

CIVIL SOCIETY AND HUMAN SECURITY IN THE SOUTHERN AFRICA DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC)

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Introduction

This paper analyses the role of civil society in individual Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) member states - Botswana, Namibia and South Africa - in the advancement / promotion of human security. In particular, it examines how recognised national umbrella non-governmental organisations in the three states / countries understand by human security, which issues of human security they tackle, how they address them, and how they relate to SADC as an organisation in their attempt to tackle human security issues. The three organisations being assessed in this study are the Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (BOCONGO), The Namibian Non-Governmental Organisations Forum (NANGOF) and The **SOUTH** African National NGO Coalition (SANGOCO).

The study is supported by data collected from secondary and primary sources. Primary sources include official policy documents and interviews. The interviews were conducted with the former Acting Director of the SADC Organ for Politics, Defence and Security Affairs of the SADC Secretariat and the General Secretary of the Southern Africa Development Community Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (SADC-CNGO). *We had also planned to interview officials of BOCONGO, NANGOF and SANGOCO. However, interviews with officials of BOCONGO and SANGOCO have not been possible because they demanded letters of introduction and written questionnaires. These were provided and they are yet to respond despite repeated reminders. With respect to NANGOF, a letter of introduction and a written questionnaire were also sent and they are yet to respond.*

The study on the role of civil society in the promotion of human security in the SADC countries is of paramount importance because civil society is a key partner in regional co-operation and integration. Moreover, this study is timely in part because human security is fairly new and an evolving concept that still requires to be debated for it to be understood better. And ever since its adoption by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1994, human security is such a topical issue. Following on to this, individual countries - including those in the SADC as well as SADC as an organisation - have embraced human security in their policy documents and instruments both directly and indirectly as a way of demonstrating their commitment to the realisation of human security. Despite its commitment to human security, the SADC as organisation and as a region, is still evolving and therefore faces a number of challenges that impact negatively on issues that affect human security and its realisation. Three key challenges can be identified. First, SADC countries have different histories and are also at different levels of development (poor and middle income countries). Second, SADC faces the challenge of capacity to address all the human security issues at a time, and this calls for it to prioritize. This is compounded by the fact that the priorities of SADC may not always be in line with those of member states thus posing a problem for regional integration. Third, SADC is confronted by the challenge

of implementation and/or enforcement. All these, make addressing issues of human security a real challenge / daunting task and in turn regional cooperation and integration.

The Evolution of Human Security

In terms of the traditional realist security approach which dominated during much of the Cold War era, security was mainly concerned with “state survival in an anarchical world”, where “power and capabilities were the language with which states communicated with each other” (Hammerstad 2003:8). At the time, security was understood largely “in terms of our ability to use or threaten to use force to hold our enemies at bay” (Dumas 2004:75). Yet, with the end of Cold War conflicts continued to rage in a number of countries suggesting that there were other factors that fuelled these conflicts. This called for a re-thinking, and subsequently a shift in thinking, in the way security was understood during the Cold war. This shift in thinking gave rise to a new form of security that a seminal *United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report of 1994* classified as human security (UNDP 1994). Thus, for the UNDP, human security has two key elements. And these are, “first, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression...second, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life – whether in homes, in jobs or in communities” (UNDP 1994:23). To this extent, the new notion of human security focuses more on the integrity of the individual rather than that of the state. It emphasises an individual that leads a dignified life. In this way, the UNDP placed the issue of human security on the world agenda by building its 1994 Report in and around it. Since then, human security has been put to wide use and has also become a highly contested issue (Batthyany 2004). With the re-classification of security to include the human element, “practitioners and theorists alike widened the definition of security and started categorising a whole range of issues, from economics through the environment to HIV/AIDS, as security issues” (Cawthra 2004:30).

The UNDP embracement of the notion of human security has been so influential in a number of ways. First, it widened the definition of security. Second, it made security difficult to define and more problematic to comprehend. Third, it defied the conventional understanding of security. Fourth, it meant that states had to realign their security priorities so that they could accommodate the new security requisites – a real challenge for developing countries such as those found in the SADC. And fifth, as Osei-Hwedie observed, it defied the conventional understanding about the character of global conflicts (Osei-Hwedie 2003). Consequently, a number of workshops and conferences have been held, and a lot of works and reports have since been produced all aimed at interrogating the concept of human security (see Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue 2003; Ogata and Sen 2003; Cilliers 2004; Grimm 2004; Leen 2004; Social Watch 2004). This paper seeks to make a contribution to that debate.

The UNDP noted that in order “to address the growing challenge of human security,” development has to situate “people at the centre” (UNDP 1994: 4). According to the UNDP (1994:4), sustainable development “gives the highest priority to poverty reduction, productive employment, social integration and environmental regeneration. It brings human numbers into balance with the coping capacities of nature”. This links the security of the country with that of the individual. Thus, Dumas (2004:76) categorically states that:

Personal security is not just a matter of avoiding or ameliorating sudden negative changes. It also implies an ability to carry on a normal flow of life activities without constant stress or worry. A person, who is continually struggling to meet basic material needs, living in a precarious balance between income and outflow, can scarcely be said to be secure. Similarly, a person who constantly weigh[s] every opinion he/she expresses against the possibility of punishment for having spoken out is also not secure. Thus, societies organized in ways that perpetuate poverty and inhibit free political expression cannot be considered conducive to personal security. In sum then, personal security requires at least a decent material standard of living, along with reasonable assurance that it will continue (or improve). It means being protected against arbitrary imprisonment or punishment for the exercise of basic human rights in ways that do not directly injure others or prevent them from exercising these same rights. And, of course, personal security most certainly includes protection against illness, injury and death, especially from “unnatural” causes, such as criminal activity, repression by the domestic government or attack by foreigners.

It is against this background that consideration of security now goes beyond the conventional / narrow military understanding of security that dominated during the Cold War to give more emphasis to the security of the person. According to the UNDP, human security entails several aspects that are closely related, and these are financial, economic, food, sanitary, environmental, personal, gender, community as well as political (UNDP 1994; Batthyany 2004). In this sense, the UNDP “maintains that the core of human insecurity is vulnerability and that we must ask ourselves how people can be protected, insisting on their direct involvement and on the close linkage between development and security” (Batthyany 2004:15). In terms of this, the security of the individual can only be guaranteed only and when he or she is protected from fear and want. This wider usage of the concept of human security suggests that the security of the state is baseless without that of the individual. Consequently, the security of the individual or human security has taken centre stage. In this way, policy makers need to identify factors which inhibit the realisation of human security as envisaged by the UNDP. This is particularly important as the security of the state is fragile as long as its population is afflicted by the foregoing problems that work against the realisation of human security. This does not in any way suggest that state security is of lower importance, however. Instead, the two complement each other (Batthyany 2004). This is underscored by Mutesa and Nchito (2005:9) who note that focus on the security of individuals, however, does not diminish the importance of national security, as

expounded in the state-centric approaches. Many authors recognise that national security and human security are mutually supportive. An effective, democratic state that promotes and protects the welfare of its people is a precondition for strengthening the legitimacy, stability, and security of the state is not an end in itself, but a means of securing security for its people.

It is in this sense that UNDP embraced human security in 1994 that in turn gave rise to its wider usage, and countries - including those in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region - embracing it in their policy frameworks and instruments. Subsequent to this, countries embraced the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000, an indication that they take the notion of human security seriously. The challenge that remains is to work towards the realisation of the MDGs, with Sub-Saharan Africa being the worst affected in so far as issues of poverty and food insecurity are concerned.

However, there is no doubt that human security has gained popularity, prominence and extensive recognition the world over. Even then, it is a notion that is still in its infancy and broad yet it is still developing. This is affirmed by Chari (2001:11) who notes that “the concept of human security is still evolving; specially the manner in which it interfaces with more conservative notions of security, but its evolution derives from prevailing inadequacies with current definitions of security”. Even so, the involvement of civil society is an issue of central importance in part because of what civil society advocates and stands for. Nevertheless, Schalkwyk (2005:127) asserts that “the definition of human security necessitates [the] inclusion of civil society in peace-building and security provision as they require the promotion of good governance, food security, advocacy of human rights, civic education, creation of employment and the general empowerment of people”. Thus, issues that civil society advances are intertwined and interrelated to those that should be met for human security to be realised. The absence of these in one way or the other contributes to insecurity. Having said this, the section that follows examines the role of civil society in the promotion of human security in SADC.

Civil Society, Human Security and SADC

What is civil society? Larry Diamond defines it as “the realm of organized social life that is open, voluntary, self-generating, at least partially self-supporting, autonomous from the state, and bound by a legal order or set of shared rules” (1999:221). This study adopts this definition of civil society. Diamond goes on further to identify five elements of civil society that are critical for it to produce results. These are; goals and methods, self-government, organisational institutionalization, pluralism, and identity (1999:228). To this extent, civil society should operate in a supportive environment for it to realise its objectives. Having defined civil society, the key question this section seeks to answer is what role has it played in SADC to facilitate the promotion of human security? Does

SADC provide a platform for civil society to play its expected role? Does it influence the decision making process in the SADC? What challenges does it face?

It is important to note that interactions with civil society can be defined by two approaches; 'permitted participation' and mobilized 'participation' (Taylor 2003). To this extent, the approach used determines the contributions and achievements civil society can make in a particular area. Without question, civil society has a role to play not only in the advancement of human security agenda but it is also an important stakeholder as a development partner, and in promoting regional cooperation and integration. Civil society has so far played a critical role in expressing violations that impact negatively on human security such as human rights violations, poverty issues etc., even before the advent of the notion of human security. Taylor notes that "evidence in the [SADC] region suggests that progressive civil society formations have been in the forefront of exposing human rights violations, monitoring state based violence, and promoting peace and accountable, transparent governance" (2003:12). The efforts of civil society are quite commendable because human security can only be realised in conditions of peace and stability. Taylor (2003:19) further states that the contribution and the role of civil society in SADC are quite evident in a number of areas that include gender issues, health, education and training, issues of the environment, small-scale enterprises and agriculture. It is quite notable that civil society has been able to play a major role and in turn make contributions to development at times under difficult conditions.

SADC recognises in its policy documents, particularly in the SADC Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO) on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, SADC's Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP), the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between SADC and Southern Africa Development Community Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (SADC-CNGO) of 2000, and more *importantly the SADC Treaty in terms of article 23*, that civil society has a critical role to perform. For all these policy instruments to realise their goals and objectives, SADC should involve civil society in designing regional strategies and policies. Article 23 of the amended SADC Treaty is central in recognising the importance of civil society / stakeholders because it is not only legally binding on SADC as an organisation but also on member states. It thus, affirms that SADC "shall seek to involve fully, the people of the Region and key stakeholders in the process of regional integration". It goes on further to state that SADC "shall co-operate with, and support the initiatives of the peoples of the Region and key stakeholders, contributing to the objectives of this Treaty in the areas of co-operation in the areas of co-operation in order to foster closer relations among the communities, associations and the people of the Region". And in line with this provision and SADC Treaty, the key stakeholders entail "private sector, civil society, non-governmental organisations, and workers and employers organisations" (SADC Treaty 1992). Article 23 of the SADC Treaty is not only encompassing but it also

commits SADC to facilitate and ensure full participation of civic organisations – a milestone indeed in a continent that has generally been hostile to civil society organisations. SADC Executive Secretaries have also made pronouncements as a way of demonstrating SADC's commitment to this partnership. In line with SADC policy instruments, in 2004 the former Executive Secretary of SADC Prega Ramsamy when addressing the CIVICUS World Assembly in Gaborone declared that SADC

underscores the critical role of civil society and other stakeholders in its integration agenda. ...Clearly the challenges facing humanity in creating a just and secure global order are daunting, but through joining forces and forging strategic partnerships we can make a huge difference and overcome the obstacles to the realisation of our cherished vision of a better and inclusive future. In this regard, we shall count on the resilience, rich experience and tested solidarity of Civil Society (Ramsamy 2004 quoted in Schalkwyk 2005:131).

Such declarations show that SADC is, at least in theory, prepared to work with civil society organisations. Furthermore, Ramsamy stated that:

Experience in many parts of the world, especially in Africa, has shown that development programmes and integration schemes designed by politicians and government officials with little or no involvement of interested parties in civil society have not been successful. We now need to take a pragmatic and holistic approach to regional integration if we want to succeed (Ramsamy 2004 quoted in Schalkwyk 2005:131).

This demonstrates that SADC appreciates the value added by civil society as a development partner. It also shows that SADC is finally coming out of age. In this sense, civic groups are an important partner in the promotion of human security because of what they stand for. Consequently, structures of engagement / interaction with civil society have been recognised and established. In particular, these are SADC National Committees, provided for in terms of article 16A of the SADC Treaty, National Contact Points and the SADC-CNGO amongst others. The SADC-CNGO was created in 1998 by umbrella national non-governmental organisations in member states "to coordinate their interventions and promote collaboration with other relevant partners including SADC institutions at regional level" (Taylor 2003:18). Since its formation, SADC-CNGO has been quite active in trying to bridge the gap between SADC and civil society in the SADC region. It has so far held four Civil Society Forums with the assistance of national umbrella bodies as hosts. The purpose of these Forums is to bridge the gap between SADC and civil society. The MoU, between SADC and SADC-CNGO, has not only recognized the structure through which SADC interacts with civil society but it has also given SADC-CNGO a consultative status. The former Acting Director of the SADC Organ for Politics, Defence and Security Affairs put it thus: "So in a nutshell, there is interaction. The SADC Chamber of Commerce and the SADC NGO Forum are steps that need consolidating. In the recent past, we could not imagine representatives of an NGO and Trade Organisations to have direct interaction with the

SADC Summit in a formal way. But today it has become a common place. Of course, there are still mutual suspicions. But as time goes on, mutual trust grows and working together shall become normal. The main concern is that the process is elite driven, both in the SADC and in academia” (Interview, 29 August 2008). Thus, to the extent SADC acknowledges the linkage with civil society, “institutionally there is no reporting line where you can say this is the bridging point” (Interview, 29 August 2008). Despite this, there is a basis for SADC and civil society to work together, and this should be strengthened. This is of critical importance because civil society complements the work of SADC. SADC also complements that of member states. In this way, civil society should be natured for it to play a more meaningful role and therefore contribute positively towards development and regional integration.

Moreover, SADC priority areas overlap with what has been defined and recognised as human security concerns (as discussed above). The Executive Secretary of SADC Tomaz Salomao when giving a keynote address at the second SADC Civil Society Forum in 2006 classified building peace, political stability, democracy, and security, ensuring food security, tackling HIV/AIDS, conducting science and technology research as well as empowering women, who constitute 60% of SADC’s population, as the five major priority areas for SADC as an organisation. In fact, these are also priority areas for SADC member states. This is supported by the SIPO Protocol which defines a whole range of issues as shown in Figure 1 below as the key challenges faced by the different sectors of SADC (SIPO 2004).

Figure 1: Challenges Faced by the Different SADC Sectors

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| <p>a) POLITICAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHALLENGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Economic underdevelopment and poverty• The HIV and AIDS pandemic• Inter and intra state conflicts• Consolidation of democracy and good governance• Refugees, irregular movers, illegal migrants and internally displaced persons• The need to redress imbalances in the accessibility to natural resources and wealth• The demobilization, disarmament, integration and monitoring of ex-combatants• The development and consolidation of regional disaster management mechanisms, and;• Corruption <p>b) DEFENCE SECTOR CHALLENGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Armed conflicts within Member States;• Terrorism• HIV and AIDS• Developing policies and capacities to ensure that the region maintains trained units ready to be deployed in peace support operations in the region or under the auspices of the African Union or the United Nations;• Developing a regional capacity on defence technology• The clearance of landmines and Unexploded Ordinances (UXOs); |
|---|

- Responding to external aggressions
 - The reintegration of ex-combatants and rehabilitation of child soldiers
 - Developing a doctrine that will enable the inter-operability of the Defence Forces
 - Disaster relief support capability
 - The proliferation of and illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons and
 - Any other threats
- c) STATE SECURITY SECTOR CHALLENGES**
- Enhancement of the capacity to prevent the subversion of the constitutional order and national sovereignty
 - The negative effects of globalization such as the growing vulnerability of national borders, increase in organized and transnational crime, drug trafficking, money laundering and human trafficking
 - Terrorism
 - Enhancement of bilateral relations
 - Implementation of Early Warning System (EWS)
 - Address the impact of the HIV and AIDS pandemic
 - Limited resources
 - Food security and
 - Protection of maritime resource
- d) PUBLIC SECURITY SECTOR CHALLENGES**
- Transnational criminal activities and organized criminal syndicates
 - Cyber crime
 - Terrorism
 - Drug dealing and trafficking
 - Violent crime
 - Control and regulation of private security companies for the elimination of mercenary activities
 - The proliferation of and trafficking in small arms and light weapons
 - Money laundering and cash in transit heist
 - The negative effects of globalization such as the growing vulnerability of national borders
 - The scarcity of resources
 - Efficient communication systems backed by a reliable criminal intelligence network
 - Combating human trafficking
 - Combating and prevention of rape, abuse and violence against women, and children
 - HIV and AIDS; and
 - Enforcement of the agreed policies pertaining to the control of conflict diamonds

Source: Reproduced from SIPO Protocol 2004 and adapted from Schalkwyk 2005

As Figure 1 above indicates, the challenges faced by the different SADC sectors overlies human security concerns. This suggests that the persistence of these challenges leads to insecurity. Most of these issues are in one way or the other close or even similar to those tackled by civil society. In this sense, civil society can make a difference towards the realisation of human security in the SADC region and even beyond. This is underscored by Schalkwyk (2005:122) who laments that "SADC acknowledges that security threats

emerge from non-military sources and that there is an interface between development, security and governance". In fact, according to the former Acting Director of the SADC Organ for Politics, Defence and Security Affairs, "the issue of human security is debated within SADC. It may probably be the most debated. A closer look at what SADC Protocols cover and what human security entails demonstrates this. SADC Protocols go even further than human security. Examples include the SADC Shared Watercourses Protocol and that on Environment. They both intend to ensure that SADC people have access to clean and safe water. The first human right of a human being is being a human being. This is assured by being able to eat, to have health and to be educated. The SADC Protocols related to Food Security, Agriculture, Health and Education are exactly aimed at these rights. The ultimate human right that one to be free from harmful threat, is covered by the Protocols of the Organ" (Interview, 29 August 2008). Thus, although SADC documents make no reference (do not mention) the notion human security, its policy documents are built in and around it. To this extent, a closer examination of the SADC Protocols and what SADC identifies as its priorities show that SADC recognises the issue of human security, and in turn the role of civil society as a partner in development, notwithstanding its constraints. It is in this sense that Mutesa and Nchito (2005:33) state that even though regional protocols do not evidently spell out "the expected roles of civil society, they provide important recognition of their importance. It is up to civil society to seize this opportunity to explore ways of building partnerships with government that would translate the global agenda on human security into domestic policy actions". There is no doubt that SADC civil society, both at the regional level and national level, has directly or indirectly shown its willingness to work with SADC. However, as much as these partnerships are an essential step on the door, what remains is the need to move beyond forging these partnerships and making declarations / protocols to implementation - a real challenge for SADC - which is in part aggravated by lack of capacity.

Challenges faced by Civil Society

Although SADC has put in place structures for interaction with civil society, civil society still meets some challenges in its efforts to engage with SADC in the promotion of human security and in turn regional integration. Without question, most SADC countries are ruled by former liberation movements turned into political parties. This in part makes it difficult for them to accept civil society as the values that governed them then are different from those which govern democracies. This is underscored by Dithake who notes that "one of the major problems in the SADC region [is] bad political and electoral systems. For instance, the post-war one-party culture has had negative implications in shaping the relationship between the citizens and the leadership in the region" (2007:15). This could be one of the possible explanations why SADC governments and SADC as an organisation is suspicious of civil society. This situation was compounded by a weak opposition that "often resulted in the

consolidation of dictatorial political behaviour in the region” (2007:15). Moreover, there is unwillingness on the part of SADC leaders to interact with civil society despite the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding. In this sense, “civil society must continue to lobby for this space because it would not only assist in closing the gap between civil society and government but help in fortifying civil society efforts and resources” (Ditlhake 2007:16). Taylor categorically states that “negotiating spaces to anchor NGO policy interventions will not be easy especially since a number of SADC affiliated structures are still evolving. Importantly, the relative weight of civil society participation in SADC is limited to that of having observer status or at best indirect consultative status through SNCs [SADC National Committees]” (2003:24). To this extent, capacity is a real issue for these structures.

Although SADC has put in place structures and policy instruments to facilitate interaction with civil society, these are largely in name without much effect. The General Secretary of SADC-CNGO, Abie Ditlhake, stated that the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between SADC and SADC-CNGO was supposed to be three dimensional. It was supposed to provide for SADC civil society observation, consultation and participation depending on the issue being discussed. Even then civil society still has to fight for space. This suggests that the three dimensions are not automatically guaranteed because civil society continues to struggle to be involved; be it observation, consultation or participation. The SADC Secretariat is willing to consult civil society but the problem in most cases emerges when the Secretariat consult SADC leaders, its principals. To this extent, it has been difficult to operationalise the MoU because SADC does not trust civil society. Moreover, SADC National Committees are not functional (Interview, 25 September 2008). This demonstrates that the pronouncements and declarations SADC makes are baseless because they are not being enforced. In fact, as one official puts it, “invitation to SADC meetings is dependent on the host country. There are countries that are friendly to civil society and those that are hostile to civil society. Furthermore, the implementation of SADC Protocols is dependent on member states” (Interview, 25 September 2008). This is a real challenge for SADC that should be addressed without fail for regional cooperation and integration to be attained and in turn human security. Otherwise, the attainment of these goals risks being turned into hollow exercises. In this sense, there should be meaningful interaction if tangible results are to be realised. In this way, ‘participation within SADC must be backed by wider and informed critical support of NGO partners to ensure that such representation is able to make a qualitative difference when it counts. [Nevertheless], having observer or consultative status is a step in the door but does not guarantee the power and influence to shift policy emphasis in the direction of social justice and equity” (Taylor 2003:24).

Civil Society in Botswana, Namibia and South Africa: An examination of BOCONGO, NANGOF and SANGOCO

Botswana, Namibia and South Africa are regarded as functioning democracies in the SADC region notwithstanding their limitations. As democracies, it is expected that they would facilitate the work of civil society not only in their own countries but also in its interaction with SADC. Having said this, this section examines the role of civil society in Botswana, Namibia and South Africa, especially in relation to the promotion of human security. It is this that we now turn to.

Botswana

Botswana has a sustained record of multi-party politics in Africa. On 30 September 2008, it celebrated 42 years of political independence. However, one-party dominance is a major facet of this democracy. Unlike most countries in the SADC region and the rest of Africa, has no history of armed conflict or that of violent civil society protests. It is a country that has since its independence enjoyed peace as well as peaceful relations between the state and civil society organisations. In this way, the country presents a conducive atmosphere for civil society organisations to engage. Although civil society remains relatively weak in relation to the state, it has had an impact on state policies. It is in this context that the role of BOCONGO in the advancement / promotion of human security should be analysed.

Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (BOCONGO)

Formed in 1995, BOCONGO is Botswana's national umbrella association that brings non-governmental organisations together. It has a wide membership, as reflected by the number of sectors it represents, that at present stands at 84 NGOs. These include those that advance gender and development issues; agricultural and environmental; arts and culture; issues of the church; disability; HIV/AIDS issues and health; issues of the media; human rights; issues of youth and children; science technology and training issues, as well as issues concerning micro finance, credit and empowerment amongst others (<http://bocongo.org.bw/>; accessed 10 October 2008). According to BOCONGO, the various sectors it represents "are involved in various projects that are tailored towards the betterment of the lives of Botswana and hence [the] development of this country" (<http://bocongo.org.bw/>; accessed 10 October 2008). This shows that BOCONGO perceives itself as a development partner. BOCONGO seeks to create an atmosphere that will facilitate the operations of civil society organizations as an acknowledged partner in Botswana's development process and beyond. It also seeks to offer a forum for exchanging information, promote, build capacity and help to mobilize resources for the NGO sector thus work towards a sustainable NGO sector in Botswana (<http://bocongo.org.bw/>). In this way, the NGO sector will play a meaningful role in the development process through lobbying and influencing state policies.

The sectors represented by BOCONGO tackle a variety of issues which in one way or the other overlap with human security concerns. However, as much as BOCONGO

addresses a variety of issues, it does not consciously tackle human security concerns (Interview, 25 September 2008). BOCONGO is also a member of SADC-CNGO. To this extent, BOCONGO does not directly relate to SADC. Instead, it is SADC-CNGO that relates to SADC (Interview, 25 September 2008).

Namibia

Namibia, since its political independence in 1990, has functioned as a dominant party system with some observable levels of pluralism. Since its first elections in 1989, four multiparty elections have been held so far. All were won by the ruling South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) party. In this way, Namibia can be regarded as one of the few functioning multi-party democracies in Africa. Thus, it also provides a conducive environment for the formation and functioning of civil society organizations notwithstanding its challenges. The section that follows examines the role of the Namibian Non-Governmental Organizations Forum (NANGOF) in promoting human security.

Namibian Non-Governmental Organizations Forum (NANGOF)

Formed in April 1991, NANGOF is a national umbrella organization of Non-Governmental Organizations in Namibia that is also a member of SADC-CNGO. NANGOF, through the collective efforts of its members, seeks to realize a favourable environment for civil society organizations to operate, "with an emphasis on democracy, poverty eradication and human rights promotion". It has three main goals. These are advocacy, networking and Information as well as capacity building programmes. The underlying aim is increased participation of civil society in development and to provide a forum for engagement (<http://www.nangof.iway.na/>; accessed 19 October 2008). NANGOF, which consists of around 100 member organizations recently called for an overhauling of the electoral system in Namibia (Namibian, 21 January 2005).

NANGOF addresses a number of issues that include poverty, economic participation and empowerment amongst others. Although its members address a variety of issues, they do not consciously address human security concerns. NANGOF is a member of SADC-CNGO. And this way, it relates to SADC through SADC-CNGO (Interview, 25 October 2008).

South Africa

South Africa emerged from a history of decades of white domination and held its first ever non-racial multiparty elections in 1994. Since 1994, South Africa is undergoing massive social, political and economic transformation. There is a need to rationalize the government, from one which was authoritarian and exclusive, to one which is democratic, transparent, accountable and inclusive. To this extent, it has shown its commitment to multiparty democracy by establishing democratic institutions which are

protected by the country's constitution. Since its first non-racial multiparty elections, three democratic elections have been held so far with the most recent in 2004. All the elections have been won by the African National Congress (ANC), a party that the majority of black people identify with largely because of its role in the liberation struggle. The 2004 national elections did not only mark the third successive multiparty elections since 1994 but also ten years of democracy. In this sense, South Africa provides a favourable for civil society organizations to organize and operate.

SOUTH African National NGO Coalition (SANGOCO)

Created in 1995, SANGOCO is the biggest national umbrella organization of Non-Governmental Organizations in Southern Africa that addresses issues concerning the development of South Africa. It seeks to organize and "coordinate NGO input into the Government policy and ensure that the rich traditions of civil society - forged in the resistance to apartheid - continue to serve the people of South Africa". Since its formation, SANGOCO has not only worked as a development partner but has also been supportive of the government's attempts of ending poverty by meeting the basic needs, economic restructuring in order to meet the needs of all groups on an equal basis, and in the democratization of the state, as well as in enhancing civil society. However, it has to be noted that there has been some policy changes, on the part of government, since the formation of SANGOCO that resulted in it reassessing its roles. SANGOCO's potency rests on "the collective will and effort of its members" (<http://www.sangoco.org.za/>; accessed 13 October 2008). At some point, SANGOCO was such a vibrant organization with some 5000 member organizations but has been faced with major problems over the last two years that had to do with failure to ensure a proper transition following a change in leadership, and being ideologically contested (Interview, 25 September 2008).

Members of SANGOCO address a number of issues and these include amongst others poverty eradication, governance, social justice and economic development. Thus, through its members, SANGOCO addresses a variety of issues without consciously or directly tackling the issue of human security. Even then, the issues tackled by its members overlap human security concerns. Moreover, SANGOCO does not relate directly to SADC but does so indirectly through SADC-CNGO because it is a member of SADC-CNGO (Interview, 25 September 2008).

Conclusion

Civil society does not replace individual member states as well as SADC. Instead, it should be perceived and held as a partner in development that complements and even enhance the work of member states and SADC. SADC should not only recognize the value of civil society, but it should also tap on the expertise and experience of civil society. This is critical in part because civil society is closer to the people and knows

some of the key problems they face. Only then could SADC start thinking of working towards the realization of human security. The other key challenge of SADC is to transform theory into practice. This is particularly important because there is a gap between commitment and implementation. In this sense, SADC should work out ways of ensuring implementation of its protocols. This would help it to move away from the current practice where by implementation is largely dependent on a member state. SADC member states also largely believe in territorial sovereignty over anything else. To this extent, they should be in a position transmit authority to SADC. Otherwise regional cooperation and integration will remain a distant dream.

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