ensure accountability of elected office holders as well as ensure that the will of the people is done. Good leadership translates to productive economy because the right people with the relevant capacity will create policies that will move the country forward" (Interview, Participant 29).

By reorientation people to democratic values and changing their behaviours, it is believed that civil society can help with issues of insecurity and transparency in governance. This is the as a participant mentions that their organisation has engaged in programs that have reoriented people away from carrying out terrorist acts. He also states that the political party of the Nigerian president, the All Progressives Congress (APC) should not shy away from its campaign promises, but rather they should fulfil the promises they made to Nigerians:

> "We have also contributed through legislative accountability, and attitudinal reorientation. We also have a programme, Youth against Terrorism. There are our contributions. Power supply is vital. Everything is related to it – cost of living, cost of goods, living conditions, etc. If we had stable power supply, the small and medium scale entrepreneurs and businesses would flourish and contribute to the revival of the economy. Barbers, artisans, cyber cafes, etc; are groaning because of the state of power supply. This increases their running cost. Political stakeholders should do what they promised during electioneering campaigns. It was wrong for President Muhamadu Buhari to disown campaign promises purportedly made by the APC, when he was the standard flag bearer" (Interview, Participant 15).

Therefore, it can be stated that these different evidences from the respondents highlight that some of these organisations engage in evidence-based policy making activities, but Firmin (2014), Williamson and Rodd (2016) and Court et al (2006) argue that their impact on policy is low and limited because these organisations focus more on donor funded programmes for the

provision of socio-economic services. The respondents also explained that they prioritise activities that aim to expose and fight corruption in the country. However, SOAS (2019) and Abba-Aji et al (2019) differ in that they believe these organisations don't impact policy on corruption rather, exposing corruption detracts from the fundamental root causes that allow it to strive in Nigeria. Similarly, some organisations explained that they impact policy decisions on peacebuilding, but Okundayo (2020) and Mahdi (2020) explain that these organisations are more involved in providing peacebuilding services as their impact on peacebuilding policy is low because they are not considered to be important players in policy design and practice.

5.2 Discussion on how effective civil society actors are

Regarding the question who is civil society, the research findings identified that civil society in Nigeria consists of associations that are restricted community organisations, are partially independent and carry out non-specific multipurpose functions in Nigerian communities. Based on the findings, civil society is made up of formal and informal organisations such as faith-based organisations, community-based organisations, NGOs, trade organisations, professional and traditional organisations. As literature explains, these findings are similar in that it allows for informal groups with formal structures that permit specific civic interests and agrees to act within rules of a civil nature, eschews violence and conveys mutual respect and pluralism (Diamond, 1994; Orji, 2009), but it excludes those with informal structures which contrasts to the findings. As the research findings show, though most of the organisations who participated in the research are formal organisations with formal structures, the faith-based organisations in the findings mention that they are the development are of parochial religious organisations, which cater for communities both spiritually and physically. As Omede and Bakare (2014) point out, religious organisations represent parochial society, but when they engage in public ends to fight poverty or improve educational institutions in the community, they are participating as civil society organisations. Therefore, these faith-based organisations in the findings represents both parochial

and civil society because they participate in public efforts to mitigate socio-economic and political problems, as well as carry out private roles to enhance people's spirituality.

In Africa and especially Nigeria, these informal organisations and in this sense, these faith-based organisations should have strong roots and social bonds to the society and the government they are looking to reform given that they must meet multiple organisational and societal criteria's so as to represent the social interests of people in this context (Kasfir, 2008). Since Africans consider the primordial public realm as more significant than formally organised civil society organisations, these informal organisations are viewed as playing important functions of aggregation and representation of their interest (Sotiropoulos,2004). In this understanding, the aim of both civil and non-civil associations is to carry out functions which influence the activities of both the economy and state, and not to gain political power (Young, 2002). They make a space for debate on development, allowing citizens to participate to influence and control the state and markets to improve their general wellbeing (Orji, 2009). They carry out not only civic associative functions but also private and political associative functions.

Therefore, the faith-based organisations in the findings represents both parochial and civil society because they participate in public efforts to mitigate socio-economic and political problems, as well as carry out private roles to enhance people's spirituality. This is similar to Onimisi et al (2017) and ONSA (2017) who mention that civil society involves both formal an informal association with both formal and informal structures, who aims to impact its members and the generality of the Nigerian population. Additionally, it is recognized that political activity in developing country's take place according to informal norms and systems which are embedded in socio-cultural institutions, norms and standards (Scott and McLaughlin, 2014).

The findings also acknowledge that these formal civil society organisations in Nigeria are partially independent from the state and other external actors such as donors, in that they are in

control of their internal activities and processes but are highly dependent on the state and donors to carry out their initiatives to Nigerian communities. This position aligns with broader literature in that individuals in formal organisations appeal and negotiate with the centres of political and economic authority publicly in the global arena, since they don't place emphasis on the state being the key driver for the delivery of essential social services (Kaldor, 2003). This is similar to Williamson and Todd (2016), who explain that these formal organisations are apolitical and more focused on their service delivery roles. But it is also observed that these formal organisations funds from donors are managed by the state who act as intermediaries between these donors and these formal civil society organisations (USAID, 2008).

However, the findings also show that some organisations especially the small group of faith-based organisations that were spoken to are much more independent and don't depend on donors as they finance their own activities and raise money from members' dues but have relationships with the state. As stated, the registration of civil society organizations with the Nigerian government is in line with Diamond's (1994) observation that organizations within civil society should operate by some shared rules, that eschews violence and abides by the civil dimension. This aligns with this ideas of African civil society scholars, who emphasis that individuals collectively organise themselves in groups in order to attain self-determination and self-development through the states regulatory capacity in the market economy. These groups create a space to debate socio-political and economic development, giving people the ability to influence and control the state and the markets by carrying out civic, private and political functions (Orji, 2009). Davies et al and Olarinmoye (2012) concur with this position as they argue that faith-based organisations have more autonomy and independence from the state than formal civil society organisations.

The findings show that civil society's relationship with the state is characterised by these organisations being critical of the state actions/ inactions, though they don't challenge or oppose the state, but the state is suspicious of the organisation's agenda. Regardless these organisations

collaborate with the state because they are dependent on them to carry out their initiatives. The findings show that they collaborate with the state on health, education, democracy, governance and conflicts management. However, the Nigerian government remains suspicious of these organisations as they refuse to give civil society the space to implement their initiatives. This contrasts with literature that civil society constitutes the vehicle for the delivery of social services in the globalised world and challenges the state, which has a reduced role (Kaldor, 2009).

Rather, civil society here is understood to be in a communicative intertwining relationship with the state and markets not to challenge the state but to advocate and carry out functions that changes the way the state is run. This can be seen in the functions these mostly formal and few informal organisations play in Nigerian society. These formal organisations carry out civil public functions that cater to the material needs of the society, while informal organisations such as faith-based organisations focus on both the material and spiritual (private) needs of Nigerians. As Ekeh (1975) points out, in Africa there is no distinction between the public and private realms given that they both have generalised morality compared to their distinction in western contexts. He adds, that political actors in the primordial public can operate in the civic public, carrying out the same functions since these two publics have a dialectical relationship. Therefore, this means that associations such as faith-based organisations and other civic organisations have an important role to play in the socio-economic and political development of Nigeria. USAID (2016), ONSA (2019), Davies et al (2011) and Olarinmoye (2012) all agree with the view that civil society organisations in Nigeria do partner and collaborate with the state to influence socio-economic interests.

However, Firmin (2014), Williamson and Rodd (2016) and Court et al (2006) explain that the effectiveness of these organisations is limited because they are not carrying out direct services rather than a broad impacting on social policy which will help with the development of the country. Therefore, we can see that although civil society's relationship with the state is quite negative and extractive showing an unequal relationship that causes resentment, these

organisations are still comfortable working with the state because they are dependent on the state for a conducive environment to work in and support their initiatives. They are also uncritical with the problems of Nigeria, as they don't have any new innovative ideas on how to fix the country's problems.

5.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings show that civil society is made up of semi-independent community organisations, who are internally independent to some extent but are externally influenced by the actions of the state, donors and local stakeholders. This creates issues as to whom these organisations are accountable to. However, with the small sample of informal organisations in this thesis such as faith-based organisations, it is observed that they are much more independent than their formal counterparts, as they don't depend on donors for funding, but carry out initiatives with the dues they receive from their members. It also shows that these organisations have non-specialised objectives and functions which they carryout in Nigerian communities. It was also observed that organisations in civil society include both formal and informal organisations that carry out civil functions in order to impact Nigerian society socio-economically.

The differences show that formal organisations in the data are thought to provide for the material needs of citizens, while the faith-based organisations provide both material and spiritual needs. These functions of the informal organisations such as the faith-based organisations emphasises the dialectical relationship between the public and the private sphere as understood in Nigeria, rather than their distinction as is known in western contexts (Ekeh, 1975). The chapter also established that the relationship between civil society and the state, though they work in an environment where the state is suspicious of their activities, they are critical of the state without opposing the state. Furthermore, they collaborate with the state to provide socio-economic services to Nigerian citizens and play a limited role in influencing the policies of the state. The next chapter, will show that the causes of conflicts in Nigeria are social-economic and cultural, with organisations carrying out some direct roles and mostly in-direct roles in order to mitigating these various structural and cultural conflicts. The

chapter will also show that challenges these organisations face in the long-run boarder around their lack of capacity and access to information that will enable them impact the policies of the state.

Chapter 6: Analysis of civil society's role in conflict resolution.

6.1 Qualitative Thematic Analysis, Findings and Discussions

The last chapter analysed data from participants who gave answers to the questions 'Who is and isn't part of Nigerian civil society', and 'How effective are these civil actors and do they fit into existing models of civil society literature' This chapter is a continuation of the research analysis and will analyse the research questions 'to what extent can non-state actors foster and facilitate peace in conflict-ravaged communities in Nigeria' and 'what are the long-term effects/ impacts as well as challenges to peace peacebuilding initiatives being employed in Nigeria'. The organisations in this analysis mostly focus on indirect conflict resolutions roles with a few of them carrying out direct conflict resolutions roles. In chapter 3, we can see that civil society organisations in Nigeria are managing the impacts of the Niger-Delta militancy, the Boko Haram insurgency, and the Herdsmen and Pastoralists clashes by concentrating on indirect conflict resolutions roles although some of these organisations do carry out direct roles which they hope will mitigate against structural factors that lead to violence.

The chapter will explain that the causes of conflict in Nigeria are social, economic, and political in nature, and that is why most of the organisation's carry out both direct and indirect roles in resolving conflicts. The chapter will also show that though civil society organisations are involved in some direct conflict resolution roles, the majority of the organisations are involved in indirect socio-economic roles which they hope will mitigate against structural violence in Nigeria. In answering the question, the themes mitigate against socio-economic conflicts and complement, and change governance were generated after reviewing and transcribing the data for the research question to be analysed in this chapter. As for the long-term impacts these organisations face in peacebuilding, their lack of access and capacity to impact state policy are some of the challenges

these organisations face in carrying out peacebuilding initiatives. Next, these questions will be presented in a discussion, that will look to compare the analysed findings with the literature on civil society, regarding its roles in conflict and the limitations to it playing those roles.

6.1.1 Mitigate against socio-economic conflicts

To answer the research question 'to what extent can non-state actors foster and facilitate peace in conflict-ravaged communities in Nigeria and what are the long-term effects/ impacts as well as challenges to peace peacebuilding initiatives being employed in Nigeria', participants during the interviews mentioned various issues, which featured prominently in the data. The first theme that emerged was that these organisations are looking to directly mitigate against socio-economic conflicts, as it is identified that the main source of conflicts are associated with the nature of the state which gives rise to structural violence, owing to its weakness and inability to cater to the needs and interests of its citizens. The data referred to topics such as ethnicity, natural resources, religion, traditional and religious leaders, community cohesion, de-radicalization, early warning signals and mediation. These are related to the drivers of conflicts in Nigeria and the direct roles that civil society organisations play in mitigating these conflicts.

6.1.1.1 Socio-economic sources of conflicts

The researcher asked participants what they think are the sources of conflicts in Nigeria. Their responses show that the causes of conflicts in Nigeria stem from a variety of sources such as ethnicity, tribalism, religion, citizenship, natural resources, culture and issues related to governance. As mentioned by a participant, the sources of conflicts in Nigeria are related to religion, ethnicity, and tribalism especially in political offices as they give preference to people from their tribe or religion which further incites violence:

> "Ethnocentrism is the main cause of conflict. Tribalism is rife. People are voted into power but on assumption of office, they only act in ways favourable to their ethnic or

> tribal group. Nigerians tend to even join political parties if they are formed and promoted by their tribesmen and women. Religion also plays a big role in conflict. Along with politics, adherents use their religion for political ends to benefit their fellow worshippers" (Interview, participant 15).

As well, a participant also points to the sources of conflict being ethno-religious communal boundary disputes, political disputes, tribal and religious disputes. They also state that there needs to be some regular form of awareness so that people can be knowledgeable about conflicts and change their attitudes so as to mitigate against these conflicts:

> "Some are communal, others are tribal such as the Fulani herdsmen crisis, and the Boko Haram issue which is religious. Boundary disputes are other causes in places like Itu, Ika, etc. Leadership tussles too bring conflict. Regular sensitisation is necessary to reduce these conflicts. Advocacy visits are critical too to the solution" (Interview, participant 9).

The ONSA (2017) mention that there are push and pull factors that can lead to participation of support for violent extremism in Nigeria. It adds that push factors which are structural conditions that make an environment more conducive to violent extremism such as 'unemployment, poverty, inequality, social exclusion, health' and other socio-economic factors and the role of governance (p.5). Furthermore, pull factors are those that facilitate mobilisation of individuals and groups to extreme positions and ideologies such as the existence of grievance, belonging to a group with a charismatic leader and the tendency for simplified answers to complex issues. Additionally, for the Boko Haram conflict, financial/material benefit, promise of marriage, conscriptions are also some of the factors that has helped the group grows. The input of civil society organisations and local community leaders is seen as vital towards mitigating these interrelated resource, religious, political and ethnic conflicts:

> "We should harness the efforts of civil societies, religious leaders, community leaders

> towards managing conflict, ignorance, greed, power drunk people and fight over the control of resources are potential causes of conflict. Religious-driven conflict; political conflicts where some dominate power and some are marginalised, partial electoral processes can generate conflict, tribal conflicts from tribal affinity as well as cultural dominance. These conflicts may not necessarily be violent. Religious conflicts, political conflicts and cultural conflicts are interrelated" (Interview, participant 31).

Another participant mentions that there are various insecurity issues which stem from citizenship, scarce resource/climate change as well as religious and political disagreements. Similarly, they think they believe these conflicts can be resolved by religious, traditional and community leaders who can help mitigate these ethno-religious conflicts between the conflicting parties:

> "There are pockets of isolated security issues but these are at the heart of the problems - rural banditry, farmer- herdsmen clashes, kidnappings. The issue of indigenes and non-indigenes. Another one is the limited resource. Also, because of climate change, people have moved from one place to another in search of scare resources. These are bound to cause conflict. Religions as well as the ordinate pursuit for power also cause conflict. How can we resolve conflict? Religious leaders, traditional rulers and personalities in the communities are individuals who can help play the role of dialoguing, to bring down ethnic and religious conflicts" (Interview, participant 8).

The Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (2019) highlights that the Nigerian government must address the root causes of conflicts through socio-economic initiatives and political reforms and also work with local civil society organisations to ameliorate these long-standing grievances. The government has also pointed out that it collaborates with community leaders, faith-based organisations, civil society organisations and the media (ONSA,2017). Particularly, the governments countering violent extremism programme involves the three levels

of government (federal, state and local governments), civil society organisations, academics, traditional, religious and community leaders (Koser and Thorp, 2015). A participant explains that democracy might be a solution in mitigate the conflicts in Nigeria. But he also blames democracy for the ethno-religious problems the country is facing especially looking back at the colonial history of the nation. He also mentions how the country's structural problems have created the new wave of insecurity problems being faced presently:

> "The answer is not simple but complex. It is best to diagnose the problem to be able to proffer solutions. Democracy is one big thing that can help address conflict, but democracy also throws up its own issues dating back to the Amalgamation of Nigeria. Ethnic, religious, tribal differences create conflict. The structural defects prevalent in the country may have been responsible for cases of terrorism, kidnapping, militancy, insurgency and all sorts. Another thing is to recognise our differences and turning them into our strength. There is power in diversity which can become an advantage" (Interview, participant 20).

Poverty, corruption and discrimination in governance, boundary disputes, religion and the disregards for cultural values are some of the causes of conflicts by a participant. This is as they believe that the actions of the state's institutions have also contributed to these conflicts exacerbating:

> "Disregard for cultural values is a major source of conflict. Disregard for ancient boundaries also brings about communal clashes. Religion also causes conflict and what is worrisome is that when we fight religious wars, they are not over our traditional religion but the two foreign religions. National agencies and institutions such as NDDC (Niger Delta Development Commission) and the Police also cause conflict through unfair treatment and lopsided distribution of government services. Poverty is also a very strong cause of conflict. Scarcity of resources sparks want, unemployment, etc" (Interview, participant 11).

Participants have mentioned the impact of religion in exacerbating conflicts in Nigeria. It should be understood that many conflicts in Nigeria occur along the country's religious and ethnic fault lines, as the secular state involves itself sometimes with religious issues, therefore giving the impression that it is biased towards certain ethno-religious constituencies (Gebremicheal et al, 2018). The politicisation of these issues by the government make it very difficult for ethno-religious problems to be resolved amicably. As Club de Madrid (2017) mention apart from religious tensions, the drivers of conflicts in Nigeria also include corruption, poverty, unemployment, inequality in resource distribution, illiteracy, grievances and the inefficient formal judicial systems. Also, it states that Boko Haram was borne out of the disillusion Nigerians feel socially, economically and politically as they are marginalised by the government, which is too weak to provide services and fulfil its role as the central authority. Koser and Thorp (2015) also add that any response to and issues such as extremism must take into consideration long-term and holistic measures that aim to address its root causes. As well, they mention that the responses must address structural societal defects that create youth unemployment, illiteracy, poverty, lack of opportunities for youths, political and social marginalisation and social security. These issues have led to many security issues such as terrorism, armed banditry, kidnapping, militancy, pastoralists and Farmers conflicts, transnational organised crime, piracy, porous borders, environmental threats, socio-political threats and cybercrimes (ONSA, 2019).

Therefore, we can see that conflicts in Nigeria are said to stem from a variety of structural factors. Although some participants mention and discuss issues around ethnicity and religion being the sources of conflict, it is observed that the key drivers of conflicts that have exacerbated religious and ethnic tensions in the country are structural injustices and inequalities. Canci and Odukoya (2016) explain that accusations of neglect, oppression and domination are the key drivers that fuel ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria. As well, Olarewaju et al (2017) mention

that these cultural value differences and divisive characteristics in Nigeria has resulted in the disunity of the country. Galtung (1990) in his broadening of violence states that cultural violence is aspects of culture that can be used to justify or legitimise direct or structural violence. This means that social injustice in Nigeria has given room for culture and ideology to be used to justify violent ethno-religious conflicts.

6.1.1.2 Prevent structural violence

For participants, civil society organisations embark on some direct roles in preventing conflicts as they aim to build social bonds between conflicting parties, change the values of Nigerian citizens, provide early warning signals, and mediate in conflicts. This theme shows that participants are engaged in direct roles that aim to reduce direct violence and hope to tackle the obstacles that exacerbate structural violence in Nigeria. A participant states that his organisation builds community cohesion by engaging in donor funded development orientated projects that involve the communities and also helps to build their capacity. They also believe that engaging stakeholders would help bring about sustainable peace:

> "We have implemented some development-oriented interventions. In 2011 we were engaged by the European Union to facilitate community mobilisation component of European Union micro-project programme in Akwa Ibom State to bring communities/Local Government Areas together to plan development in a sustainable manner. So, we have facilitated a five years community development plan and identified priority development project of the communities and fostered peaceful co-existence with the communities. We participate in capacity building, in peace-building and conflict management and social bonding. We see water as a promoter of peace and we encourage communities to contribute 5% and be actively involved in water maintenance schemes. One of the possible ways of resolving these conflicts is that we need to continuously engage stakeholders sustainably" (Interview, participant 1).

A participant who works for a peacebuilding organisation mentions that her organisation has

taken on softer approaches to post-conflict reconstruction, leaving the other approaches to the government and donor agencies as they work on rehabilitation, disarmament, training, transitional justice, reconciliation and social cohesion services especially in northeast Nigeria:

> "What we have as something close to reconstruction is in the Northeast where the insurgency took a more serious dimension with communities sacked, markets destroyed, people displaced widely. Now that the war is being won militarily, we are beginning to reconstruct where we are dealing with rehabilitation, disarmament, reconstruction, and continuous peace building. Our reconstruction takes softer approach. The hardware reconstruction would be left to the big players - government, United Nations, World Bank, Victim Support Fund, Presidential Committee on the North East, etc. to do the infrastructural (hardware) reconstruction. We also build community resilience, community awareness and vigilance (Know You Neighbour Project). We also help people regain means of livelihood in the aftermath of insurgency in the form of micro-trading, bakery, confectionery training. We are also researching on helping communities to deal with the past and build trust within communities based on justice, reconciliation and healing. We have brazed the trail in the use of these models. They have worked and are ready for replication, scaling up and wider application to bring about social cohesion, peace and stability" (Interview, participant 21).

Transitional justice is another bottoms-up approach that is recognised as important in preventing conflicts by a participant, as it involves Nigerian citizens in deciding ways they would want to deal with grievances. Therefore, this participant believes the state should be able to create reintegration policies that involves Nigerian citizens:

> "We also have an engagement with transitional justice – rather than top-bottom approach, government should ask people how they want to be rehabilitated and their conditions for accepting former combatants, etc. So transitional justice creates the enabling ground for people to get the respite in society and settle their grievances" (Interview, participant 6).

International Alert (2019) in its final evaluation report of its social cohesion program, states that they have organised activities at various levels to reduce stigma against women and children into society ate the individual, family and community levels. This has brought about reconciliation and healing, as well as increased the self-confidence and self-esteem of women and girls who have been associated with boko haram. It has also allowed them to build support networks with other women like them and has enabled them to source income, which helps them improve interactions with family and community members. But reconciliation is a long-term on-going process, which is challenged by the ongoing violence, and the context of widespread poverty in Nigeria (International Alert, 2019). Furthermore, sustaining such processes will involve building the capacity of community leaders, traditional and religious leaders, the support networks of these girls and women and using religious teachings to reach out to these people. As Cox et al (2014) argue, women in Nigeria have an important role to play and will act in reducing conflict in the country. However, they add that this role is hindered by discriminatory social norms and gender-based violence, which creates obstacles to their participation. This structurally induced violence embedded within Nigerian socio-cultural norms defines what constitutes abuse of women in both domestic and public contexts in the country especially as a third of women have reported that they have been subjected to some form of violence (British Council, 2012). Apart from building societal bonds and cohesion in communities, participants also stated that civil society also play roles in changing the behaviours and values of Nigerian citizens. A participant mentions that his organisation focuses on projects that help to change the behaviours of youths for the better by making them think positively:

> "We focus on youths and we do that in a programme called "Catch Them Young" – we train young people to think positively, and to focus deliberately on useful aspects of life. We also train them to steer away from conflict and violence. We pay attention to children and youths, work on their minds and get them to know that several options are open to achieve things in life" (Interview, participant 2).

Similarly, another participant mentions that his organisations has carried out projects to de-

radicalise youths from violence and extremism in northern states of Nigeria. They hope this will help them expand their reach in deradicalizing in other northern states:

> "the Open Minds Project allows us to work with youths to prevent them from being radicalised, and discouraging violent extremism. We ran this project in Kano, Bauchi, and Abuja, representing the three zones in the North. Here we work with youths 10 to 19 years old. You know these are formative yours which could be influenced. We use tools like critical thinking, skill acquisition and civic education to catch them young and extricate them probably from the strangle hold of religious fundamentalists. We hope that if we record successes in these three areas, we can then learn enough to move from the pilot areas to the hot bed which is Borno, and Yobe State" (Interview, participant 18).

Some organisations fund deradicalization programs in order to counter extremist's ideology's and negative attitudes. As well, they also carry out capacity building and training for youths so as to reduce violent conflicts:

> "We continue to give funds into de-radicalisation, countering radical narratives. The reason for violence is attitudinal. So attitudinal change is important for conflict reduction perception, behaviours are vital too. The use of softer approaches to violent conflict resolution namely influencing behavioural change, de-radicalisation, facilitating counter narrative to violence, effecting political management, restructuring of political organisations, capacity building/training platforms organising youth networks" (Interview, participant 21).

The need to counter narratives stems from the understanding that reducing ideological conflicts such as the Boko Haram insurgency to just structural issues like poverty, lack of education and social marginalisation obscures the role played by factors such as extremists' ideology (Olojo, 2013). This is because the Boko Haram conflict is considered to be borne out of frustration with the changing dynamic in the generational social order, which perpetuates structural and cultural violence (Joy, 2015). In addition, because of the democratic transformative processes taking

place in Nigeria, the beneficiaries of this structural and cultural violence feel that their patriarchal privileges are being taken away therefore, they rebel against the new systems and look to preserve their culture. As another participant highlights, civil society organisations should move away from concentrating on only physical projects but should be promoting projects that deal with post-traumatic stress and psychological disorders:

> "Another problem is the tendency to concentrate on physical projects rather than psychosocial ones. We have been trying to promote this paradigm shift for a while now. For people emerging from post-traumatic conflict, there is a big need for emotional support to help them come out of psychological disorders" (Interview, participant 4).

Deradicalization in its common form is understood to be the cessation or abandonment of radical ideology or a change in attitudes that are deemed to be conducive to terrorist's behaviour (Taylor, 20012; Clubb and Tapley, 2018). However, this definition is believed to have complicated the concept as it ignores other components such as the gradual moderation of beliefs and the de-legitimation of violence (Clubb and Tapley, 2018). The term should be understood in the context of Nigeria as 'a complex process of wide attitudinal change which by definition of being a process constitutes de-radicalisation regardless of whether or not it has reached its end state of ideological abandonment' (Clubb and Tapley, 2018, p.). The ONSA (2017) explains that the Nigerian government partners with women groups, community leaders, faith-based organisations and the media to implement Nigeria's national counter-terrorism strategy. The government collaborates with these different organisations to deradicalizing and reintegrating convicted violent offenders into society by focusing on religious education (Koser and Thorp, 2015). Furthermore, they raise public awareness by promoting counter-narratives, focus on community engagement and education-based projects to stem the flow of recruits and reduce vulnerability to radicalisation and providing psychological intervention to help with post-traumatic stress disorders. Similarly, Barkindo and Bryans (2016) state that de-radicalisation intervention programmes embarked on for prisoners in Nigeria include motivational interviewing (to build trust and lay the foundation for de-radicalisation), vocational training and

work experience (to gain skills for employment and financial empowerment), education and cultural activities (to help understand social and economic factors that contribute to their disillusionment), therapeutic, religious, and psychological and counselling interventions. In addition, this de-radicalisation program is understood to be having a positive impact on the prisoners, the staff and management of the prison, as the prisoners are now entering into positive dialogue and responding constructively. These interventions are thought to be providing opportunities to develop alternative ways to meet their needs. The real test would be what happens when the prisoners leaves the prison. As Koser and Thorp (2015) explain, it is still too early to access the overall contribution of this program to achieving national peace and stability, given that the strategies are still focused on the Boko haram insurgency. They add that, though the program is still at its infancy stage, its foundation is built on the needs that have risen from the issue of extremism.

Some organisations also provide early warning signs by trying to understand the conditions in the conflict affected areas and as well as assessing the conflicts and other countries in which the Boko haram insurgency is ravaging:

> "In terms of post-conflict reconstruction, we use that for engagement to harvest the issues of post-conflict – the foundation of conflict, condition's on ground, using our tracker to assess extremist conflicts in Mali, Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Burkina Faso" (Interview, participant 6).

Early warning signs are also given by some organisations to warn refugees and IDPs about impending violence:

> "We use our contacts to ease up violence/crisis/conflict in the communities especially during elections. We also give early warning signals to help stem the refugees/internally displaced person's conflict" (Interview, participant 20).

For a peacebuilding organisation, they map conflict areas in collaboration with state agencies in the north, central and southern Nigeria in order to ease conflicts and aid decision making:

> "we have done several interventions directly or with partners to see that conflict is

reduced to the barest minimum. We do mapping of conflict prone areas such as the insurgency in the North, Niger Delta militancy and the ethno-cultural conflict in the Middle Belt. This helps in tracking, early warning and early response to douse tension. Here we do analysis, review trends and pick up early warning signs for action taking" (Interview, participant 21).

Nextier SPD (2020) maintain that early warning mechanism have proven to be useful, as the social media and other technology platforms have been used to gather and disseminate local intelligence among stakeholders and predicting insurgency attacks. They also add that this has also led to the collaboration between the government and other non-state actors which has resulted in a humanitarian response plan that helped unlock support for people impacted by conflict. Other organisations state that they are involved in mediation activities as they bring people who understand the conflicts and the contexts to help negotiate peace between warring parties:

"This deals with my field diary – we manage conflict by bringing in people who understand conflict, people who try to curb the conflict, people who provide the context of the conflict and these influence how the conflict is managed and provide a platform for people in conflict to network and for Expertise and experience to be shared to prevent escalation of the conflict or negotiating dialogue an all the options for the resolution of the conflict. These also fall within the confines of development. How we manage little misunderstanding in society is critical" (Interview, participant 6).

Another participant explains that his organisation has been involved in mediating between oil bearing communities and multinational oil producing companies in 5 states in the Niger-delta region. The facilitated peace by negotiating between the company and the communities:

"This we have done in the form of helping to shore up programmes. We have worked with Chevron for about five years to manage its relationship with host communities in five States of the Niger Delta. This involved community clusters that considered historical linkages, local government (geographical location), ethnic affiliation. So, we

> facilitated the negotiation between the communities and Chevron and ended up with GMOUs which stated commitments, responsibilities, obligations and expectations from both sides" (Interview, participant 20).

For some organisations, they use trusted approaches to create spaces for communities to dialogue at the local level by collaborating with state agencies to get to the root causes of conflicts. It is thought that through mediation and dialogue, socio-economic development issues can also be addressed so as to reduce the likelihood of a return to structural violence and also preventing the likelihood of conflicts in the future (Olojo, 2013):

> "At the grassroots, we engage communities through the creation of platforms for dialogue and at reducing violent conflict. We likewise use the community peace partnership structure to encourage dialogue at the local government level and using the State Conflict Management Alliances at the State level. Addressing the underlying problem is Important to resolving conflict. You can see that the Amnesty programme did not solve the Niger Delta problem. So, the short answer is that as long as the underlying causes of conflict are not addressed, conflict will not go away. Solutions also lie in the application of trusted approaches e.g. dialogue mechanisms, early warning activities, coordinating security based on information received and used systematically e.g. working with IDP. We work through platforms like the State Management Alliances, encouraging people of different faith to dialogue and mediate on conflict management in their communities" (Interview, participant 21).

Foster (2017) in his evaluation on the violence and underlying tensions in the middle-belt of Nigeria maintains that dialogues/mediation trainings were helpful in increasing the capacity of local community members to mitigate violence. Also, intergroup relations improved as a result of improved communication and coordination with security agents. Similarly, Sjolander et al (2016) in their report on the long-term stability and functioning peace architecture in the Niger-Delta region, state that dialogue helped communities positively by ensuring that issues are resolved without conflict, and has had spill over effects on how they conduct themselves with

their family members. Therefore, these organisations have discussed their involvement in direct conflict resolution roles with the aim that it helps mitigate against structural and cultural violence which gives rise to direct violence. They engage in these direct roles hoping that it brings about positive peace as they hope to eliminate socio-economic and political inequalities in Nigeria.

6.1.2 Complement and change governance

The second theme that emerged was that most of these organisations complement and hope to change governance as they see conflicts in Nigeria as a result of socio-economic problems which they aim to engage in indirectly. As the analysis shows, these organisations spend money on various project such as health, education, poverty eradication and youth employment. But what we cannot see is the impact these various projects are having in mitigating these various conflicts. Participants during the interviews also mentioned that their organisations lack of access and capacity to impact policy were also issues that they saw as challenges to their impact in peacebuilding in Nigeria.

In order to understand the indirect roles civil society provides to Nigerian communities and the challenges they face in these roles, most participants mentioned topics such as community development, health, education, inequality, social justice and empowerment. As a participant states, stigma of HIV patients, child abuse and gender-based violence are issues which needs to be address. She also states that her organisation monitors elections and helps with dialogue between communities:

> "We have experience in malaria in pregnancy control where we worked with Jhpiego on maternal, new born and child health. we have done programmes with MTV-Sugar and other partners regarding Out-of-School Youth. These are all development-targeted programmes. We would like to see a society free from HIV stigma, gender-based violence, child abuse. The health of our nation depends on the health of individuals-

children, youths, women, etc. We have also worked with CPD to monitor elections and dialogue with community gate keepers is important for development" (Interview, participant 25).

By extending medical missions to communities, another participant states that her organisation helps with community development by caring for those with HIV and other medical issues, while focusing on the vulnerable:

> "Nigeria is the big picture. We have contributed to our communities by tackling people's health problems such as HIV/AIDS free of charge. Since 1999, we have extended our free medical mission to over 35,000 people. We have treated people with malaria, gastro-intestinal diseases, and nonspecific disorders. We also focus on orphans and widows and often subsidise medication for the poor. We also do referral services following follow-up treatment. Our mission permits sustainable livelihood for people, the reason we expanded into medical credit, food provision, etc" (Interview, participant 3).

Similarly, in post-conflict reconstruction, a participant states that his organisation has been catering and providing food, clothing and other amenities to refugees and internally displaced peoples (IDPs) from the north, south and central parts of Nigeria flee conflicts:

> "In terms of post conflict reconstruction, we have experience working for refugees and internally displaced persons. We worked at the Amana refugees camp in Obanliku L.G.A catering for those who fled the Cameroons. There were also other camps in Makurdi and Bauchi. We worked with them through National Commission for refugees. Our involvement was in the aspect of supervision of the distribution of amenities, building materials, food, clothing" (Interview, participant 9).

The report by Stoddard et al (2020) and USAID (2016) shows that civil society provides food aid to people an education, health care, clean water and cash assistance. In the north eats, international organisations and some faith-based organisations have increased their

humanitarian relief to communities and to internally displaced persons (IDPs). As well, partnership initiatives in the Niger-Delta have continued their work in the oil rich region to achieve peaceful and economic development in collaboration with the government (USAID, 2016). As well, another participant mentions that his organisation monitors educational services for the stigmatized and vulnerable, while engaging in medical healthcare services to communities:

> "We monitor education which includes services for orphans helps us fight stereotypes and stigma e.g. for children suffering from HIV/AIDS or whose parents have the problem, they are the children who report late to school because they are sick or care for parents or the ones looking for income for the family. So, capacity building for school administrators help to guard against this. In HIV, we have worked with key populations. Currently, we have been invited by NACA (National Agency for the Control of AIDS) to get grants sponsored by The Global Fund to implement HIV programmes for key populations: female sex workers, men who have sex with men, injection drug users, etc. We have engaged in HIV intervention programme for over 2500 families in AKS, Cross River, Imo, Ebonyi and Enugu States. Those provided 5000 healthcare services take the burden off government" (Interview, participant 11).

A participant from a faith-based organization explains that they help people in communities and care for their well-being by establishing educational, health and other social infrastructure to complement the government's services to the vulnerable:

> "as the medical arm of the Church, we reach out to the communities while the church brings people to Christ. We care for the total man - the body, spirit and soul. We help people in communities, brothels, the homeless, etc. It is one that is ready to care for the needs of the society where it operates to make sure life moves on as it should. That is why the Church of God Mission establishes schools, hospitals, rehabilitation homes and even an orphanage in Benin to support a government in rendering services to the needy.

> In Uyo, we have outreaches and encounter so many people who cannot help themselves. People with serious medical problems who we readily assist in our outreaches. You can hardly preach to someone who is sick. We have been in Uyo for over 10 years and often we undertake outreach mission into interior villages" (Interview, participant 12).

Similarly, another participant from a faith-based organisation mentions that his organisation provides aid to IDPs in the south of the country, who have been displaced from the north:

> "We have experience in providing aid for displaced people. We are based in the South-South, but people who have been displaced from the conflict/war-torn areas of the north who come back to the South completely deprived of homestead are given support" (Interview, participant 17).

Babalola and Onapajo (2018) explain that faith-based organisations have been very important in building peace in many aspects as they have focused on providing development services and the needs of the poor by bringing a faith-based perspective to secular views of development. They further state that these faith-based organisations have been involved in the distribution of 'first aid, household goods, medication, food and clothing to displaced persons', while religious institutions themselves have focused on 'providing teaching, encouragement, preaching the message of faith, divine purpose, reconciliation and forgiveness' (Babalola and Onapajo, 2018, p.192).

As well as providing services, Haynes (2009, p.61) explains that faith-based organisations also contribute to providing: (1) 'emotional and spiritual support to war-affected communities'; (2) effective mobilisation for 'their communities and others for peace'; (3) mediation 'between conflicting parties'; and (4) a conduit in pursuit of 'reconciliation, dialogue, and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration'. This shows that these organisations provide both public and private functions which aim to mitigate against structuralconflicts. As explained in the literature review chapter, these organisations are considered to be part of parochial society as they provide inward looking activities such as emotional and spiritual support to communities, and at

the same time providing public activities that aim to cater for the socio-economic interests of people. An organisation that specialises in HIV and Aids, mentions that they provide technical support, while acting as a voice for the stigmatized and vulnerable. They also ensure that there is no discrimination making sure they provide an inclusive process for candidates:

> "Our work is to provide technical support in terms of response to HIV/AID. We also act as a voice for the silent population. Through our work, we look at what is happening in the country and suggest ways of making a difference. We make sure that Nigeria subscribes to the global target agreed by UN member nations towards achieving zero new infections, zero HIV deaths, zero discrimination/stigmatisation as well as achieve those targets. Importantly, we ensure that the processes are all-inclusive and serve all those infected/affected by the diseases" (Interview, participant 31).

Civil society organisations also provide services in order to complement and change governance in Nigeria. They do this through the provision of education, health services, and empowerment programs. A participant states that some of the reasons youths in northern Nigeria turn to violent extremism and the resource conflicts in the Niger-delta is because of the high rate of unemployment and illiteracy, given people don't have jobs to take care of themselves and their families. He also mentions that those who have jobs are not also paid well, which needs the civil society and the government to engage in these structural issues:

> "Our findings revealed unemployment and youths' exposure to violent extremist in as causes. These are some of the key drivers of insecurity in the North. For us, it is continuous engagement. It also pointed clearly to lack of effective governance and the fact that there are so many unemployed youths, uneducated people and those without a means of livelihood. Government needs to provide jobs for the citizens; a lot of highly qualified manpower are wasted. Youths should be given the opportunity to develop their potentials. There is need to invest in the education of youths. The disparity in educational attainment between the rich and the poor needs to be checked. Teachers should not be seen as the fringe. They need to be properly remunerated. Resource control particularly

in the Niger Delta may also boil down to the issue of unemployment" (Interview, participant 8).

For Rowson (2012), what counts as structural violence or poverty varies according to the contexts. Furthermore, the causes of structural violence may include the lack of income and assets, powerlessness and vulnerability to sudden change such as ecological disasters and war. As Okeke-Ogbuafora et al (2018) explains, in the context of Ogoni communities in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria, structural violence is manifested both in visible (cash lessness, lack of basic infrastructure and escalation of physical conflict) and invisible forms (social inequality, political exclusion and community development). They also add, that it can only be eliminated by reducing inequality and increasing democratisation, as the structural violence serves as a tool to legalise violence in Nigeria.

The issue of inequality and social injustice is another area which these civil society organisations need to concentrate on in order to complement and change the way governance is perceived in Nigeria. As a participant explains, the rule of law has to be enforced for both the powerful and ordinary citizens:

> "Social injustice is persuasive. A small boy who steals a phone is imprisoned 35 years. But the Senator who steals billions gets only two years. So, government has to enforce the rule of law i.e. crimes from whatever quarters should follow the full course of the law without regard to status" (Interview, participant 6).

There should be equality in how the issue of resource control is managed. Every tribe should be treated fairly and should not be treated as second class citizens:

> "Akwa Ibom State is a major oil producer but the producing company is headquartered in Lagos. Such unfairness would make the Niger Delta Avengers want to bomb Lagos" (Interview, participant 11).

As participants mention, civil society plays interesting roles in empowering Nigerian citizens through education and building their capacity, as well as providing counselling services for the internally displaces people (IDPs)so that literacy levels can improve:

> "We have been involved in services and targeted interventions. In terms of education and capacity building, we do have a programme tagged, "Computer for Schools" where we strive to bridge the digital literacy gap between children in private and those in public schools. We take children from computers drawn on the board to actual experience in line with the sustainable development goals which has the component of bridging the digital divide. For disaster/risk management, we are involved in crisis, trauma, and counselling. In conjunction with Heart to Life Foundation, we started the grief counselling. We have established this centre in Kano for IDPs and so it has been tremendous" (Interview, participant 19).

Another participant mentions that their organisation trains the vulnerable and excluded for sustainable livelihoods, as well as building shelters where they can live:

> "we have trained many physically disabled people for sustainable livelihood in several local government areas but sometimes we encounter problems of a political nature where politicians may want to derail the focus of your intervention such as we experienced once in Ukanafun Local Government Area. By building a centre for the physically challenged as we have in Ekpene-Obom (for those who have been treated of leprosy). Rather than be treated as outcasts, they need to be built a home and a rehabilitation centre" (Interview, participant 13).

Similarly, another participant mentions that they provide education and also fight to eradicate poverty through schemes like cash transfers:

> "Take education, the vulnerable or the poorest of the poor do not have access to education. In Akwa Ibom State, even with our free education, we engage in education monitoring. Our 15 years in humanitarian services have given us core experience in poverty eradication programming like provisional cash transfer which we have harnessed with technology, offshore expertise, etc. so people can access cash from anywhere. We work with traditional birth attendants, women groups and other

stakeholders for educational or poverty eradication purposes" (Interview, participant 11).

Onapajo and Uzodike (2017) explain that inequality and the discrimination of groups (ethnic and religious) and social divisions are possible predictors of organised violence against the state and perceived dominant groups. Furthermore, frustration makes people aggressive, as individuals with a sense of deprivation will most likely act aggressive to the object, which is perceived to be responsible for their conditions. Okeke-Ogbuafor et al (2018) state using the experience of the Niger-delta, that marginalised and disempowered young unemployed males hold deep-rooted frustration, which explains the spread of violence across the Niger-Delta.

Educating the girl child, maternal health services and access to legal services to combat domestic violence and rape are some of the issues that are important. Therefore, civil society need to be involved in such areas:

> "A woman is critical. Education is vital. Enlightenment is pivotal particularly for the girl child. Also important is maternal and child healthcare services. You know the development of a nation is dependent upon the present and future health of children and women. Access to legal resources especially in the cases of child and domestic violence as well as rape is very important to development more so, for poor people" (Interview, participant 7).

6.1.2.1 Lack of access and capacity to impact policy

The participants mentioned that external factors such as the governments inefficiency in tackling insecurity and applying stringent laws against civil society actors are a barrier to civil society organisations implementing long-term peacebuilding initiatives. They also mention that a lack in capacity to fund their activities and inability to employ skilled staff members also inhibits these organisations long-term peacebuilding impacts. A participant states that insecurity in Nigeria is affecting the organisations activities as well as the government inability to manage the country and various conflicts effectively. He also states that rapidly changing government

policies affects how organisations operate and carry out their activities:

> "The changing dynamics of conflict are an issue. You see, while we are grappling with the Boko Haram insurgency, the farmer–herdsmen conflict is brewing, and then the Niger Delta Avengers are bombing oil pipelines, IPOB and MASSOB as well as the crashing economy, the budget crises all make effective planning impossible. So, the state has to make sure that they pass laws which address the Boko haram insurgency, as well as policies that deal with the management of resources and political rights. Again, the problem of confusing policy summersaults by government make NGO work challenging in addition to election monitoring, security agency evaluation, etc. are all some of the challenges" (Interview, participant 8).

Similarly, a participant who works for a peacebuilding organisation mentions that insecurity and crime are issues as it restricts them from going to certain areas ravaged by conflict and hinders their operations in other parts of Nigeria:

> "The conflict dynamics change repeatedly and so the programme is challenged to respond to these changes. The security situation is also a challenge. Only one year ago, we were not able to get into the north east. The incidence of kidnapping in the South east also poses as a threat to our operations" (Interview, participant 21).

Another participant also states that the governments restriction on civil society organisations also makes it difficult for them to influence policies. Therefore, the state needs to give them access to important areas that can improve their effectiveness. He also states that the country's economic situation makes it hard for his organisation to attend to its daily obligations:

> "Inadequate access to policy spaces. Without access to information, how can we, as policy influencers influence policy? Even with the Freedom of Information Act, which we are trying to test the willingness of the government to release information based on the promptings of the law. So, access to information is a challenge. Nigeria's down-slide economy. It has become difficult to pay even salaries. The economy is posing a challenge" (Interview, participant 24).

To buttress this point about insecurity restricting the work of these organisations, Stoddard et al (2020) explain that in the northeast region of Nigeria, Boko Haram insurgents are a major threat to aid operations and to people in that region. They add that apart from the violations on human rights, this insurgent group have kidnapped and executed aid workers therefore, leading to the Nigerian government limiting information and movement that would have allowed for adequate situational awareness, while curtailing the analysis civil society organisations would have carried out regarding the conflict. Onimisi et al (2017) on their part regarding the government restricting civil society organisations mention that these organisations are viewed negatively by the government as they are perceived to be competitors for power and influence over Nigerian citizens against the state, rather than as partners who can enhance the development agendas of the state.

Participants also mentioned that internal factors such as civil society organisations lack of capacity in financing their operations and the lack of skilled staff are some of the adverse problems, they face in implementing peacebuilding initiatives. A participant explains that finance is a problem as they cannot fund their activities. Therefore, they need the governments intervention as well as donors to help provide funding so they can keep operating:

> "Funds are our major challenges. Without funding, we cannot carry out our programmes. We need funding from government, ministries, parastatals, agencies. We need funding in cash, and in kind for instance expertise. If funders strive to identify CSOs that are honest, transparent, accountable and integrity-oriented, development work would be raised to new heights" (Interview, participant 2).

A similar position is taken by another participant who mentions that they have many projects which they are finding difficult to finance. So, funds would help them implement these projects effectively as they are finding it hard to generate funds:

> "Funding is a major challenge. We have a multiplicity of projects scattered around the State. If we are empowered, we would be great at implementing them. Generating funds by ourselves has proven difficult. To be able to fulfil our mandate of saving lives, we

need funds" (Interview, participant 7).

Another participant, states that smaller organisations should be given the space to implement projects as the bigger organisations are making it hard for smaller organisations to attract funding. She also mentions that the lack of technical support and skilled staff are also a problem because they are incapable too attract knowledgeable staff with their meagre revenues:

> "The primary challenge is lack of funding. Coordinating CSOs, should give room for implementing CSOs to operate and not elect to do both jobs. So, the space should be created for smaller organisations to prove themselves. This problem caused the international funding agencies to resort to funding a partnership of CSO – i.e. networks rather than individuals CSOs. Another challenge is the dearth of technical support. We need knowledgeable/skilful experts to guide, direct and deliver cutting edge civil society service who are particularly willing to volunteer services. CSOs are often not financially buoyant to accommodate their charges" (Interview, participant 25).

One participant stated that apart from funding, corrupt practices by some organisations has made civil society organisations look untrustworthy, therefore they are not able to attract funding. As well, he mentions that the lack of skilled staff is impeding their work as they cannot attract the right type of staff without adequate funding:

> "Funding is the major challenge. As I said before, the forerunner CSOs messed the terrain for the rest because of their corrupt practices. Another challenge is lack of skills and capacity. Passion is not enough for civil society work. A certain analytical mind is needed to work in this field. For example, people hardly want to read heavy stuff, so we need visual artists capable of putting ideas in graphic terms for people to digest easily. So, the dearth of capacity is real within CSO though with the right funding, it should be possible to hire the right calibre of experts" (Interview, participant 4).

This lack of expertise, funding and corruption within civil society organisations is thought to have an impact on the effectiveness of these organisations. Onyekwena et al (2017) explain that the dearth of expertise in civil society organisations means that very few of these organisations

will be engaged in evidence-based policy analysis that could play an important part in supporting advocacy. Furthermore, they add that the lack of funding curtails these organisations participation and resduces their impact on issues such as poverty eradication and development. Similarly, Onamisi et al (2017) state that the lack of capacity affects policy impact as these organisations lack the adequate knowledge base to understand and re-direct the governments development agendas. As well, the lack of funding and corruption within these organisations, limits the effectiveness of initiatives these organisations embark on and weakens their quest as the moral standard for confronting the state. For another participant, apart from the funding challenge, some organisations deliberately support politicians in order to attract privileges to their organisations:

> "Funding is the major challenge. Even individuals within some organisations, also prefer to support politicians in the hope that when they win, they would extract commitments in terms of patronage, contracts, etc. In that way, NGOs with laudable intervention programmes and with the capacity to benefit mankind are left without funds" (Interview, participant 15).

6.2 Discussion on how Civil society can foster peace

As the research findings shows, many participants talked about what the view as the sources of conflicts in Nigeria. They mentioned that the causes include ethnicity, religion, citizenship, culture, natural resources, boundary disputes, climate change, poverty, unemployment and failure of governance. For them, these issues although not all might be violent, would need the involvement of religious, traditional and community leaders to help mitigate these conflicts by getting to the root causes. Therefore, they accept that the causes of conflicts in Nigeria are related to social, economic and cultural factors. Galtung (1969) in his definition of positive peace, explained that it is the absence of structural violence that is dependent on the egalitarian distribution of power and resources, which means that it is the elimination of socio-economic and political inequalities. He adds that negative peace is the absence of direct violence.

Furthermore, violence can either be direct or indirect, with direct violence being visible with a clear object. While for in-direct violence (structural violence), it is not visible. As can be observed from the participants, the socioeconomic and political conflicts in Nigeria means that structural violence needs to be eliminated from Nigeria. Their statements also showed that the violence in Nigeria is both visible and invisible in that there is physical conflicts and the is social inequality that has given wat to direct physical violence. With this, these formal and informal organisations are focused on some direct conflict resolution roles, while focusing more on in-direct conflict resolutions roles.

The findings are supported by the ONSA (2017) who mention that there are push and pull factors that can lead to participation of support for violent extremism in Nigeria. It adds that push factors which are structural conditions that make an environment more conducive to violent extremism such as 'unemployment, poverty, inequality, social exclusion, health' and other socio-economic factors and the role of governance (p.5). As well, Club de Madrid (2017) mention that the main drivers of conflicts in Nigeria are corruption, poverty, unemployment, inequality in resource distribution, illiteracy, grievances and the inefficient formal judicial systems. Koser and Thorp (2015) state that any response to extremism must take into consideration long-term and holistic measures that aim to address its root causes.

As well, they mention that the responses must address structural societal defects that create youth unemployment, illiteracy, poverty, lack of opportunities for youths, political and social marginalisation and social security. The government has also pointed out that it collaborates with community leaders, faith-based organisations, civil society organisations and the media (ONSA,2017). Particularly, the governments countering violent extremism programme involves the three levels of government (federal, state and local governments), civil society organisations, academics, traditional, religious and community leaders (Koser and Thorp, 2015).

The research evidence also suggests that these organisations are sometimes involveg in direct conflict resolution roles such as building social bonds in communities, changing the values and behaviours of citizens, provide early warning activities and also facilitate mediation to prevent conflict from escalating. But the research shows that most of the organisations engage in in-direct roles and see conflict as socio-economic problems, which makes them get involved in fixing these issues as they believe fixing these problems will mitigate against ethno-religious conflicts. They get themselves in eradicating poverty, providing services that empower citizens, educate them, provide health services, fight inequality and social justice. As we can observe from literature, civil society has specific direct roles in post-conflict peacebuilding that involve, building relationships, mediation and socialisation for tolerance and to build trusts (Lederach, 1997; Paffenholze, 2010). Furthermore, level two and three leaders (middle range leadership and grassroot leadership) are understood to be involved in carrying out these roles. The research findings support the levels of leadership mentioned in literature but contrasts with the roles civil society plays. The findings point to civil society in Nigeria playing some direct roles and mostly in-direct roles in post conflict peacebuilding.

The ONSA (2017) supports the findings as it states that the Nigerian government partners with women groups, community leaders, faith-based organisations and the media to implement Nigeria's national counter-terrorism strategy. They collaborate by deradicalizing and reintegrating convicted violent offenders into society by focusing on religious education (Koser and Thorp, 2015). Similarly, Barkindo and Bryans (2016) state that de-radicalisation intervention programmes embarked on for prisoners in Nigeria include motivational interviewing (to build trust and lay the foundation for de-radicalisation), vocational training and work experience (to gain skills for employment and financial empowerment), education and cultural activities (to help understand social and economic factors that contribute to their disillusionment), therapeutic, religious, and psychological and counselling interventions. In addition, this de-radicalisation program is understood to be having a positive impact on the

prisoners, the staff and management of the prison, as the prisoners are now entering into positive dialogue and responding constructively. As Koser and Thorp (2015) explain, it is still too early to access the overall contribution of this program to achieving national peace and stability, given that the strategies are still focused on the Boko haram insurgency. They add that, though the program is still at its infancy stage, its foundation is built on the needs that have risen from the issue of extremism.

International Alert (2019) in its final evaluation report of its social cohesion program, states that they have organised activities at various levels to reduce stigma against women and children into society ate the individual, family and community levels. This has brought about reconciliation and healing, as well as increased the self-confidence and self-esteem of women and girls who have been associated with boko haram. It has also allowed them to build support networks with other women like them and has enabled them to source income, which helps them improve interactions with family and community members. But reconciliation is a long-term on-going process, which is challenged by the ongoing violence, and the context of widespread poverty in Nigeria (International Alert, 2019). Furthermore, sustaining such processes will involve building the capacity of community leaders, traditional and religious leaders, the support networks of these girls and women and using religious teachings to reach out to these people.

Nextier SPD (2020) also corroborate the research findings as it maintains that early warning mechanism have proven to be useful, as the social media and other technology platforms have been used to gather and disseminate local intelligence among stakeholders and predicting insurgency attacks. It has also led to the collaboration between the government and other non-state actors which has resulted in a humanitarian response plan that helped unlock support for people impacted by conflict. Foster (2017) in his evaluation on the violence and underlying tensions in the middlebelt of Nigeria, supports the research finding that dialogues/mediation trainings were helpful in increasing the capacity of local community members to mitigate violence. Also, intergroup relations improved as a result of improved communication and

coordination with security agents.

Similarly, Sjolander, Bentu and Gomez (2016) in their report on the long-term stability and functioning peace architecture in the Niger-Delta region, state that dialogue helped communities positively by ensuring that issues are resolved without conflict and has had spill over effects on how they conduct themselves with their family members. The report by Stoddard et al (2020) and USAID (2016) shows that civil society provides food aid to people an education, health care, clean water and cash assistance. Therefore, these all show that civil society is active and does have some impacts in direct and in-direct resolution roles that aim to fix socio-economic and political conflicts. But most of the participants refer to and mention that focusing on indirect roles make things better in the long-term and can create positive peace (Galtung, 1969). However, there is little evidence to show that this is the case especially as issues like poverty and inequality continue to be a factor in Nigerian society. The reason for this is because these organisations still face some challenges that calls to question their ability to mitigate ethno-religious conflicts.

According to the research findings, these organisations face some long-term impacts and challenges to their peacebuilding initiatives especially as some of these problems are related to external factors such as the government's inability to manage the country's security and its restrictive measure on civil society organisations. As regards to internal challenges, these organisations state that the lack of capacity to raise finance and hire skilled staff are the major challenges they face. These challenges are also highlighted by Nemr and Bhulai (2018) who state that many civil society organisations don't have good relationships with government officials that will facilitate partnerships or information sharing, and in that, they are sometimes viewed with suspicion by the state. They also add that civil society organisations suffer from a dearth of staff with the prerequisite knowledge or training and resources to provide aspects of rehabilitation and reintegration, such as legal aid for psycho-social counselling. Talabi (2018)

states that funding and technical capacity to effectively engage public policy are also major challenges for civil society organisations. He also adds that the lack of transparency and corruption within civil society organisations, and the attempts by members of the Nigerian National Assembly to stifle rights to freedom of association and assembly, are also threats to the long-term impacts to civil society initiatives. As Firmin (2014) explains, the lack of fundraising knowledge, expertise and capacity are major challenges as these organisations don't have the technical expertise to make strong applications, write project proposals, and put together plausible budgets. Furthermore, in his survey fifty three percent of civil society organisations maintained that they have the capacity to prepare and report financial records, which creates accountability deficits and fundraising challenges. As the ICNL (2020) posits, one pressing concern for these organisations in the northeast of Nigeria, is the problem of terrorism that s has led groups like Boko Haram to continuously attack the region and even target the convoy of the governor of Borno state in March 2019 and army commanders in January 2020. However, the army has continuously fought the group, curtailing their efforts to re-establish a caliphate as they did in 2014.

These issues make it difficult for these organisations to impact peacebuilding effectively in Nigeria. The barriers these organisations face in their access to information and partnership with the government makes it difficult for them to get relevant data that would enable them to tackle the structural and cultural factors that lead to direct violence. This is because these restrictions make it difficult for these organisations to engage the state effectively and in that case, they would be unable to deal with issues such as the menace of extremism and extremists' ideologies that breed cultural violence which gives way to direct violence (Muhammad, 2016). Following from this, the lack of capacity to generate funds means that these organisations find it difficult to engage in activities that would be effective in ameliorating the socio-economic needs of communities in Nigeria. It also means that the dependence on external funding disconnects these organisations from the interest of the grassroots therefore, issues of poverty and social inequalities

would not be effectively dealt with because these organisations are more accountable to their funders and their programs more than to the Nigerian people. This in turn limits the impact these organisations have on factors that lead to structural, cultural and direct violence, given that these donor funded projects do not represent the socio-economic and cultural needs of these communities.

As well, the lack of skilled staff affects the impact these organisations have in the resolution of conflicts given that these organisations find it difficult to draft policy papers which would effectively lead to new approaches in government legislation on resolving conflicts. As Court et al (2006) explain, organisations engaging in policy processes can have a broader innovative pro-poor impact compared to service delivery engagements which impacts the poor directly. In this sense, skilled staff would be more effective in writing up policy proposals that would deal with socio-economic and cultural factors that tend to exacerbate structural and cultural violence. Therefore, there is the need for these organisations to increase their capacity to raise funds and be aware of opportunities to source for funds, hire quality staff and build stronger relationships with the state. The state also has to increase its capacity to contain the criminality and violence in the country with the active collaboration and synergy with civil society organisations so as to manage humanitarian initiatives in the country.

6.3 Conclusion

As has been emphasised in this chapter, civil society organisations play some conflict resolution roles by directly mitigating against socio-economic conflicts in Nigeria. They aim to do this by preventing structural violence though the building of social bonds between communities, changing the behaviours and values of Nigerians, providing early warning signals of impending attacks and mediating in conflicts. As mentioned, it was also identified that the main sources of conflicts are associated with the nature of the Nigerian state which is weak and unable to mitigate

against structural violence. Although these structural injustices and inequalities in the country are thought to have exacerbated religious and ethnic tensions that has led to cultural violence. The chapter further showed that though some organisations are involved in direct conflict resolutions roles, the majority of the organisations whose statements were analysed discussed about their indirect socio-economic conflict resolution roles which aim to mitigate against direct, structural and cultural violence in Nigeria. They explain that by engaging in activities such as health, education, poverty eradication and youth employment programmes, they look to reduce the incidence of conflict in the country.

Also, the chapter shows that there are some differences between traditional civil society organisations and parochial organisations such as faith-based organisations. The differences lay in the fact that faith-based organisations aim to cater for both the material and spiritual needs of people and communities, as opposed to the material needs which these traditional civil society organisations offer to Nigerians. As was explained in the literature review chapter, in Nigeria and Africa at large, the public and private realms are not distinct from one another. Therefore, parochial/primordial organisations are capable of operating in the civic public realm to carry out civil functions that aim to mitigate against structural, cultural and direct violence.

However, the chapter shows that issues related to the government restraining civil society organisations, the lack of finance and lack of capacity to hire skilled staff are some of the problems these organisations face in their impact on long-term peacebuilding initiatives. Their inability to engage the state effectively as well as limited funds to carry out peacebuilding initiatives and hire quality staff, affects their ability to impact the states governance processes. Next is the conclusion of this thesis, which would give some piece together of the various arguments in the thesis, so as to develop an understanding for theory and policy on civil society in Nigeria.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 Introduction and thesis statement

This chapter's intention is to piece together the various arguments made in this thesis, in order to develop an understanding which would have implications for theory and policy on civil society in Nigeria. Ever since the end of the Cold war, a surge in intra state conflicts has seen stakeholders discuss ways in which conflicts can be resolved amicably in the hope that positive peace can be obtained. This has led to debates about how relevant the idea of civil society is in the Nigerian context, especially given citizens disenchantment and loss of faith in the Nigerian state.

The aim of the study was to find out what the meaning of civil society is in the context of Nigeria and how useful the concept is in conflict resolution. Furthermore, the research's objectives are to bring to the fore the idea of non-civil associations and groups who are excluded from the normative conceptualisation of the idea, as important actors in mitigating against and resolving the violent ethno-religious conflicts that are ravaging the various communities and regions of Nigeria. The study looked to answer some questions such as:

- Who is and isn't part of Nigerian civil society?
- How effective are these civil actors, and do they fit into existing models in civil society literature?
- To what extent can non-state actors foster and facilitate peace in conflicts ravaged communities in Nigeria? And what are the long-term effects and challenges to peacebuilding initiatives being employed in Nigeria?

This research aimed to answer these questions by using qualitative research method, while employing in-depth interviews through convenience sampling, and triangulating these interviews with a range of documentary sources to examine the idea of civil society in the

Nigerian context.

7.2 Empirical findings

The findings and themes of the fieldwork conducted suggest that some of the assumptions in the literature concerning who is and isn't part of civil society are confirmed in the case of Nigeria. By such understandings, it embodies organisations that literature explains are civic in nature. As most participants from the analysed data explain civil society in Nigeria is not that different from the theoretical conceptualisations although they perceive it to be non-profit, voluntary and independent from the state to some extent, with the aim to better the socio-economic and political lives of citizens. However, some other participants add that civil society also includes non-civic groups with informal structures like ethnic/traditional rulers and religious organisations, which conventional literature considers to be parochial and do not fit in the normative conceptualisation of the idea. Furthermore, some participants from faith-based organisations also mention that their groups are also independent of the state, with the aim to cater to the material and spiritual needs of people and communities in Nigeria. This observation about faith-based organisations shows that they represent both parochial and civil society because they participate in public and private efforts to mitigate against structural violence in Nigeria. As Omede and Bakare (2014) argue, in Nigeria these religious organisations are part of parochial and civil society given that they engage in both private and public ends to cater for the socio-economic interests of people.

Another theme that emerged from the analysis concerns how effective these organisations are in society. What emerged from the participants is that these organisations, though they are critical and have a negative relationship with the Nigerian state, they still partner the state to carry out their programs. The reason being that they are dependent on the state financially for funds to carry out their activities and also for a conducive environment for their engagements, in that partnership with the state will enable these organisations to carry out socio-economic programs. These organisations are also critical of the state, because of the state's inability to

implement policies as well as the bribes and corrupt practices which these associations have to pay to state officials to get vital information that would help them carry out their activities more effectively.

The participants also explained further that civil society's role in resolving the conflicts in Nigeria mainly involves cultural, socio-economic and political problems such as social and political inequality/marginalisation, unemployment, illiteracy and the failure of governance from the high levels of corruption. Although these groups involve themselves sometimes directly in conflict resolution activities such as countering the radicalization of youths (through education) and dialogue engagements between warring parties, therefore, it can be stated that these groups embark on mostly indirect activities, supporting the state to challenge socio-economic structural and cultural problems, while few groups are engaged in the direct mitigation of conflicts through conflict resolution activities. Nevertheless, I am confident that with this weakened/ restricted civil society, they are capable of carrying out these functions. Also, most of the participants also explained that their main challenges in carrying out their activities had to do with their financial capacity to fund engagements, making it hard for them to carry out programs and also restricting their ability to recruit highly qualified staff to carry out these programs. This has made these majority civic formal groups more reliant on external financing from the state and also from international, which in turn affects their ability to be independent and cater to the real needs and interests of Nigerian society.

7.3 Theoretical implications

The findings of this study, to some extent are broadly in line with some of the normative ideas in the literature about civil society. For example being that the conceptualisation of civil society by many of the participants is recognised as incorporating civic associations who partner the state to demanding for the rights of citizens to achieve social justice. As also argued in chapter two, the view of civil society embodying only organizations with civic values runs counter to

what obtains in Nigerian society, given that non-civic involuntary associations that contain seeds of incivility and are considered destructive in the normative sense, are capable and useful in carrying out functions that mitigate socio-economic and political problems facing the Nigerian nation since independence (Adekson, 2004). This contrasts the view of literature in chapter two that civil society is the ethical vision of social life, that avoids confrontations with uncivil spheres of the family, and the state (Diamond, 1994).

The civil and non-civil division within literature can be seen to be contradictory in the context of Nigeria. Therefore, this thesis rejects the idea that civil society only constitutes civic organisations. Rather, this thesis accepts the argument in chapter two that informal non-civic organisations, although at times parochial and destructive, can encourage a sense of social obligation and are a true manifestation of the concept in Nigeria since they are capable and do carryout the same functions as their civic counterparts in liberal democracies (Parekh, 2004; Adekson, 2004). Although the data collected for this thesis contained mostly civic organisations, the few non-civic organisations that were part of the research sample (faith-based organisations) highlighted that civil society in Nigeria also includes these parochial organisations and encourage a sense of social obligation as they carry out the same functions as their civic counterparts in mitigating against Nigeria's socio-economic problems.

The findings also counter the assertion in literature that associational life and social justice rests on the normative idea of individual self-determination alone. Rather, as demonstrated in chapter two associational life in the context of Nigeria allows for individual and the collective organisation of community or groups to express their need and interests through communicative interactions with the Nigerian state. This further is not just to attain self-determination, but also self-development, which allows Nigerians to engage and grow economically, socially and politically (Young, 2002). Therefore, this allows for both individual and group autonomy in Nigeria, making sure that the voice of the vulnerable and marginalised are heard as they communicate with the state through both formal and informal associations.

The fieldwork findings also counter the narrative that civil society is independent of the Nigerian state or is counter hegemonically challenging the Nigerian state. The findings show that these associations, although they have a very negative relationship and are critical of the policies and actions which the state embarks on, they still partner the state. This contrasts the

normative understanding that civil society constricts and enables the state, or acts as opposed to the state, which in turn enables the individual to attain social justice (Keane, 2009). This findings supports the argument made in chapter two that although the tensions between the Nigerian state and civil society are not likely to be resolved and are a permanent feature of their relationship, the state, civil society and the capital markets reinforce one another's particular attributes, as these associations collaborate with the state to implement socio-economic and political agendas, while the state directly subsidizes the maintenance of these associations as compensation for unequal influence in policy through associative democracy (Young, 2002). Furthermore, associative democracy's virtues and democratic processes might be beneficial, though conflictual, as it allows for the implementation of special representations for oppressed and disadvantaged groups with the aim of setting basic economic and welfare policies in collaboration with the state.

The research findings also show that the causes of conflict in Nigeria are mostly socio-economic, political in nature and also about religion or ethnicity. These places the source of conflict in the country in the realm of structural and cultural violence, as it involves the social exclusion and injustices meted out to groups and individuals in Nigerian society. As Galtung (1969) explains, this type of violence is built into the social structure of Nigerian society, which then manifests itself as inequality in power and the life chances of Nigerians to grow. This invisible form of violence, therefore, shows up as direct violence, in that it leads to conflicts such as border disputes, militancy, crime and also religious extremism. This, also means that the Boko Haram conflict and to some extent the herdsmen and farmers conflict are also rooted in culture (religious and ethnic divisions), which can be used to legitimise direct and structural violence (Galtung, 1990).

As demonstrated in chapter three, the Herdsmen/ Farmers conflict is highly rooted in issues of land rights, environmental degradation and climate change and citizenship, which have caused some ethnic divisions between communities that have always been at peace in time past (Conroy, 2014; Graf, 1988). As well, the Niger-Delta conflict is argued to be a product of marginalisation and the competition for resources, which has destroyed livelihoods and has instigated unemployed youths to pick up arms in order to agitate towards a state that is not responsive to their plight (Ibeanu, 2006). The issues related to the Herdsmen/ farmers conflict and the Niger-Delta militancy has led to direct and in-direct violence as they are based on socio-economic inequalities and exclusion that have been built into the social structure of Nigerian society. On the other hand, as argued in chapter three and from the data findings in chapter 6 (participant 9), the Boko Haram insurgency is understood to stem from socio-economic, political and religious ideology especially with the message to establish a sharia government. Therefore, in this case, the insurgency is different from the Niger-Delta militancy and the Herdsmen/ Farmer conflict as it includes both socio-economic inequality and cultural aspects which legitimise direct and structural violence. Consequently, it can be said that to mitigate against this cultural, structural and direct violence in Nigeria, civil society would have to be involved in playing very crucial roles.

But the findings also show that civil society associations in Nigeria play minimal roles in directly resolving conflicts, as they concentrate on efforts such as early warning signs, counter-radicalisation and bringing warring parties to dialogue with one another. This being the result of their inability to be provided with a conducive environment to engage in such activates. By carrying out these minimal direct roles, these associations are involved in socialising citizens to change their behaviours towards one another, creating the environment to build community social cohesion, as they work at the societal level to encourage contact and reconciliation of warring parties to establish trust through these kinds of activities (Paffenholz, 2004; Marchetti and Tocci, 2004). As Paffenholze (2004) mentions, these initiatives to establish trust are more effective long-term, rather than short-term, especially when trying to avoid people from being

radicalised, in the promotion of democratic values and behavioural change.

As can be observed from the research findings in chapter 5, civil society is an independent sphere composed of formal and informal organisations outside the state, who are intimately linked to the conflictual spheres of the state and capital markets to influence socio-economic and political development in society. The chapter also established that the relationship between civil society and the state is characterized by civil society being critical of the Nigerian state without really opposing the state, although it is done in a tense and suspicious environment. In chapter six, with the state engaging stakeholders such as professional organisations, issue-oriented organisations and a few religious organisations, they collaborate to carry out direct functions that help build community cohesion by rehabilitating and reintegrating ex-fighters, internally displaced persons involved with the Boko Haram conflict, as well as help build community cohesion and resilience between the Herder and Farmers communities. Civil society organisations are also involved directly in de-radicalising and changing the ideas of citizens as they engage in projects that prevent them from being radicalised and discourage violent extremism (participants 18). This helps challenge the cultural aspect of violence which Galtung specifies that legitimates direct and structural conflicts. Civil society organisations also get involved in providing early warning signs to help track and map both the Boko Haram and Fulani/ Farmers conflicts to stem the tide of internally displaced persons and refugees within the country. Mediation and the felicitation of dialogue in the Herdsmen and Farmers conflicts as well as the Niger-Delta conflicts mentioned in chapter 3 are other roles which civil society organisations engage in. They involve stakeholders in conflicts who collaborate with the government to carry out these roles.

The indirect supportive roles which these organisations carry out is also undertaken by religious associations, who challenge the normative underpinnings of civil society theory as argued in chapter two regarding parochial society. For Omede and Bakare (2014) religious groups engaged in religious activity can be considered as being part of civil society. They explain that since these organisations carry out their religious functions and focus on public ends to fight

poverty, crime or illiteracy in the community, they can be considered to be civil society groups. As the research findings show these religious associations in Nigeria still carry out their parochial religious functions, while at the same time, carrying out indirect supportive roles that challenge society's socio- economic inequality and injustice.

However, the findings are to some extent at odds with that of literature because these civil society organisations in Nigeria tend to focus more on indirect roles, which challenge socio-economic inequalities, and in the long-term create positive peace. As demonstrated in chapter two, conventional civil society organisations engage in direct roles that aim to build democracy, but as highlighted by the research findings, civil society in Nigeria are mostly involved in in-direct roles that challenge socio-economic inequalities.

But this main focus on indirect supportive roles does come with challenges for civil society in Nigeria. This is especially the case since most associations in Nigeria face mostly financial and capacity challenges. For these associations, their funding is from external sources (the state and international donors), meaning that these funds tend to be directed at short-term projects and would not be sustainable if these organisations look to carry out long-term projects. This lack of funds affects their ability to retain and recruit staff of high quality and qualified to carry out programs which will benefit citizens and sustain positive peace in Nigeria.

Therefore, the contribution this thesis is making to knowledge is that Nigeria's conflicts are in the context of a fragile weak state and not from the liberal understanding of a democratic state whose civic associations restricts and enables their activities or that of Eastern European associations which are in opposition to the state.

Here, the Nigerian state has many democratic deficiencies such as non-compliance to the rule of law, as well as transparency and accountability issues. But the state is not as repressive as those states in eastern Europe since it still partners with these associations to achieve certain goals. Essentially, the Nigerian state is weak and can become stronger and more effective at promoting ‘the accumulation and better distribution of wealth and improving their own

legitimacy and power potential by allowing a good measure of pluralism in associational life' (Keane, 2009, p.2). Therefore, formal and informal civil society organisations in this context can be a very useful actors in helping the state fulfil its obligations, as it collaborates with the state to influence socio-economic, political and cultural transformation through both direct and in-direct roles in conflict resolution. In their direct roles, these organisations help build social cohesion by engaging in projects that helps communities build their capacities to manage grievance and also rehabilitate those affected by conflict especially women and youths. They also engage in projects that help change the behaviours and values of citizens especially in areas such as deradicalization from extremists' ideologies. Some other organisations also provide early warning signals to warn of impending violence, as well as assess and understand conflict affected areas. Furthermore, these organisations also engage themselves in mediation as they facilitate dialogue between warring parties and communities. In their indirect roles, these organisations embark on socio-economic projects they feel will impact structural violence, such as providing health, education, eradicating poverty and providing empowerment to the unemployed as well as micro-credit services. By participating in such roles, they aim is that Nigeria will achieve positive peace as emphasised by Galtung (1990). However, these organisations will be more successful and effective if they don't have challenges of funding as they have to depend on donors which can derail the projects they engage in as it tends not to be community-based, given that they are more responsive to the dictates of their funders. This issue of funding also affects the type of staff they are able to hire, given that quality staff would be able to draw up policies that could effectively impact socio-economic policies. As well, the state's relationship with these organisations would go a long way in making these organisations more effective as they will be able to get the right information that will enable them provide for the needs of citizens as well as impact government policies.

7.4 Policy implications

The research findings support the idea that these organisations in order for them to realise their goals, partner with the state to meet the socio-economic needs of people (Lewis, 2002). Furthermore, by accepting traditional and religious groups, there is some potential that these groups would accept aspects of democratic principles, given the rich associational life in Africa, which is restricted by weak democracy. This weakness in democratic principles in Nigeria stems from a weak and fragile institutionalised state, which is dependent on patronage (Kasfir, 1998). The research, therefore, suggests that civil society's relationship with the state shifts from opposing the state to partnering the state, depending on the dynamics at play, rather than just opposing the state or playing its democratic watchdog role.

On the face of it, civil society in Nigeria supports the state to resolve problems stemming from structural and cultural inequalities and social injustices, focusing indirectly on socio-economic and political tendencies, which manifests itself through direct violence in society. Therefore, in order to strengthen civil society vis-a-vis the state, there is the need to emphasise the participation of the grassroots of Nigerian society through the inclusion of involuntary kinship and religious organizations, which would widen the concept of civil society to fit the Nigerian context and other fragile states in Africa (Lewis, 2002).

7.5 Limitations

It should be understood that the study had some limitations, which affected the quality of the findings. One main limitation was the inability of the researcher to connect and interview parochial ethnic-based/ traditional and religious organisations especially Muslim based organisations. This restricted the researcher’s data findings to the ideas and experiences of mostly civic organisations therefore, posing a challenge to the researcher getting more nuanced analytical possibilities in relation to civil society and its role in conflict resolution. Also, the researcher travelling to regions and states where different cultural, religious and linguistic

factors affected how he was perceived and restricted some organisations from participating in the research interviews. These cultural aspects especially in the Muslim north restricted the researcher from interviewing certain women's groups, which would have enriched the research study. As well, the view that the researcher was from a wealthy family because he studies abroad did not help because he was expected to pay some form of gratification before interviews could commence.

Although most of the organisations in the thesis sample were civic, the researcher was able to get very few non-civil organisations to partake in the research study. Therefore, the aim of this research is not to generalise to larger populations, but rather, to look at civil society organisations as a specific subgroup of the population (Bryman, 2012). Although the researcher was able to penetrate the non-civil world of Christian religious organisations, he was not able to speak to Muslim organisations and ethnic organisations. This limited the research to being a specific sub-group of the larger population but it allowed the research to produce a partial picture and made the researcher understand that civil society has a role to play in resolving Nigeria's socio-economic and political problems.

7.6 Recommendations

For future research purposes, possible areas that can be investigated should focus on how effective informal and kinship organisations can be in effecting direct supportive roles in resolving and transforming conflicts, so as to obtain positive peace in Nigerian society. This would take into consideration the fact that the latent conflicts which are experienced in Nigeria are protracted and have not been resolved through either the states conflict management mechanism or the indirect roles played by mostly civic organisations in resolving the protracted conflicts in Nigerian society. Furthermore, since most civil society organisations face the challenge of funding their activities, and they rely on the state's capacities to carry out their engagements, further research can be investigated into how these organisations can improve

their financial capacity. This is so that they can be able to carry out peacebuilding activities, which involve long-term investments, so as to engage programs that aim to resolve and transform Nigerian society from negative peace to positive peace in the long-term.

7.7 Conclusion

So therefore, it can be stated that despite the normative conceptualization of civil society being either from a liberal democratic state in partnership with associations, or civil society organizations being in opposition to the state, this thesis has established that civil society in Nigeria is in the context of a negative relationship with a fragile, weak state, which these organizations both partner with and for exigency reasons and also at the same time it also opposes. This thesis has also underlined that structural socio-economic and political factors are the causes of conflict, which has led to protracted direct violence over a long period of time; therefore, there needs to be the need for both short-term and long-term measures to be employed in tackling these various socio-economic problems

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Appendix 1

Type	Leadership	Support	Dominant Activities	Dominant Orientation	Territorial Base	Example
Trade Unions	Representative	Mass Based	Workers welfare, socio political	Radical/ Progressive	Urban/major cities	
Civic Associations	Representation	Mass Based	Socio-political		Urban/major Cities	
Gender Groups	Limited Representation/ Sometimes leadership perpetuation	Limited mobilization of special groups	Gender issues, socio-economic empowerment poverty alleviation civil/human rights	Rights and Claims	Urban	
Non-Governmental Organizations	Founders/Board of Trustees	Special Groups	Social Services Technical support Advocacy development activities	Rights and Claims. Development orientation Radical	Urban/major cities	
Faith Based Organizations	Religious leaders often founders	Religious based	Social welfare human capital Humanitarian Assistance	Parochial		
Media	Owners of Media House	Readership/ Broad based	Information, enlightenment, outlet for diverse views, public scrutiny of governments	Governance and development	Urban based	
Professional Associations	Representatives	Members, sympathizers supporters	Protection and projection of professional interests, public advocacy	Professional, Governance	Urban based	
Students and Youth Groups	Representatives	Support Youth, Sympathizers	Protects against misrule, advocacy,	Mobilization, radical, contentious politics	Urban and Community based, Educational	

			mobilization		institutions	
Business Groups	Representatives	Business Sector, Corporate bodies	Economic governance issues, policy advocacy	Collaborations with government, Remedial actions	Urban based	Farmers Association Chambers
Socio-Cultural Associations	Representatives Founders	Identity groups, Communities s kinship groups	Articulation of socio-political and cultural interests, contentious politics, public scrutiny policy advocacy	Parochial, Conservative	Community based	Ethnic, Regions, Communities, Clan association
Uncivil Groups	Representative Founders	Members Socio-Cultural leaders	Militant resistance violent engagements	Militant, Aggressive, Radical	Urban based	Militias, Cult Groups, Vigilantes
Clubs/Development Associations	Representatives	Members, Opinion leaders and Kins	Socio-economic interests of members	Social and Economic Empowerment and support	Rural and Urban	
Constituency Groups	Representatives	Members, families, interested others	Concerns of Constituents	Mutual and Welfare	Urban, Semi Urban and Rural	Associations of Women traders, farmers, artisans, the elders etc.
Organizations of Survival	Representatives	Members, families, interested others	Socio-economic welfare interest of members	Welfare and Support	Urban Semi Urban and Rural	Mutual Savings Groups

Source: Ikelegbe (2013, p 10-11)

Appendix 2

1. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: This organization is a non-profit/ non-governmental democracy and human rights organization which has been in existence since 2010. The goals of the organization are to promote good conduct, transparency, integrity, and accountability in Nigeria.

2. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: this is an issue-oriented organisation established in August 2000, as a coalition of over 3,000 indigenous non-governmental, non-profit making organizations. The organization was created with the aim of building a mechanism for the Civil Society to engage with stakeholders and government in building a strong national HIV and AIDS response in recognition of the roles and proximity of the CSOs to grass root communities.

3. Location: Abuja, Nigeria

Details: This organization is looking to improve the life of Nigerians through grassroots interventions by placing emphasis on primary healthcare, governance and income earning through agriculture.

4. Location: Abuja, Nigeria

Details: They are committed to fostering socio-economic development in Nigeria. Most of their interventions cut across education, health, water and sanitation, empowerment, agriculture, legal aid and human rights

5. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: This is a community based non-governmental organization that engages in social work, disease control, youth empowerment and conflict resolution. The goal; of the organization is to collaborate to end diseases and empower youths.

6. Location: Abuja, Nigeria

Details: It is non-governmental organization established in January 1998 with the mission of promoting public safety, security and accessible justice through the strategies of empirical research, legislative advocacy, demonstration programmes and publications, in partnership with government and civil society.

7. Location: Abuja, Nigeria

Details: It is an independent non-profit research organization established in April 2008 by Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-lweala, former Managing Director, World Bank, and currently Nigeria's Coordinating Minister for the Economy and Honourable Minister of Finance. CSEA advocates for greater fiscal transparency and accountability, reduction in leakages of public funds and improvements in governments' delivery of social and public services.

8. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: This not for profit non-governmental organization Focuses on education, health (HIV) and poverty reduction. Their goal is to achieve quality life, education and economic empowerment for the populations in Africa's most vulnerable settings.

9. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: This is a hospital that belongs to the Church of God Mission International. It is a non-profit organization that provides discounted medical services to all, regardless of tribe, religion and social status.

10. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: This non-governmental, non-profit organization focuses on women with disabilities. These women are trained so as to improve their economic and social status and wellbeing in society.

11. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: It is not-for-profit, non-sectarian, non-governmental organization. GPI was founded in 1993. At the core of GPI programme is regular educational sessions on Adolescent Sexuality, Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights, Leadership and other Gender Sensitive Life Management skills from a gender and human rights perspective particularly with in and out of school adolescents girls aged 10 – 18years in 4(four) states (Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Delta and Edo States).

12. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: This non-governmental organization is a social enterprise committed to enterprise development, youth development of start-ups, individuals and communities is Nigeria.

13. Location: Abuja, Nigeria

Details: It is a non-governmental organization that focus on women and youth empowerment, health promotion, peace building, good governance and food security. IFEHS is charged with creating real and positive sustainable change in the lives of the poorest Women, Children, Aged and Youths.

14. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: It is a faith based, non-profit organization founded in 2009 as a development arm of Insight Bible Church. They are focused on economic empowerment, health care services and good governance.

15. Location: Abuja, Nigeria

Details: supports local reporters, citizen journalists and civil society activists in three dozen countries in conflict, crisis and transition around the world. They contribute to peace and good governance by strengthening the ability of media and civil society to speak out.

16. Location: Abuja, Nigeria

Details: It is a Non-profit organization committed to enhancing growth in needy communities. Their goals are to provide education as a means of enhancement and development, establish a mentoring support system that would enhance self-sufficiency among the youth through various mentoring initiatives and youth programs.

17. Location: Lagos, Nigeria

Details: It is a non-governmental organization seeking to build a new Nigeria through partnerships between the public and private sector. Their vision is for sustainable socio-economic development of communities through public-private partnerships.

18. Location: Abuja, Nigeria

Details: It was established in the United Kingdom in 1997 as an independent, not-for-profit, research training, advocacy and capacity building organisation. The purpose was to mobilise global opinion and resources for democratic development and provide an independent space to reflect critically on the challenges posed to the democratisation and development processes in West Africa.

19. Location: Abuja, Nigeria

Details: The organization focuses and aims to promote women and youth participation in building clean technologies and using these clean technologies to enhance environmental sustainability and a low carbon society.

20. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: This non-governmental organization focuses on education, health and good governance. They believe by complimenting the state government's effort in improving education and

also highlighting efforts at sanitizing the electoral system and enthroning a regime of inclusion in socio-political life of Nigeria.

21. Location: Lagos, Nigeria

Details: This organization focuses on education and capacity building, policy advocacy and disaster risk management. As regards education, they are looking to bridge the gap as regards digital literacy and information technology in children.

22. Location: Abuja, Nigeria

Details: It aims to reduce violent conflict in Nigeria. The programme provides support to Nigerian stakeholders to better manage conflict resulting in wealth creation, service delivery and poverty reduction.

23. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: Partners for Peace is a network supported by Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND) whose mission is to build social capital around peacebuilding through amplifying the voices of positive actors, building a network of self-identified agents of peace, and leveraging that network through facilitation, small grants, and capacity building.

24. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: This is a non-governmental organization that focuses on micro- financing, the environment and health services to the poor. Their main target is poverty reduction, as well as the protection of the environment through awareness of eco-friendly alternatives to their daily lifestyles.

25. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: It is a non-governmental organization founded in 2013 by a group of committed development activist as a space for generating alternatives ideas, sharing critical information,

building innovative alliance and learning effective actions for social change and sustainable development.

26. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: This is an indigenous advocacy and community based organization that works in communities to coordinate developmental programs. They aim to see a society free from HIV/AIDs stigma, gender based violence and child abuse.

27. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: This non-governmental organization is committed to impacting positively on women, youth and children, in the areas of health and education. Their goal is to reduce the transmission of HIV/AIDs, while canvassing for the removal of barriers that stand against access to qualitative education and health.

28. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: This non-profit organization focuses on preventive HIV/AIDs development programmes. They mainly target female sex workers, men having sex with men, out of school youths, long distance drivers and generally men/women of reproductive age.

29. Location: Abuja, Nigeria

Details: This Non-governmental organization seeks to bring about better ways of thinking among kids and youths through seminars, also through group and individual counselling. The organization focuses on the less privileged, deprived or abused children and youths.

30. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: It was set up in 2000, with the mission to develop the informal sector of the economy, by impacting knowledge and giving technical assistance. They also look at issues relating to governance in helping to accelerate private sector development.

31. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: This non-governmental organization focuses on women and children. They try to reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDs transmission from mother to child, as well as trying to curtail the spread of HIV/AIDs.

32. Location: Abuja, Nigeria

Details: This organization helps to enhance the capacity, both institutional and individual capacity of civil society organizations and networks in Nigeria, who have a bearing on HIV/AIDs. The organization also focuses on gender and youth issues to make sure there is an inclusive, people centred and rights based response to HIV/AIDs in Nigeria.

33. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: This non-governmental organization has been in existence since 2004. Their mission is to promote women's rights, gender equality and sustainable development for all women and children in rural areas. They place emphasis on health, education and human rights.

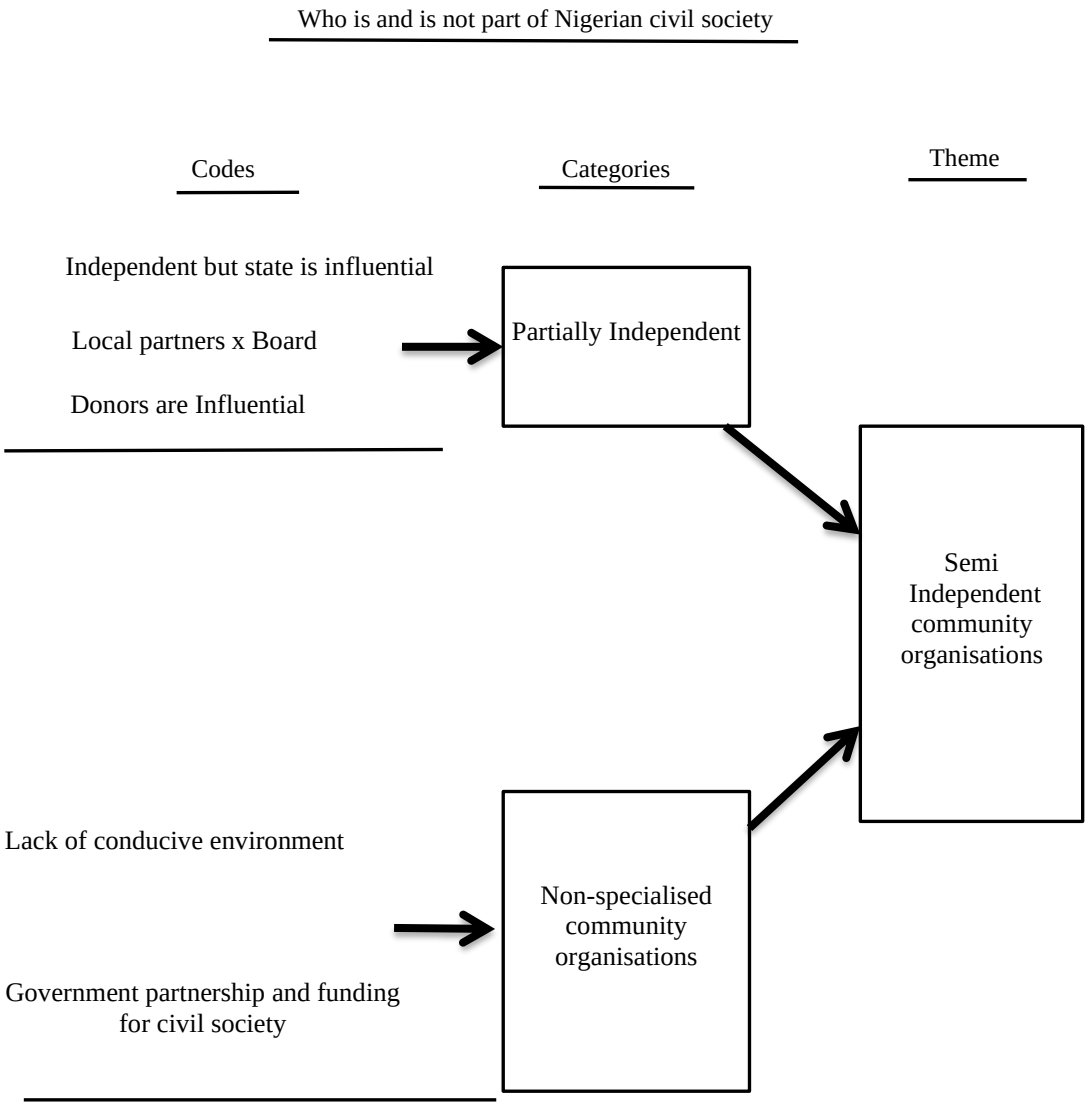
34. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: The main goal of this non-governmental organization, is to reduce poverty and provide social services to the public. Their focus is on the prevention of HIV/AIDs and micro-financing.

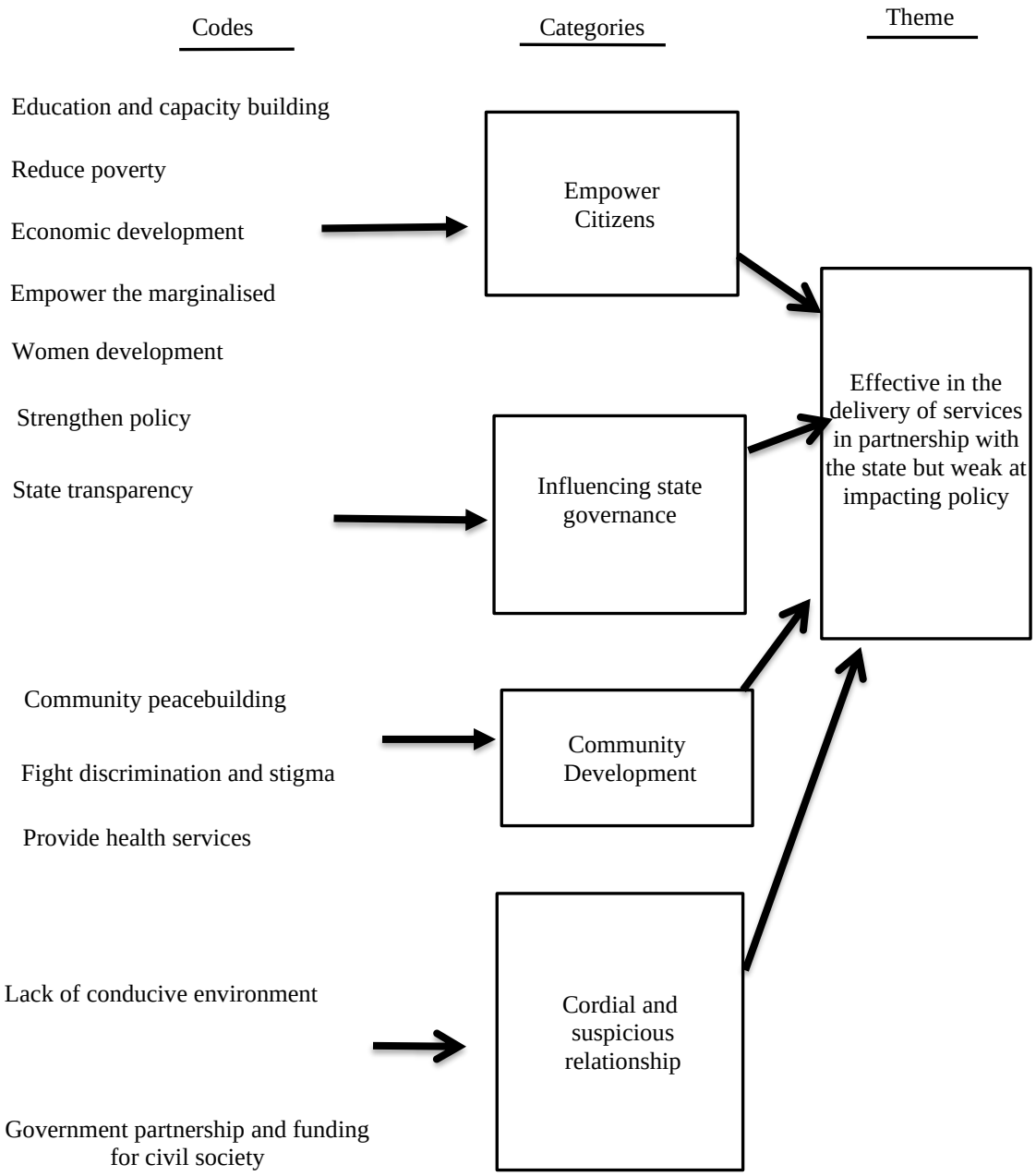
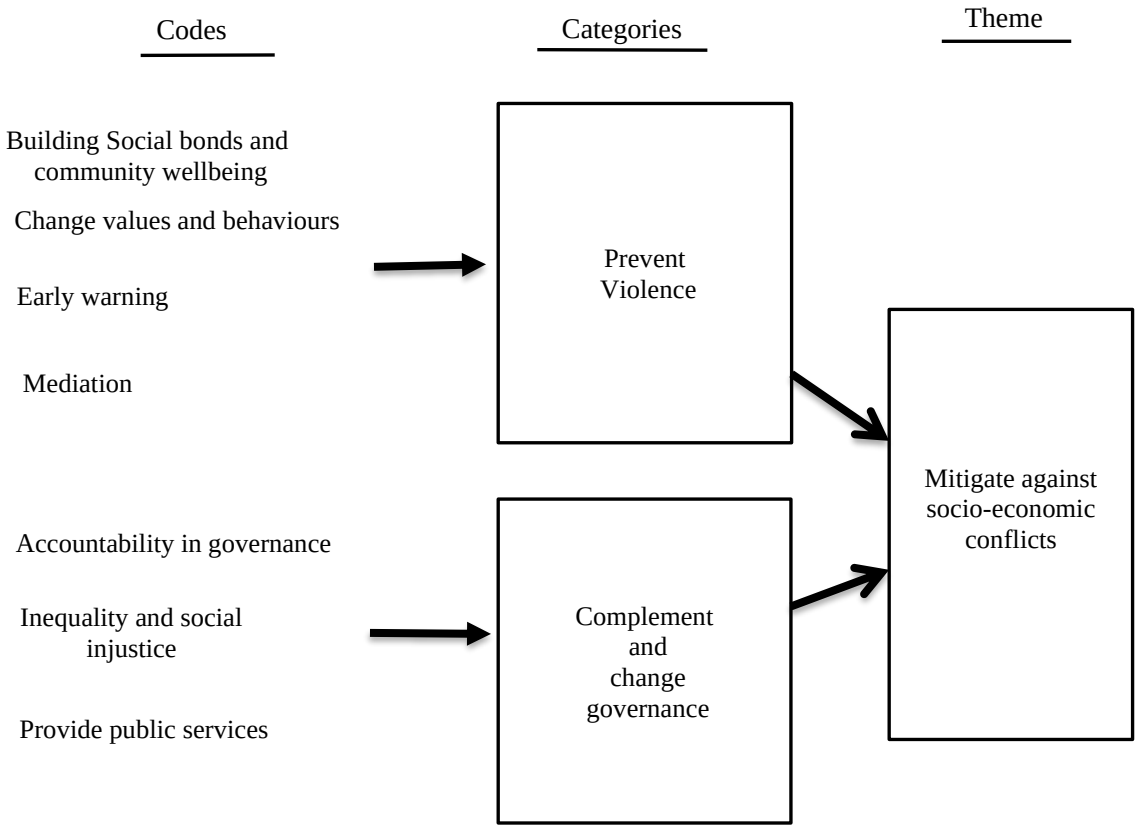
35. Location: Akwa Ibom, Nigeria

Details: It is a non-governmental organization (NGO) dedicated to women's rights and development. Our goal is to empower underprivileged women and children by providing them with tools and skills to promote economic stability and self-sufficiency.

Appendix 3


Who is and is not part of Nigerian civil society
Codes
Categories
Theme
Independent but state is influential
Local partners x Board
Donors are Influential
Partially Independent
Semi Independent community organisations
Lack of conducive environment
Government partnership and funding for civil society
Non-specialised community organisations

How effective is civil society and does it fit models in literature



To what extent can civil society foster peace in conflict communities