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**COUNTRIES EMERGING FROM CONFLICT: LESSONS ON PARTNERSHIP IN POST-
CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION, REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION**

I. Introduction

This paper examines the important role that government, private sector and civil society partnerships play in rebuilding countries emerging from conflict in Africa. It argues that strategic partnership forged between government, private sector and civil society are critical to successful post-conflict reconstruction in order to prevent recidivism to violent conflict. Since the end of the Cold War, nearly half of African countries have experienced some type of conflict, most of it in the very low-income ones. This suggests an evident link between poverty and conflict. But also, it points yet to what two decades of violent conflict can do in affecting millions of women, men, boys and girls, communities, businesses and even government capacity and legitimacy. In the case of Somalia, the entire government machinery has collapsed. In some countries conflict is still active, in others it is dormant. But a good number of them, such as in Liberia, Sierra Leone and DRC, are characterized by periods of activity and dormancy. The halcyon periods have proved to be elusive and, where possible ephemeral and quite often punctuated by more, not less, violent conflict. Evidently, while other parts of the world are experiencing relative peace and economic growth and prosperity, Africa, for the most part, is enmeshed in incessant conflicts, largely internal, and general economic malaise. Violent conflict is simply a major constraint to development in Africa.

It is against this background of endless conflicts in the continent, that issues of peace and security and good governance have assumed center stage in the new development framework for Africa, and has been at the fore front of discussions at the just concluded Durban Summit of African Heads of State and Foreign Ministers and similar past fora. The challenge here is on how to find enduring solutions to Africa's seemingly intractable conflicts that will transcend mere halting of hostilities to include post-conflict reconstruction, rehabilitation and reintegration. Experience has shown that most of Africa's conflicts have been recursive not least because solutions have often been truncated and short-sighted leaving out the full range of conflict resolution mechanisms, which must necessarily include post-conflict reconstruction. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) accounts for this weakness by emphasizing that future efforts to build Africa's capacity to manage all aspects of conflict must focus, *inter alia*, on post-conflict reconstruction, rehabilitation and reconciliation.

The efforts to integrate lives and livelihoods in societies emerging from civil wars into relative peace are necessary in order to prevent recidivism into violent conflict. Post-conflict reconstruction eases the transition to sustainable peace after hostilities have ceased, and supports socio-economic development. But this is beyond the capacity of governments alone and the process relies on a partnership between the private sector and civil society to support the transition. By its very nature, post conflict reconstruction measures demand a concerted effort from all concerned to ensure that the process succeeds. It is essential to engage all stakeholders in the reconstruction process. When stakeholders do not have a stake in making adjustments, or in reforming political, economic and social relationships, then the process is likely to fail and recidivist pressures for re-newed conflict can become ascendant. Over and above this, other stakeholders such as the private sector and civil society can complement the weak capacity of a "conflict-weary" state through the unique comparative advantages that they wield. Together, a government, private sector and civil society partnership is a formidable team for successful post-

conflict reconstruction. There is a clear imperative for this kind of partnership if the new attempts to build peace in post-conflict areas in Africa are to yield fruits.

Although government efforts are critical in addressing post-conflict reconstruction, they are not sufficient in dealing with the challenges. The scope of these challenges requires the mobilization of all talents and resources that stakeholders have. This underscores the need for government, private sector, and civil society partnership. Experience has indicated that ownership and responsibility for reconstruction must reside with the Africa civil society itself. Civil society and governments can play complementary roles. Similarly, the private sector has a role in post-conflict reconstruction in an era where the sector is increasingly conceived of as the "engine of growth". Therefore, areas of complementarities between the entities should be sought. Action is necessary to catalyze the inclusion of societal groups in discussion and negotiation processes related to all aspects of reconstruction.

The African union has just adopted drastic measures in creating organs responsible for conflict prevention and resolution within the renewed spirit of NEPAD that guarantees space for citizens' participation. But there must be lessons to inform the direction of this novelty. Are there cases of successful government, private sector, and civil society partnership in post-conflict reconstruction in Africa that has yielded positive outcomes and that could guide future work in post-conflict areas in general?

The above feeds into the broad backdrop around which the second meeting of the Committee on Human Development and Civil Society (CHDCS) is being organized, which seeks to draw on the contribution of the government, private sector and civil society. It also aims attention at actions to nurture a functional and mutually beneficial relationship between state and citizens for enhancing partnership. In this context, this paper *emphasizes the role that stakeholders' partnership plays primarily in the reconstruction of war-torn societies in the aftermath of armed conflict and draws on the lessons learned*. It will focus on the role of government, private sector, and civil society partnership in post-conflict reconstruction. Though deliberately seeking out and addressing the most pressing and critical lessons in countries emerging from conflict, it will also collect existing case studies and identify, document, and analyze the most significant and innovative government, private sector and civil society partnerships. In the process, the paper will interrogate the enabling role of the state, and its relationship with the private sector and civil society. The specific issues to address will include, but not limited to:

- (1) identifying stakeholders and existing complementarities with government in respect of efforts at post-conflict reconstruction;
- (2) identifying and discussing the nature of stakeholder partnerships, whether corroboratory or confliction. What are the points of coincidence and what are the points of divergence?
- (3) establishing link between nature of partnership and outcomes of post-conflict reconstruction efforts;
- (4) teasing out the specific variables in government, private sector, and civil society partnership that account for particular outcomes and not others.

II. Causes and Typology of Conflicts

Full understanding of the nature, origins and impact of current armed conflicts in Africa is necessary if they are to be taken into account in the strategies formulated for integration, peace building and reconstruction to avoid refueling the conflict. Although there are some inter-country conflicts, most violent conflicts in recent decades have taken place within - rather than between - states. Some are country wide (Rwanda) and others localized in specific part/parts of a country (Sudan). Their origins, often multifaceted, range from ethnic and economic inequities, social exclusion of segments of the population, social injustice, competition for scarce resources, poverty, lack of democracy, ideological issues to religious differences (Nigeria and Sudan) and political tensions. The conflicts in the Sudan, Burundi and Rwanda are, in large measure, the result of historical disparities between the ethnic or tribal components of the population.

A common recurring theme in the literature on causes of African conflicts has been ethnicity and religion. This attribution has assumed dominance largely because most of African conflicts have ethnic and religious coloration. It is seemingly so and self-evident to many, given that African rebel movements almost always are ethnically defined. Notwithstanding this, recent studies have revealed that such an assertion is simplistic and that contrary to popular belief, Africa's civil wars are not due to its ethnic and religious diversity. Rather, most conflicts in Africa are due to high levels of poverty, failed political institutions and economic dependence on natural resources.¹ Indeed, Africa's ethnic diversity helps - rather than impedes - the emergence of stable development as it necessitates inter-group bargaining processes.²

Evidently, conflicts may result from one or more causes. But it is poverty and the underlining competition for resources that typically lies at the heart of conflict.³ For example, in Angola, the struggle for control of oil and diamond producing areas was at the source of the conflict. Similarly, the conflict in Liberia is attributed to the exploitation of major mineral resources such as diamonds. Therefore, the struggle for political power in many African countries is essentially the struggle to acquire control over resources and the means of production. In his edited work on conflict in Africa Adebayo Adedeji notes that the most significant of all causes is the role of prevailing development paradigms in causing conflicts or at least in fuelling them.⁴ This is the case in relation to the fact that two decades of implementing externally initiated and funded development strategies such as SAPs has immiserated the lot of Africans and pushed them to the verge, which in turn has engendered conflicts or exacerbated them. There is little doubt therefore, that there is a direct correlation between civil strife and poverty.⁵ In fact, it is noted that the

¹ See Elbadawi, Ibrahim and Nicholas Sambanis, "Policies for Building Post-conflict Peace," *Journal of African Economies* 9 (October 2000) : 3.

² Ibid.

³ Adebayo Adedeji, *Comprehending and Mastering African Conflicts, The search for Sustainable Peace and Good Governance*, eds. (London: Zed Books, 1999).

⁴ Ibid., p.12

⁵ Betty Bigombe, Paul Collier and Nicholas Sambanis, "Policies for Building Post-conflict Peace" *Journal of African Economies*, 9 (October 2000) : 3

lower the per capita GDP the higher is the likelihood of civil wars.⁶ Also, based on a recent work it was observed that poverty or lack of alternative economic opportunities is one of three major policy-related risk factors that can lead to conflict or re-start conflict.⁷ The other two factors are the extent of dependence of a country on natural resource rents, and ethnic dominance.

Yet, lack of good governance, underpinned by lack of respect for the rule of law, social exclusion, and intolerance, has been identified as an underlining cause of several conflicts in Africa. Most conflict areas in the continent are characterized by situations where political leaders find it difficult to respect the democratic principle of tolerance, encourage participatory development, to refrain from violence and use intimidation as means of resolving domestic conflicts. In Sierra Leone, bad governance in terms of political and social injustice, corruption and lack of accountability and transparency and the abuse of political power resulted in the civil war that threatened the stability of the sub-region.

Given the multi-faceted nature of African conflicts, it may be useful at this point to categorize conflict. Conflict can be categorized in different ways depending on the criteria for categorization. For example, conflict in Africa has been classified as follows:

- boundary and territorial conflicts
- civil wars and internal conflicts having international repercussions,
- succession conflicts in territories decolonized
- political and ideological conflicts
- others including those related to transhumance and irredentism.⁸

Some other classification of conflicts has relied on the actors involved in a conflict as the bases,⁹ while others are concerned only with conflicts in which the state is a party to the conflict. It is useful to note the latter, since the basis for classification sets apart clearly the distinction between two categories of conflicts – political conflicts in which the state is involved and lesser well-known urban and rural conflicts in which generally the state is not a party. On political conflicts, it is noted that during the four decades of independence there have been roughly 80 violent changes of governments.¹⁰ Add to this, other well-known political conflicts – mainly rebellions and civil wars – and one gets a clear indication of conflicts in Africa.

Yet, others have tried to classify civil conflicts in Africa based on such factors as the duration of the conflict, the presence or absence of government repression before war, reference to ethnic or religious dimensions, etc. (see Table 1. below)

⁶ Ibrahim Elbadawi and Nicholas Sambanis, "Why Are There So Many Civil Wars in Africa? Understanding and Preventing Violent Conflict" *Journal of African Economies*, 9 (October 2000) : 3

⁷ Collier, P. and A. Hoeffler *Greed and Grievance in Civil Wars*, Policy research Working Paper, 2355, (Washington DC: World Bank, 2000)

⁸ For a full discussion see Salim Ahmed Salim, in "Preventive Diplomacy," Edited by Kevin M. Cahill, 1999

⁹ See Bujra (2000) for details.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Table 1. Typology/Dimensions of Civil wars in Africa

	Yes	No
<i>Was the conflict short and intense?</i>	Rwanda	Angola, Burundi, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Liberia, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda
<i>Was there a pre-war tradition of domestic political instability?</i>		Angola, Burundi, Ethiopia, Liberia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda
<i>Prior to the war did the government suppress the domestic opposition?</i>	Ethiopia/Eritrea, (Liberia?), Mozambique, (Rwanda?), Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda	Angola, (Burundi?)
<i>Did the war have a strong ethnic or religious dimension?</i>	Angola, Burundi, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, (Uganda?)	Mozambique
<i>During the war did the government disintegrate?</i>	Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Uganda	Mozambique, (Rwanda?), Sudan
<i>Did interference by outside powers prolong the war?</i>	Angola, Mozambique	Burundi, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda
<i>Is the war part of a post-independence struggle?</i>	Angola, Mozambique	Burundi, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Uganda

III. The Post-conflict Situation – What are the Issues and Challenges?

The recursive nature of African conflicts has catalyzed attention on the multiple challenges of rebuilding countries emerging from conflict. Further, the end of conflict does not necessarily mean the end of problems. The transition process from war to peace entail not only overcoming the structural causes that originally sparked the fighting, but also effectively mitigating ongoing conflict and dealing with the legacies of conflict, which define the challenges of the post conflict situation. These challenges are numerous. It is much more than just repairing infrastructure. When civil authority has broken down, the first priority is to restore a sense of security. This includes restoring legitimate government institutions that are regarded by citizens as serving all groups and that are able to allay persistent tensions, while carrying out the challenging and costly task of rebuilding. The security of the individual and respect for basic human rights is therefore, the cornerstone of political and economic stabilization. Attaining this requires the rebuilding of

credible institutions at the central as well as at the local and community levels as they will have determining influence on the entire reconstruction efforts, ranging from the restoration of productive sectors of the economy, the return of capital, to disarmament.

Following from the above, a major challenge for post-conflict reconstruction is efforts to legitimize state institutions. In a general sense, political institutions must be seen as legitimate and competent. One way of establishing such legitimacy is through election. However, elections do not create or sustain democracy in themselves. In a broader sense, democratization must be conceived of as a context of changing relations both within government and civil society and an arena for partnership and dialogue between all stakeholders in reconstruction. This entails developing the relevant operative governance structures, including rule of law and other civil society institutions.

In addition to the institutional challenge noted above, there are other challenges indicative of the range of needs that must be addressed early in societies emerging from conflict if the ground is to be secured for sustainable peace and economic development. These include:

- infrastructure recovery, including water, sanitation, shelter and transportation;
- food security and agricultural rehabilitation, including land tenure designation and registration;
- urgent health, education and basic social welfare requirements, including employment and income generation; and
- more importantly, demobilization and reintegration, which takes priority in the peace process because security must be enhanced; the rule of law promoted; development stimulated; refugees repatriated.

A major challenge of post-conflict is that presented by a polarized society, which has tendency to continue to weaken all kinds of social relations. This situation may endure because of conditions of insecurity. Rebuilding bridges of communication between social groups and promoting participation in political life is therefore a necessary but daunting challenge for social reconstruction. In this context, post-conflict reconstruction policy must deliberately foster the re-emergence of civil society.

Another, most important issue of significant challenge for post-conflict reconstruction is that of food security and social provisioning. Typically, war debilitates the productive capacity of a country and displaces most of the agriculturally productive segment of the population. The result is usually widespread hunger and malnutrition. Hence, improving food security is basic to any systematic post-conflict reconstruction. This includes work to improve agricultural productivity, access to markets and distribution systems and market-based measures to stabilize farm-gate prices. Also, given that most social services would have either deteriorated or even been abandoned entirely, there is the added challenge to restore basic services in health,

education, water supply and increased life opportunities for women, disabled, youth and the rural population.

The dismantling of the state sector as a result of war is yet another challenge as it results in job losses. This is compounded if post-conflict reform includes privatization of remaining state enterprises and the associated unemployment. Such was the case in Nicaragua. A more gradual privatization approach in Mozambique appears to have been better for both production and social stability.¹¹

An overarching theme underlying the above challenges is a focus on the special needs of women, children and the elderly, as these vulnerable groups invariably comprise a majority of the affected population. The challenge here is on how to integrate the needs of these groups in the entire reconstruction process. At the same time, however, care must be taken to avoid the perception of serving the needs of the returnee population to the exclusion of the local inhabitants. For reintegration to succeed, recovery efforts must include the entire community, with due regard for the rights of all. The special role of women as agents of change should be promoted in all reconstruction and economic development activities.

IV. Post Conflict transition: Partnership and Roles of Stakeholders

As had been indicated in the earlier pages of this paper, and conceived in the context of the challenges outlined above, the process of achieving and sustaining long-term peace in a country emerging from conflict is no mean task. It is certainly beyond the capacity of any single entity, and definitely beyond that of war-torn governments, in part because they themselves are often parties to the conflict. It requires launching a process of good governance, the very absence of which, in large part, caused violent conflict in the first instance. Post-conflict efforts also must include preparing for the reconstruction itself. It is a critical part of the broader process of rebuilding a shattered country and institutions. The process of reconstruction requires first and foremost knowledge and information. It also requires political leadership and cooperation and it requires funding. Yet, above all, it entails a process that must provide opportunity to continue to listen to citizens who must be in the driver's seat for reconstruction. All these require a concerted effort from the government, private sector and civil society.

The foregoing also implies a broad partnership, which is critically important because the magnitude and diversity of the problems are beyond the capacity of any single institution to address. And, each stakeholder has a specific comparative advantage that it can contribute. Government must embark on a deliberate crafting and introduction of the elements of good governance into the social and political system. Private sector spirit and capacity must be at the center of development strategy, and evident in reconstruction efforts from the beginning, including the delivery of both infrastructure and social services. And reconstruction must also be centered on building a nation with the input of a strong civil society and communities, good governance, transparency and open and positive relations between local communities and government. A coordinated and holistic approach must be taken, from the point of view of the people and their community, in all sectors ranging from road building, agriculture and rural development, as well as health, education and water and sanitation.

¹¹ See Development Studies at Oxford, "Enhancing the Private sector Contribution to Post War" Working document

The point to be made here is that, partnership between the state, private sector and civil society is a *sine qua non* of post-conflict reconstruction with the government taking the lead. This partnership must be predicated on identifying and recognizing the developmental challenges of the post-conflict situation, sorting out comparative advantages and synergizing, staking out mutual responsibilities and accountabilities, and geared exclusively to complementing government effort. Greater attention need to be given especially, to the complementary role of civil society, whose grassroots processes can be harnessed for effective reconstruction efforts. For example, in Somalia, administration by elders' councils had transformed the city of Baidoa (see box 1.). This meant that success in reconstruction is aided by the direct participation in, and ownership of, the reconstruction effort by the country's communities at all levels and also by the broad and coordinated participation of key NGOs.

The Role of Civil Society

Rebuilding efforts are much more likely to succeed if they take place in the context of an official framework. In the wake of many conflicts in Africa, however, effective national governments do not exist, placing greater burden and responsibility on civil society efforts. In some countries, civil society itself has been decimated by conflict. In these situations, rebuilding may begin with the reconstitution and re-organization of civil society itself. Nevertheless, civil society has a most important role to play in post-conflict reconstruction and both its leaders and institutions can perform different functions in the process. These include, among other things, channeling and dissemination of information; advocating norms, values, and standards; encouraging power-sharing among competing interest; contributing to good governance; providing the means for interaction and confidence-building across the lines that divide parties in conflict; and encouraging and participating in socio-economic activities aimed at mitigating disparities.

In situations where post-conflict reconstruction is underway, peace efforts must address the underlying causes of the conflict to prevent a recurrence of violence. Because average citizens are the primary targets of such peace building, input provided on their behalf by civil society actors is essential for its success. African CSOs can therefore play an important role in providing early warning regarding impending conflicts by concretely derailing the sources and the parameters of disparities, mistrust, suspicions, and misperceptions between the adverse groups.¹²

In countries where politics is restricted at the national level, civil society can perhaps work toward creating more open democratic structures at the local level. Democracies are not created overnight, especially in the context of post-conflict situation. Civil society organizations can be useful in easing the laborious task of building them by being more representative of, and sensitive to the needs and wishes of average citizens. By doing so, they will provide the long-term utility dialogue and discussion that is so necessary for post-conflict reconstruction.

Further, CSOs can encourage conflicting parties to engage in a long-term communication process including the launching of parallel, or "track two" efforts at mediation and facilitation. Also, as an important constituency of political leaders, civil society can pressure conflicting

¹² See, report of the IPA/OAU consultation, May 29-June 2, 1996.

parties to seek peaceful settlements (see box 2. on Mali). In these various activities, the roles of women, elders and religious leaders are particularly salient.

One major development challenge for post-conflict transition is the lack of funding for reconstruction. A comparative advantage of African CSOs is their ability to attract external funding for local development purpose. CSOs, through their northern counterparts, can be an important source for funding. Therefore, the effectiveness and ability of civil society in mitigating conflict can be significantly enhanced through an alliance between national and international NGOs. Further, CSOs in countries where conflict has just ended, could play a decisive role within the overall strategic framework embracing political, human rights, humanitarian and political development activities in organizing, mobilizing and influencing bilateral and multilateral development agencies to direct assistance where it is most needed. Some of the substantive areas, which are a purview of the CSOs, could be: facilitating the rapid re-establishment of income earning activities; identification and implementation of quick impact micro-projects; and capacity building activities that can quickly ensure the re-integration of ex-combatants, refugees and displaced persons into their communities.¹³

Finally, in many African countries, existing development strategies have not only failed to benefit the lower classes, but have destroyed forests, arable land, and fragile ecosystems, thus depriving many people of their life support systems, and in turn exacerbating existing conflicts. Given the failure of the existing development paradigms in Africa, there is the urgent need for NGOs to formulate and promote alternative development strategies that are friendly toward both entrepreneurs and the environment, and are rooted in African realities and traditions. In this regard, NGO advocacy for a paradigm shift to a more people-centered development should be enhanced in the post-conflict situation.

The Role of Government

In light of the enormous developmental challenges of post-conflict areas, the government must necessarily take the lead in crafting a post-conflict reconstruction plan. While partnership with civil society and the private sector is crucial in reconstruction, it is the state that should provide the broad framework within which all actors must operate and which will define the general developmental thrusts of the country. In crafting the reconstruction plan therefore, government must recognize the many issues, which sparked conflicts in the first place and the problems it will have to deal with after the conflict to prevent its recurrence and initiate recovery. Among its top concerns are issues that relate to the reconstruction of the economy and the rehabilitation of society. In this respect, the critical elements required for post-conflict reconstruction are a) well-planned economic reforms, mainly organized and secured through good governance; and b) a thriving civil society buttressed by a solid social capital base and augmented through decentralized government.¹⁴

¹³ See UNECA, *Profiles of African NGOs in Peace and Conflict Resolution: Selected Country Cases*, p. iv. 1999.

¹⁴ World Bank, *The Nexus Between Economic management and Civil Society In Countries Emerging From War In Southern Africa*, paper prepared for a WB consultation on the interrelations between economic management and civil society in countries emerging from conflict in Southern Africa. Cape Town, October 1998

The primary structural conditions that lead to intra-state crises and violence is a function of the nature and role of the government, hence the state plays a critical part in post-conflict reconstruction. A primary function of the state is to manage the reconstruction process through national authorities or mechanisms, and through provincial and /or local channels and security forces. If the state lacks viable institutional means to protect rights and interests, manage competition and settle disputes and grievances, individuals and groups will resort to violence. Even with the presence of an adequate institutional framework, violence may erupt if the state is too weak to maintain and enforce conflict management systems and if it lacks popular legitimacy. Thus, governments have a responsibility to proactively build peace by establishing a political structure that is transparent, representational, and most importantly, interactive.

Government-CSO partnership

It is noted from the foregoing that the role of CSOs in post-conflict reconstruction is clear. While this is the case, it is also important to articulate and delineate the specific needs for coordination and partnership between CSOs and other stakeholders, especially government in the re-building process. There is usually mixed feelings on the type and level of interaction that should exist between CSOs and the government. The standard position is that government should only provide a conducive environment and facilitative role to enable CSOs to become effective.¹⁵ However, the nature of the relationship between civil society and governments depends on the form of government and its openness to civil society. The situation is often characterized by a feeling of mistrust especially where some CSOs are seen to be parties to conflict. In any case, governments have responsibility for creating mechanisms to coordinate reconstruction efforts towards resolving basic political, economic and identity concerns of the post-conflict society. This task however, is often unfulfilled due to lack of resources, the effects of long-term conflict, general lack of state capacity or lack of government credibility or will to play its role (particularly in cases where the government itself is involved in a conflict). Although ideally civil society should provide institutions and processes that complement those provided by governments, it plays an especially important role in filling the institutional vacuum in situations where government institutions are particularly weak or non-existent.¹⁶

Members of African CSOs can also work with government to develop creative options for promoting equitable and sustainable forms of enterprise in the post-conflict setting. Given the tradition of community-based economic and political structures, African private enterprise might better serve Africa if it were organized along cooperative lines, recycling profits back into the communities that provide resources and labor. This could form a classic basis for partnership between government, private sector and civil society.

Success stories have developed around government-civil society partnership in the fight against AIDS in Brazil and in judicial reform in Ecuador. Such examples could be replicated in post-conflict situations in Africa. We are already witnessing the positive outcomes of Sierra Leone government Community Reintegration and Rehabilitation Project (CRRP), under which refugees, internally displaced peoples, and communities affected by the war are helped to return and social and economic infrastructure built. This project is being carried out by approximately

¹⁵ UNECA, Studies in Participatory Development: A Case Study of Uganda, No.2.

¹⁶ Ibid.

100 separate implementing government partners (predominantly CSOs), which had been key in accessing the North and East of the country where government control is still fragile. In the DRC also OXFAM Quebec is implementing the Reintegration of Vulnerable Street Children in Urban Areas Program. This program reintegrates children in the DRC, and is carried out through a CSO-Government partnership. The Congolese government provides social centers while the local CSOs run these centers.

The Role of Private Sector

In striving to build post-conflict economies, Africans have not explored the resources available with the private sector in Africa, relying on resource provisions from governmental sources, especially external donors. While it may be necessary to rely on such governmental sources, it is equally important to recognize that the private sector could be an important financial support base. This sector could support key elements of the reconstruction plan, particularly within the context of the private sector as the recognized "engine of growth". However, less widely recognized is the vital contribution the private sector makes to economic development infrastructure and 'economic multipliers', which provide the momentum for future development. This includes distribution networks, financing mechanisms, access to markets, training and human resource development etc.

Yet, as was noted earlier, government efforts alone cannot ensure post-conflict recovery. For economic reconstruction to succeed there must be a strong private sector, usually developed through liberalization and in the context of Africa, supported by the state. This is in recognition of the fact that the private sector has a number of critical roles to play in the reconstruction process in a manner that will complement government and civil society efforts. Paramount to this role is the large potential resource capacity of the private sector that can be brought to bear on a post-conflict environment characterized by acute financial and human resource paucity. In the post-conflict period for example, business can help by providing commercial support in rebuilding infrastructure and investing in productive sectors. In the case of Multinational companies (MNCs), as far as possible, their operations should build local capacity. This can be through skill transfer, local sourcing, sub-contracting and employment, offering of work experience and internships.

And yet, over and above its resource capacity and commercial objectives, the private sector can also provide social and humanitarian contribution to the reconstruction effort. As already implied in the beginning, internal war is largely understood as stemming from a combination of resource competition and weak institutions. In other words, as originating in underdevelopment. Therefore, business can play a role in pursuing sustainable development that constitute investing in local communities, supporting local education and health and enterprise development programs, and funding activities that promote diversity, tolerance and education. These activities help to make local communities less likely to be trapped in underdevelopment and conflict. Further, after the cessation of fighting, business can fund projects that target affected population taking into account long-term development strategies of the country. Collaboration with NGOs may often provide an opportunity to balance commercial and development objectives.

Having outlined the role of business above, one must acknowledge the fact that the private sector cannot perform its determined role in the post-conflict situation unless in the context of an enabling environment conducive to the performance of sound business. Government therefore has a role to embark on an economic reform that provides the right combination of incentives for private sector development. In the same vein, the private sector should consider how it could develop partnership with government and CSOs to optimize their impact on local economic development where this is possible. This sets the framework for partnership between government, private sector and civil society for a successful post-conflict reconstruction. The question is that whether such a partnership frame has existed elsewhere that could provide the guide for future work in post-conflict areas in general.

V. Some Post-Conflict Partnership Practices

In trying to seek lessons and guidance from past partnership practices and experience, it may be instructive to sample some cases of the post-conflict situation. Notable cases include that of Liberia, Sierra Leone, Mali, Mozambique, Angola, Burundi, Sudan, Somalia and South Africa. The choice of these countries is not based on any other criteria other than that they present a mix of both successful and failed partnership models. And, it is necessary to look at the two categories of cases if we have to discern, appreciate and establish the link between partnership and post-conflict reconstruction.

Mali

The Malian case is particularly instructive because it provides an inter temporal context within which to establish the significance of civil society partnership in reconstruction. Following years of unrest and violent conflict in the northern part of Mali, peace finally prevailed in 1996 in the solemn "Peace of Flame" ceremony. The role of civil society as a partner to government in the Malian reconstruction process is worth discussing here. There were two major-armed conflicts in Mali involving the government and the Tuaregs in the North between 1962 and 1964 and from 1990 to 1995.¹⁷ Each time, the government attempted and failed to resolve the situation using military means. Neither civil society nor business was deemed relevant to peace building and this may have collaborated with other factors¹⁸ to undermine the success of several peace accords that were signed before 1996. These accords failed woefully to prevent a resurgence of violence.

However, when civil society was finally brought in the fray peace prevailed. This was the culmination of several years of extensive consultations with civil society across the country starting in 1991 (National Conference and the Mopti Conference). And, it also showed that civil society must and can be involved in seeking solutions to major national problems. A lasting solution has now been found and the efforts of civil society have largely contributed towards consolidating governmental action aimed at the construction of peace.

¹⁷ For details of this see Bintou Sanan Kouka and sicave Ag. Ecawell in "Comprehending and Mastering African Conflicts" Eds. Adebayo Adedeji, p.49. 1999.

¹⁸ Although there was a peace accord between 1991 and 1994, the deficit of conflict analysis and communication weakened it. The press, free but unprofessional and uninformed, did not also calm the situation.

A key component of the reconstruction process in Mali has been the pursuit of good governance and the mobilization for sustainable development. The regions of the north have attracted the attention of the authorities not only in the framework of good governance but also and most especially in the area of sustainable human development. This provides the context for the current on-going decentralization in Mali, which is intended to foster popular participation in development planning, particularly at the local level. Yet it also has provided an opportunity for civil society participation in post-conflict reconstruction.

Liberia

In 1989, Liberia had its first wave of armed insurrection by rebel forces. Thereafter, the country plunged into seven years of intense factional fighting, which ended in 1996 albeit, still characterized by intermittent outburst in fighting. Before that attempts to restore peace and stability continued at all fronts – local, subregional, regional and international. At the local level, the role of CSOs in the process including administering of relief and brokering peace is well acknowledged.¹⁹ Civil Society organizations alongside their subregional, regional and international partners influenced the peace debates, with a focus on how to bring lasting peace to Liberia. Indeed, citizen's groups strongly propelled and supported efforts to end the war and institute an elected government.

The level of devastation brought on by the conflict in Liberia was great and required enormous effort for rebuilding. The prolonged conflict reduced significantly agricultural and industrial productivity, causing an appreciable drop in the country's ability to accumulate foreign exchange. Further, the country's roads and telecommunications infrastructure was affected. As a result, the challenge for reconstruction was beyond the capacity of the state alone. In this instance, NGOs contributed and redirected their energies from peace brokering into post-conflict activities, which included conflict management, peace building through community development, rehabilitation and reconstruction. The range of activities carried out by CSOs included micro-projects to help rehabilitate, repatriate, reconstruct and rebuild. Their actions also covered activities to promote democracy and economic stability. Many of the CSOs were also involved in local initiatives to help maintain and promote peace and this included helping war affected children, rehabilitation of traumatized child-soldier, community development and income generation activities.

Partnership with government was particularly sought and pursued in the Liberian context. Because the credibility of government became seriously undermined, it was necessary to tap into the comparative advantage offered by CSOs in terms of their closeness to the grassroots and society at large. Several CSOs played different roles as a function of their specialized areas of activities.²⁰ For example, the Monrovia-based Center for Democratic Empowerment (CDE) engaged actively in the campaign and support for disarmament and demobilization of former fighters. It also organized, in partnership with government, meetings, workshops, and conferences on post-conflict reconciliation that targeted women, children, traditional leaders, and leaders in government and civil society.

¹⁹ UNECA, Profiles of African NGOs, p.3.

²⁰ For a detailed listing of NGOs involved in the post-conflict reconstruction in Liberia, their backgrounds, areas of activities, target groups of beneficiaries, see UNECA, "Profiles of African NGOs" 1999

Mozambique

Against a background of post-colonial exigencies and a disappointing economic development, Mozambique experienced full-scale civil war throughout the 1980s. However, the introduction of multiparty democracy created the necessary conditions for resolving conflict in Mozambique and addressing the economic devastation caused by the protracted war. A little over a decade ago Mozambique transmitted from a civil war situation to peace. A formal Peace agreement putting an end to conflict was signed in October 1992, between the two fighting parties, FRELIMO and RENAMO. Mozambique is now approaching 10 years of sustained peace, economic stability and surging investor confidence. It is one of the few examples today of a peace process that was cut and dry without resumed hostilities. Mozambican Civil Society, and in particular the churches played a significant role in the creation of an enabling environment for sustained peace and reconstruction. The private sector, supported by the initiatives of the government and civil society also contributed to sustained peace in the country.

The civil society community, in particular NGOs, has taken an active part in the development of the country and much of what has been achieved, especially in the rural areas, has been due to their involvement and dedicated work. These CSOs including local peasants associations and community-based groups have and continue to play significant role in the post-conflict reconstruction process. A notable paragon in the contribution of CSOs to reconstruction is the work of Mozambican Association for Rural Development (AMODER), which was founded in 1993, a year after peace was found. The organization promotes the improvement of living conditions for rural communities and to increase their level of food security. The focus is on reconstruction and rehabilitation of infrastructures and is primarily through activities including credit support services and institutional capacity building to enhance a government led process of decentralization. Some of AMODER's past and on-going activities include:

- Credit concessions,
- To small rural traders and enterprises for purchase of agricultural products produced by peasants and for engagement in commercial and production activities,
- Reconstruction and rehabilitation of commercial and productive infrastructures and to a lesser extent social infrastructures such as schools, health posts and communication infrastructure.

The activities of civil society in Mozambique are also carried out in the context of a viable partnership with government and the private sector. For its part government has encouraged the involvement of civil society in the reconstruction process and therefore, has acted to facilitate both the establishment and work of CSOs in several ways. The increased number of indigenous CSOs evidences this after the peace agreement in 1992. Presently there are about 600 NGOs with an average 40-50 NGOs being situated in each of the 10 provinces and about 200 in the capital.²¹ Civil Society on its part has supported the private sector through its assistance to traders in rural areas and rural community. Here also the role of civil society in the development

²¹ UNECA, Profiles of African NGOs, p. 16.

of the micro-finance industry is worth noting.²² By supporting the micro-finance industry, and particularly targeting it to war-affected populations, it is essentially a support of the domestic rural private sector.

The contribution of the private sector in reconstruction in the above cases is less pronounced. This outcome is parasitic to what seem to be the general attitude of business across the continent even if at various levels of engagement. The reasons for this general lack of interest in and of the private sector are hard to determine. However, it may well be that the African private sector is weak to start with, and therefore lack the requisite financial muscle to confront issues of the post-conflict environment. Additionally, most MNCs would have left the country at the start of conflict and therefore are also unavailable immediately following the cessation of hostilities. When this happens, the remnant of the business community is the usually weak and fragile domestic private sector, which lacks both the human and material capacity to contribute meaningfully to reconstruction. It underscores the need for African countries to expend some effort in developing the domestic private sector, for it is this sector that stays in the country, be it during war or peace. Nevertheless, it is incumbent upon post-conflict governments to seek the participation of the private sector, and civil society, in post-conflict reconstruction regardless how puny their contribution may seem. The actions of the government itself can catalyze private sector activity, which can then be channeled to the sectors and regions where it would effectively complement government reconstruction efforts. Such initiatives are not too farfetched and the experiences of the South Eastern European countries could provide some useful lessons for post-conflict reconstruction in Africa.

South Eastern Europe

Conflict has had a significant negative economic impact on all the countries in South Eastern Europe. It took the initiative of an NGO, the East West Institute (EWI) to vulgarize the need and absolute priority for government and private sectors to contribute to the stabilization and economic revitalization of South Eastern Europe. As one of the key NGOs in the region, the institute offered its in-depth expertise and unblemished reputation as an honest, neutral broker between government, private, and NGO sectors. Through its Action Network for South Eastern Europe (ANSEE), EWI launched a Task Force on Economic Strategy, which had as its focus the mobilization of private effort for post-conflict economic reconstruction in this region as a whole. The Task Force prepared concrete recommendations for stimulating domestic and foreign private investment and more broadly to developing the private sector in South Eastern Europe.

In two countries in South Eastern Europe, *Macedonia* and *Albania*, EWI, with funding from government and other international sources, organized national workshops that provided the platform for financial intermediaries as well as local and western business interests to discuss concrete investment prospects based on government-led development priorities and proposals. The workshops helped to focus the priorities in critical developmental areas. In *Macedonia* it was in the telecommunications and energy sectors. In the context of the CSO-organized workshops, the government also noted the favorability of the investment climate and actively

²² For a deeper insight into the role of CSOs in micro-financing in Mozambique, see ILO, the Evolution of Microfinance in a Successful Post-Conflict Transition: The Case of Mozambique, A document prepared for the Joint ILO/UNHCR Workshop, Geneva, September 1999

sought strategic partnership with the private sector in the priority areas. The government further solicited partnership by formulating strategies for SME development in those sectors which the country had comparative advantage, such as textiles, agribusiness, tourism etc.

Government partnership with the private sector was to be established in other areas as well. Most economic activity in conflict and immediate post-conflict environment is usually conducted through a parallel economic system of 'black marketeering'. Such activity, if it remains uncorrected, can deepen the post-conflict crisis. In Macedonia, government again pursued a deliberate partnership with the business sector in working out an appropriate and mutually acceptable strategy to legitimize this gray economy in order to help mobilize domestic resources for investment. All these partnership initiatives helped create a greater capacity for sustainable peace, democracy and prosperity in the region.

VI. What have we learned?

1. Strategic partnerships forged between government, private sector and civil society are critical to successful post-conflict reconstruction.
2. Government has to take the lead in providing the framework plan for post-conflict reconstruction.
3. Private sector leadership is the key to economic growth and development. It is important that the reconstruction effort, being as vast as it is politically complex, takes into account the input of key private sector institutions as well as the participation of indigenous businesses.
4. Because post-conflict governments in Africa lack the financial and skill bases for a dominant role in the economy, its role in reconstruction must be small and selective.
5. African domestic private sector is inherently weak and fragile and so contributes only marginally to reconstruction efforts.
6. Post-conflict governments have to embark on economic reforms that would attract FDIs.

VII. Recommendations

1. Strategic partnerships between government, private sector and civil society must be deliberately forged and formalized in order to benefit from its effective application to post-conflict reconstruction. The present hodgepodge of widely uncoordinated stakeholder contributions in post-conflict African countries does not support the benefit of maximized utility in the reconstruction effort. Some focal point for coordinated and synergized stakeholder's activity must be initialized. In the case of the South Eastern European countries CSOs provided this focal impetus for the complementary and coordinated activity of stakeholder partners.

2. Because foreign private capital is the first to leave the country once hostilities break out, they are not readily available to help in the post-conflict reconstruction effort. Hence, it is important for governments and donors to concentrate on building the capacity of domestic private sector to take up the mantle of leadership in the reconstruction effort. More generally, African governments must reorient their strategy to developing the domestic private sector as opposed to relying exclusively on FDIs.
3. Civil society has invariably been at the center of all the reconstruction efforts in Africa. Their role is particularly salient because of the demonstrably weak authority of the African State. Therefore, African CSOs involved in post-conflict activities must be identified and their capacities enhanced through training and institutional development.

VIII. Conclusion

This paper has noted that nearly half of African countries have experienced some type of conflict since the end of the Cold War. This has bequeathed a legacy of enormous social, political and economic post-conflict challenges that must be addressed if post-conflict countries have to move forward. Yet, the development challenges for such areas are beyond the capacity of any single entity to deal with. This implies the need for a broad partnership between all stakeholders in the post-conflict reconstruction process. It essentially calls for a partnership between the state, private sector and civil society, which must be predicated on identifying post-conflict development challenges, sorting out respective comparative advantages and synergizing them, and staking out mutual responsibilities that is geared exclusively to complementing government effort.

However, Post conflict reconstruction in Africa has hitherto been pursued in fragmented and ad-hoc bases with the various stakeholders doing their own things. This approach remains uncoordinated and essentially duplicative of stakeholder efforts denying any opportunities for strategic partnerships between government, private sector and civil society. Although evidenced in some post-conflict cases in the continent, such partnerships have been the exception rather than the norm. As a result, reconstruction efforts in post-conflict African countries have tended to be slow and unsustainable. The imperative to place government, private sector, and civil society partnership at the center of post-conflict reconstruction in Africa is the more relevant given that by themselves stakeholders are weak. Together, they can combine their limited resources for maximum and effective application to the post-conflict situation.

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