

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**INSTITUTE OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

**THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN  
PROMOTING DIPLOMACY IN KENYA: CASE OF AFRICA PEACE  
FORUM**

**LILLIAN A. OMONDI**

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**SUPERVISOR**

**PROF. MARIA NZOMO**

**A Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Degree of Master in  
Arts in Diplomacy**




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**DECLARATION**


I Lillian A. Omondi hereby declare that this research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

Signed :  ..... Date: 11/11/2013 .....

Lillian A. Omondi

R51/64912/2010

This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor.

Signed:  ..... Date: 12 November 2013 .....

Prof. Maria Nzomo

## **ABSTRACT**

**This study broadly examines NGOs as non state actors in diplomacy. It examines in general NGOs activities and diplomacy in Kenya both pre and post independence and narrows down to contributions of NGO activities to diplomacy in Kenya. The study seeks to justify the need for more study on NGOs and how they contribute towards advancing the interests of the country abroad. In its investigations it focuses on Africa Peace Forum (APFO), an NGO that deals with peace initiatives in Kenya, as a case study. The study revolves around two objectives and a hypothesis which were satisfactorily met. The study was able to examine the role of NGO in enhancing diplomacy by examining the activities of APFO and also Kenya Independent Schools Association (KISA), an NGO providing support to basic education endeavours in Kenya. A few other NGOs were also examined in the process of data collection. The case study was able to evaluate the role of APFO as mentioned in its second objective by examining APFOs activities and achievements and the methods it uses to partake its duties. From the findings of the study, it is clear that the hypothesis too, was met. Having thoroughly examined NGO activities and achievements it was evident that NGOs engage tools of diplomacy in the conduct of their activities which in essence are all embedded in issues addressing the interests of the country. Last but not the least, it is clear that there is need for more study and documentation on the role of NGOs in promoting diplomacy in Kenya.**

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>NGO(s)</b>	-	<b>Non Governmental Organizations</b>
<b>NPM</b>	-	<b>New Public Management</b>
<b>CBO</b>	-	<b>Community Based Organization</b>
<b>APFO</b>	-	<b>Africa Peace Forum</b>
<b>YMCA</b>	-	<b>Young Men Christian Association</b>
<b>MYWO</b>	-	<b>Maendeleo Ya Wanawake</b>
<b>CCK</b>	-	<b>Christian Council of Kenya</b>
<b>KNCSS</b>	-	<b>Kenya National Council of Social Services</b>
<b>IMF</b>	-	<b>International Monetary Fund</b>
<b>KPU</b>	-	<b>Kenya People Union</b>
<b>GASS</b>	-	<b>Geneva Assembly</b>
<b>KDF</b>	-	<b>Kenya Defence Forces</b>
<b>UNDP</b>	-	<b>United Nations Development Programme</b>
<b>AU</b>	-	<b>African Union</b>
<b>SME</b>	-	<b>Small and Medium Enterprise</b>
<b>SCF</b>	-	<b>Save the Children Fund</b>
<b>WHO</b>	-	<b>World Health Organization</b>
<b>UN</b>	-	<b>United Nations</b>
<b>KFA</b>	-	<b>Kenya Farmers Association</b>
<b>SAPs</b>	-	<b>Structural Adjustment Programmes</b>

## **DEDICATION**

**This research project is dedicated to my husband, my parents and my two sons.**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background to the Problem**

The term Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) is a relatively recent terminology and according to Michael Y., & Jonathan D. (2009)<sup>1</sup> an NGO is a citizen-based association that operates independently of government, usually to deliver resources or serve some social or political purpose that is of great purpose to the society. The World Bank classifies NGOs as either operational NGOs, which are primarily concerned with development projects, or advocacy NGOs, which are primarily concerned with promoting a cause. Unlike state-based membership inherent in citizenship, association in civil society is voluntary, and it is characterized by individuals coalescing around common ideas, needs or causes to promote collective gain. It can be said that once these individuals unite in an organized or semi-organized fashion, they are taking collective action. When individuals or groups within civil society work together to advance a broad common set of interests, and these interests become a significant force in shaping the direction of society, the outcomes of this process are often called social movements. Social movements can be thought of as broad societal initiatives organized around a particular issue, trend or priority. When civil society groups come together to form more organized relationships, the entities that emerge are often referred to as nongovernmental organizations or NGOs. NGO is a broad term that is used somewhat loosely to refer to all organizations that are neither an official part of government (at any level) nor a private, for-profit enterprise.

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Y., & Jonathan D. (2009). Business, Value Creation and Society. ISBN:9780521866842

According to Vakil (1997)<sup>2</sup> states that NGOs are “self-governing, private, not-for-profit organizations that are geared to improving the quality of life for disadvantaged people.” This definition contrast NGOs with other types of “third sector” groups such as trade unions, organizations concerned with arts or sport, and professional associations, which are in essence member owned clubs.

Hudson and Bielefeld<sup>3</sup> takes the definition further and says that NGOs are organizations, which first provide useful goods or services, thereby serving a specified public purpose; secondly, are not allowed to distribute profits to persons in their individual capacities, thirdly are voluntary in the sense that they are created, maintained, and terminated based on voluntary decision and initiative by members or a board and lastly exhibit value rationality, often based on strong ideological components.

But according Teegen et al<sup>4</sup> refers to the purpose of NGOs as private, not-for-profit organizations that aim to serve particular societal interests by focusing advocacy and/or operational efforts on social, political and economic goals, including equity, education, health, environmental protection and human rights.

Further insights of what would be the succinct definition of NGO is given in a 1994 United Nations document<sup>5</sup> which describes them as a *non-profit entity whose*

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<sup>2</sup> Vakil, A. (1997). Confronting the classification problem: Toward a taxonomy of NGOs. *World Development*, 25(12), 2057-70.

<sup>3</sup> Hudson, B. A., & Bielefeld, W. (1997, Fall). Structures of multinational nonprofit organizations. *Nonprofit Management & Leadership*, 8(1), 31-49.

<sup>4</sup> Teegen, H., Doh, J., and Vachani, S. 2004. The importance of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in global governance and value creation: an international business research agenda. *Journal of International Business Studies* 35, 463-483.

<sup>5</sup> UN document A/49/215-E/1994/99 of 5 July 1994.

*members are citizens or associations of citizens of one or more countries and whose activities are determined by the collective will of its members in response to the needs of the members of one or more communities with which the NGO cooperates.* Task-oriented and driven by people with a common interest, NGOs perform a variety of services and humanitarian functions, bring citizens' concerns to Governments, monitor policies and encourage political participation at the community level. They provide analysis and expertise, serve as early warning mechanisms and help monitor and implement international agreements. Some are organized around specific issues, such as human rights, the environment, education diplomacy peace or health.

## **1.2 Statement of the Research Problem**

The NGO community in Kenya is an active sector that has continuously grown in size. More and more NGO's are registered every year in as much as deregistration of others also occurs. By the year 2010 about 7000 NGO's were registered at the National Council of NGO's in Nairobi (National Council:2010).

The contribution of NGOs to Diplomacy has not been sufficiently studied and documented both in literature and in practice. It is important to note that NGOs are frequently defined by two major aspects; function and focus. This study therefore asks the question "Have NGO contributions to Diplomacy been adequately studied and or even documented in Kenya?"

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

The study examines NGO's as emerging non-state actors in the third world countries and specifically in Kenya. The study focuses on issues that emerge as NGOs interact with the Government and also the foreign public. This study further examines the kind of relationships that exist between international NGO's and local NGO's as they interact in the development arena. The study ultimately seeks;

- i. To examine the role of NGO in enhancing diplomacy in their day to day activities in Kenya.
- ii. To evaluate the role of Africa Peace Forum (APFO) as an NGO that employs diplomacy in its peace initiatives.

### **1.4 Justification**

NGOs as state actors in Kenya have not been treated with the seriousness that deserves the title. Their attributes and achievements need to be studied and even documented systematically and not mixed up and put down as part of government programmes or treated like general views gathered randomly. Proper study and documentation will enable the NGO fraternity to have point of reference and to create frameworks for organizing the activities systematically and even confidently continue to offer support in fronting for government interests.'

Academically, if more research is done on NGO and diplomacy in Kenya contributions will have been made towards producing more literature which from this study I discovered is very little. This study is important because it shows there is need to have more studies done on NGO and their contribution towards diplomacy in Kenya.

## **1.5 Literature Review**

### **Background**

In the past diplomacy was mainly concerned with matters of war and peace ('high politics') and it was carried out by expert members of the foreign service. Today it seems that there is no aspect of life that has not been on the diplomatic agenda ('high' and 'low' politics) and diplomacy itself is carried out by a variety of people, many of whom are not foreign service officers (Leguey-Feilleux, 2009)<sup>6</sup>. Whereas, traditionally diplomatic negotiations have been carried out by only a few parties in utter secrecy, today there is a new sense of openness and inclusiveness both in the number and variety of parties and issues. This seems to be one of the most important and interesting aspects of the 'new' diplomacy.

As Jean-Robert Leguey-Feilleux<sup>7</sup> points out, many of the 'contemporary participants in diplomacy are not even "agents" or "intermediaries" in the traditional diplomatic sense of carrying out orders and implementing policy'. These new "agents" include representatives of international organizations, multinational corporations (MNCs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Especially NGOs have a significant importance in new diplomacy as they do not represent individual states, or greedy corporations, and can be seen as a reliable partner in negotiations. One reason for states to engage in diplomatic negotiations with a growing number of NGOs is the new interdependence, which has been caused by the proliferation of problems that no single nation can solve unilaterally. The new agents themselves have also been pressing governments to address these problems. The new complex interdependence

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<sup>6</sup> Leguey-Feilleux, J. 2009. *The Dynamics of Diplomacy*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc This was one of the principal criticisms made by Roy Jones in the article that gave the school its name ('The English school of international relations: a case for closure', *Review of International Studies* 7: 1, 1981, pp. 1-13)

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

is eroding the freedom of action of sovereign states, it increases the complexity of diplomacy and diversifies the ways to carry it out. One of the strengths of NGO diplomacy is their ability to either rally public support or opposition together with their skills in creating coalitions and using modern technology for networking. The classic example of the importance of NGO diplomacy and its strengths is the campaign to ban landmines, where NGO representatives played a central role from the setting of the agenda until the actual ratification process. Patrick Leahy, US senator even stated that 'never before have representatives of civil society collaborated with governments so closely, and so effectively, to produce a treaty to outlaw a weapon'.

NGOs have also actively used all the possible diplomatic means to mediate in conflict situations and bring peace if possible. Even though states have the advantage of offering guarantees and inducements beyond the means of NGOs, it might be easier for the conflicting parties to trust an NGO which is less likely trying to gain some personal advantages, and NGOs can even engage in negotiations with outlawed groups, whereas states might be put off because of fears of giving these groups a degree of legitimacy. Modern diplomacy is undertaken by a wide range of actors and this has been among the biggest changes that have taken place in diplomacy since the end of the IIWW. They include economic, environment, humanitarian and criminal interest groups, just to mention a few. The proliferation of non-state actors leads us to question the role of the state and its representatives as primary actors in International Relations Gregory, Bruce (2011)<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup>Gregory, Bruce (2011) 'American Public Diplomacy: Enduring Characteristics, Elusive Transformation'. *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 6(2011) 351-372.

### 1.5.1 Entry of Non -State Actors in Diplomacy

Traditionally, public diplomacy was carried out specifically by the state, the only power authorized to develop a foreign policy (Börzel, T.A. and Panke, D. 2006)<sup>9</sup>. The globalization and evolution towards democracy of international society has brought about the advent of other actors, who, for the moment, are referred to with the generic term 'non-state', and have global interests and the will to make them felt on the world stage. These non-state actors contribute essential ideas and aspects which must be taken into account in any up-dating of the concept of 'public diplomacy'. Specifically, it underlines the effort to obtain 'legitimacy' and to show 'effectiveness'; these have always been what is demanded from this type of actors for the recognition of their right to intervene in the international arena. At the present time, social movements like those seen in the Arab Spring, in the Spanish '15-M', or the global '#occupywallstreet', emphasize the need for political institutions to constantly maintain and win back the credibility and confidence citizens have placed in them. This challenge is even greater when what they are attempting to obtain is the recognition of part of the foreign public, which is what 'public diplomacy' wants.

The non-state actors could be said to be the practitioners *par excellence* of 'public diplomacy', as this is the only type of diplomacy they can perform. They have accumulated experience in developing the practices, strategies and use of new technologies that a global society demands. Gregory (2011) <sup>10</sup>definition of 'public diplomacy': an 'instrument used by states, associations of states, and some sub-state and non-state actors to understand cultures, attitudes and behaviour; to build and

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<sup>9</sup> Börzel, T.A. and Panke, D. (2006) 'Network Governance: Effective and Legitimate?'

<sup>10</sup> Gregory, Bruce (2011) 'American Public Diplomacy: Enduring Characteristics, Elusive Transformation'. *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 6(2011) 351-372



manage relationships; and to influence thoughts and mobilize actions to advance their interests and values', then the actions described in the enunciation are the only actions that these actors can carry out. Although these practices make up a high proportion of the current activity of traditional diplomats the non-state actors are ahead of them in time and experience.

In fact, the non-state actors are pioneering the development of new strategies for communication and influence, engagement techniques and the creation of opportunities for dialogue. They have also incorporated and make the most of the new technologies and social networks which have become their usual means of communication with internal and external publics (Cox, 2006)<sup>11</sup> As for the traditional actors, and despite the fact that the ministries for external affairs have increased their interest and sensitivity on matters of public diplomacy and communication, they still find it difficult to find the resources and staff needed in order to incorporate these activities as much as they should (Melissen,2012)<sup>12</sup>. However, the contribution of non-state actors to the re-definition of 'public diplomacy' is not limited to the mere application of these practices. On the contrary, they introduce and suggest aspects that must be considered in the theoretical debate.

As Börzel and Panke state (2006)<sup>13</sup>, legitimacy and efficacy are the conditions that characterize good government and the stability of the political order in the new global context. This principle is applicable both to state actors and to sub-state and non-state

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<sup>11</sup> Cox, Christopher J., "Digital Repertoires: Non-State Actors and ICTs" (2006). *All Volumes (2001-2008)*. Paper 57.[http://digitalcommons.unf.edu/ojii\\_volumes/57](http://digitalcommons.unf.edu/ojii_volumes/57)

<sup>12</sup> Melissen, J. (2008) 'Options for Public Diplomacy', The Hague, Clingendael Institute, 5 February, 2008. Online publication

<sup>13</sup> Börzel, T.A. and Panke, D. (2006) 'Network Governance: Effective and Legitimate?', in E. Soresen and J. Torfing (Eds.) *Theories of Democratic Network Governance*. London: Routledge.

ones. In spite of the fact that, in certain circumstance, they may be divergent or even incompatible conditions, they are usually complementary and strengthen one another. 'Legitimacy' goes beyond mere electoral support and can be queried by the citizenry at any time, as can be seen in the reactions commented at the start o this work (#occupywallstreet or the 15-M movement in Spain). The dependency of the institutions on citizen approval has increased along with the democratization process in the international sphere.

This legitimacy may mean the right that personalities and institutions have to exercise power in society, based on the citizens' support and trust. In the words of Edwards (1990),<sup>14</sup> (it) 'is generally understood as having the right to be and to do something in society; a sense that an organization is lawful, proper, admissible and justified in doing what it does and saying what it says, and that it continues to enjoy the support of an identifiable constituency'. Thus, although the non-state actors may lack the 'democratic legitimacy' of countries or sub state actors, they receive just as much backing by the citizens. The difference is that it is expressed in a different way. The public support and show their confidence in different ways, not merely by exercising their right to vote in elections. They also show their support, for example, when they make financial donations or work for an NGO, when they buy certain brands, or follow a religious leader.

Legitimacy, then, is not exclusively linked to democratic election. Thus, it is not exclusive to state or sub-state governments that have won an electoral process, but is

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<sup>14</sup> Edwards, M. (1999) 'International Development NGOs: Agents of Foreign Aid or Vehicles of International Cooperation?'. *Non-Profit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 28 (25-37).

also applicable to non-state actors. The distinction lies in the fact that, for non-state actors, the origin of legitimacy is different: it is closely linked to the moral authority the latter earn and is based on their capacity to resolve a certain type of problem, in the specialized knowledge or expertise they show or in exemplary quality of their principles and values (Avant et alia, 2010)<sup>15</sup>.

The legitimacy of an NGO and the legitimacy of a government differ in the type of relations they have with the citizens (more ethereal for NGOs) and the type of commitment established between the institution and the citizen (more demanding in the case of governments). But in contrast with (Vedder 2003)'s<sup>16</sup> conclusions, this support is not limited to the occasional activities that an NGO or any other type of non-state actor may carry out, but is granted to the organization itself and is lasting. Therefore, it is crucial for non-state actors (1) to prove that they represent the common values of the general public, linked with universal values in the case of global actions; (2) that their criteria or working principles be correct (transparency, participation, consensual decisions) – correct at least in the eyes of those who support them: in the case of al-Qaeda democratic decisions would not matter, but the fulfillment of certain principles would; (3) that their actions show effectiveness.

### **1.5.2 Non-State Actors as Political Players in Influencing Foreign Publics**

The proliferation in recent years of non-state actors is transforming international relations (James N. Rosenau, 1980)<sup>17</sup>. Some consequences of globalization, such as

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<sup>15</sup> Avant, D.; Finnemore, M. and Sell, S. (Eds.) (2010) *Who Governs the Globe?* Cambridge:

<sup>16</sup> Vedder, A., (2004), "Internet NGOs: Legitimacy and Accountability", Colloquium on Legitimacy of non state actors, (Electronic), <http://www.tilburguniversity.nl/faculties/frw/research/schoordijk/ctld/colloquia.html> [Accessed: 28 April].

<sup>17</sup> James N. Rosenau, (1980) *The Study of Global Interdependence: Essays on the Transnationalisation of World Affairs* (New York: Nichols)

the crisis of the state or the impact of new technologies, or the emergence of a powerful civil society, have multiplied players acting in the global sphere. But it is not only a question of quantity, but a question of quality: non-state actors are assuming roles that previously belonged to states. They have been empowered by financial, political and technical resources, widely available in these global times. In particular, new technology has made it possible to have a global reach and to contact individuals and other organizations, weaving a broad net that allows non-state players to share knowledge and to develop joint actions.

They are increasing their autonomy and have started to define new rules, acting more effectively than the states (as some NGOs have demonstrated in humanitarian catastrophes), challenging strong powers (like Google in China) or radically modifying security parameters (as al-Qaeda has done). In a sense, non-state actors obtain 'political authority' from their efficacy in advocating human rights, moving forward new regulations or setting the agenda of political institutions. NGOs, transnational companies, religious groups, think tanks, social movements or university experts have a say (and power) on most of the global issues (and conflicts) affecting civil society. However, the coexistence of with new players means that a new kind of diplomatic relations on different scenarios must be developed. In contrast with the bi-lateral and multilateral relations that have traditionally been developed between states, Wiseman introduces a new model, 'polylateralism', which describes the relations between states and the new non-state actors (Wiseman, 2004)<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Wiseman. G, (2004) "Polylateralism" and New Modes of Global Dialogue

### **1.5.3 Transformations that have occurred in Diplomacy**

Nancy Snow and Philip Taylor's *Handbook of public diplomacy* explores some of the strategies and tactics that they think the new diplomat needs to 'sell' their nation's message effectively. *Diplomatic theory of international relations* asks us to recover and apply again some of what might be called the inherited wisdom—the 'mystery'—of past diplomatic practice. These writers agree that diplomacy must be transformed if it is to survive; all three suggest that once transformed, diplomacy will prove a powerful agent for good in international affairs.

#### **Reinvention**

According to (Copeland 1998)<sup>19</sup> diplomacy serves states in three useful ways: as a channel of communication between sovereigns; a means of negotiating agreements between them; and a source of information about what is happening in host states. Past scholars thought these activities so important that they called diplomacy the 'master-institution' of international politics. They also recognized that this institution was fragile. Dishonest or inept diplomats can disrupt channels of communication and generate great—and consequential—misunderstandings, while poor negotiators can undermine attempts to secure agreements even when states' interests align. The gathering of information can all too often shade into espionage, especially in the perceptions of host sovereigns, and spying can wreak lasting damage to the reputations of diplomats themselves and the states they are sent abroad to represent. Diplomacy, in other words, can play a very positive role in international relations, but if practised badly it can also be a potential source of great instability and even conflict. This is because, in essence, diplomacy involves more than just bargaining, as

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<sup>19</sup>Copeland, Daryl. (2009) *Guerrilla Diplomacy : Rethinking International Relations*. Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers,

is sometimes assumed. Rather, diplomacy is better understood as the ‘management of legitimacy’ and legitimacy is a difficult thing to build and maintain. Successful diplomacy renders difficult compromises between states acceptable to both parties: it helps to confer legitimacy on agreements that might not, at first glance, be palatable to sovereigns. Poor diplomacy, on the other hand undermines the capacity of states to view any compromise as legitimate. Without legitimacy, international agreements are hard to make and are often not kept, at least not for long; with legitimacy, states are arguably more easily bound to their commitments.

### **Repackaging**

Many scholars and practitioners agree that diplomats could learn much from the worlds of business and especially public relations. This is particularly true in the case of ‘public diplomacy’—the practice of states speaking to foreign publics to influence opinion rather than just to foreign officials—where great efforts have recently been made to learn new non-governmental strategies and techniques (E. Soresen and J. Torfing (Eds.)<sup>20</sup>.

These scholars enthuse for public diplomacy in both its traditional and more innovative forms. They argue that public diplomacy offers a powerful way not only of bolstering reputation in the world, but of improving international relations. Newer modes of public diplomacy—nation-branding, for example, or policy-networking—can bolster these efforts, as can the mastery of older tricks of propaganda and information warfare. Public diplomacy operates in a legal and normative grey area. It stands in potential, if perhaps not actual, contradiction to some aspects of the

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<sup>20</sup> E. Soresen and J. Torfing (Eds.) *Theories of Democratic Network Governance*. London: Routledge.

normative structure of the modern international system, the basic rules of which are enshrined in the United Nations Charter, but is actively encouraged by others. The Charter commits states to non-intervention in the affairs of others, or, at the very least commits them not to use force or the threat of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state (Art. 2: 4), and prohibits the UN itself from intervening in matters reserved to the domestic jurisdiction of states (2: 7) — barring, of course, circumstances covered in Chapter VII. These norms might be taken to imply that public diplomacy ought not to be practised, but, somewhat paradoxically, other parts of the UN system were deliberately designed for it.

Educational, cultural and scientific exchanges across borders are thus promoted especially by UNESCO and state-to-state contacts are also encouraged.<sup>21</sup> The 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations is no further guidance on this issue, merely stating that building friendly relations between states (note: not peoples), as well as educational, cultural and scientific exchanges, are one of the purposes of resident missions (Art 3: 1(e)). No clearer picture of the acceptability and legitimacy of public diplomacy are indicated by state practice. During the Cold War both sides used various modes of public diplomacy to influence each other's public opinion and to sway third parties, but both took measures too to block the other's efforts. The jamming of radio stations such as the Voice of America illustrated this well, as did mutual condemnations of public diplomacy initiatives as propaganda or even subversion.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> UNESCO's mission is described on its webpage, at: [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=3328&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=3328&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

## **Recovery**

For Paul Sharp (1994)<sup>22</sup>, diplomacy can be a 'civilizing' force and no apology is due for using such terms. More importantly, diplomacy is conceived as an expression of a humane and liberal politics; indeed, 'nothing less than reason made manifest on the international stage'.

Diplomats, Sharp argues, 'see the world differently and with different priorities from those they represent'. For much of the twentieth century, this has been thought a serious problem, either by democrats who see diplomats as elitist distorters of the expression of 'general will' in foreign policy, or by realists who mistrust the ignorance and capriciousness of the masses. He gets around this problem by conceiving of diplomats not as mere public servants, but as messengers, mediators, even 'objective articulators' of 'different worlds'. But that proposition is not at all clear and many would argue the world we have is nowhere near as good as the world we could have.

### **1.5.4 Rise of the NGO Sector**

Many of the world's best known NGOs predate the emergence of the development industry. Save the Children Fund (SCF) was founded by Eglantyne Jebb in 1919 after the trauma of the First World War. Oxfam, which was originally known as the Oxford Committee against the Famine, was established in 1942 in order to provide famine

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<sup>22</sup> Sharp, P. Who Needs Diplomats. *International Journal*, Vol. 52, no. 4, Autumn 1994.



relief to victims of the Greek Civil War. CARE began its life sending US food packages to Europe in 1946 after the Second World War (Charnovitz, 1997)<sup>23</sup>.

Essentially, NGOs had been active at the international level since the eighteenth century in Western countries, when national level issue-based organizations focused on the abolition of the slave trade and movements for peace. By the start of the twentieth century, there were NGOs associations promoting their identities and agendas at national and international levels. For example, at the World Congress of International Associations in 1910, there were 132 international associations represented, dealing with issues as varied as transportation, intellectual property rights, narcotics control, public health issues, agriculture and the protection of nature, and NGOs became prominent during the League of Nations after the First World War, active on issues such as labor rights. But from 1935 onwards, the League became less active as growing political tensions in Europe led towards war and NGO participation in international affairs began to fade (Charnovitz, 1997)<sup>24</sup>.

In 1945, Article 71 of the UN Charter<sup>25</sup> formalized NGO involvement in UN processes and activities, and some NGOs even contributed to the drafting of the Charter itself. UNESCO and WHO both explicitly provided for NGO involvement in their charters. But NGOs again began to lose influence, hampered by Cold War tensions and by the institutional weakness of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It was not until the 1970s when NGO roles again intensified and they played key roles within a succession of UN conferences from the Stockholm

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<sup>23</sup> Charnovitz, S. (1997). Two centuries of participation: NGOs and international governance. *Michigan Journal of International Law*, 18(2), 183–286.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid

<sup>25</sup> Article 71 of the UN Charter (1945)

Environment Conference in 1972 to the Rio Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992, where NGOs were active in both the preparation and the actual conference itself, which approved a series of policy statements relating to the role of NGOs within the UN system in policy and program design, implementation and evaluation.

According to Cernea (1988)<sup>26</sup>, the term “nongovernmental organization” dates from 1950, when the United Nations (UN) coined the expression. Presumably the UN, which primarily dealt with governments and wanted to consult private, nonprofit organizations that were independent of governments, found it convenient to refer to them simply as non-governmental organizations to distinguish them from governments. NGOs have existed in various forms for centuries, but they rose to high prominence in international development and increased their numbers dramatically in the 1980s and 1990s. It is difficult to know precisely how many NGOs there are, because few comprehensive or reliable statistics are kept. Some estimates put the figure at a million organizations, if both formal and informal organizations are included, while the number of registered NGOs receiving international aid is probably closer to “a few hundred thousand.” From the late 1980s, NGOs assumed a far greater role in development than previously. NGOs were first discovered and then celebrated by the international donor community as bringing fresh solutions to longstanding development problems characterized by inefficient government to government aid and ineffective development projects. Within the subsequent effort to liberalize economies and “roll back” the state as part of structural adjustment policies, NGOs came also to be seen as a cost-effective alternative to public sector

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<sup>26</sup> Cernea, M. M. (1988). Non-governmental organizations and local development, World Bank discussion papers. Washington, DC: World Bank.

service delivery. In the post- Cold War era the international donor community began to advocate a new policy agenda of “good governance” which saw development outcomes as emerging from a balanced relationship between government, market, and third sector. Within this paradigm, NGOs also came to be seen as part of an emerging “civil society.”<sup>27</sup>

The new attention given to NGOs at this time brought large quantities of aid resources, efforts at building the capacity of NGOs to scale up their work, and led ultimately to important changes in mainstream development thinking and practice, including new ideas about participation, empowerment, gender, and a range of people centered approaches to poverty reduction work. But too much was expected of NGOs, which came to be seen in some quarters as a “quick fix” for development problems. This had led to a backlash against NGOs by the end of the 1990s, when the evidence began to suggest that NGOs had only partially lived up to these unrealistically high expectations. A global shift also took place among development donors towards new ways of working with developing country governments, using mechanisms such as “budget support” and “sector-wide approaches” (Lewis, 2007)<sup>28</sup>.

On diplomacy Simmons (1998)<sup>29</sup> says that it is states that always play a very crucial role in the study of international relations. The study of international relations has been concerned primarily with struggles for power, wars, and the efforts of states to gain best national interest that began in 1648 with the Peace of Westphalia. However, a variety of other non-state actors are increasingly involved

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid 27

<sup>28</sup> Lewis, D. (2007). *The management of non-governmental development organizations* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

<sup>29</sup> P.J. Simmons, (1998) “Learning to Live with NGOs,” *Foreign Policy*

in the decisive issues of world politics. Therefore, there are some debates in the field of international relations. Over the past three decades or so, more and more scholars suggest the important roles of non-state actors. States are not only losing autonomy in a globalizing economy, but also sharing powers – including political, social, and security roles at the core of sovereignty – with business, international organizations, and a multitude of citizens groups, known as nongovernmental organizations. This results from the declining role of states, the increased emphasis on private sector initiatives and the emergence of civil society. This dynamic shift among states, private sectors, and civil society has brought about a new set of issues, challenges and opportunities for a tremendous amount of NGOs. In addition, NGOs have risen to greater prominence in almost every region of the world. Most NGOs, which consist of nonofficial groups in different countries have come together to promote common interests through international actions. Today, NGOs deliver a lot of human development assistance. If current trends continue, the international system will become profoundly different in the future. Therefore, to comprehend roles of NGOs in international relations is very important and significant.

According to Simmons (1998), NGOs' functions are as follows: First, setting agenda: NGOs have long played a key role in forcing leaders and policymakers to pay attention. They now use computers and cell phones to launch global public-relations blitzes that can force issues to the top of policymakers' "to do" lists. Second, negotiating outcomes: NGOs can be essential in designing multilateral treaties that work. Third, conferring legitimacy: NGOs judgments can be decisive in promoting or withholding public and political support. And last, making solutions work: NGOs on the ground often make the impossible possible by doing

what governments cannot or will not. They also play critical roles in translating international agreements and norms into domestic realities. Moreover, NGOs increasingly operate outside existing formal frameworks, moving independently to meet their goals and establishing new standards, hence governments, institutions and corporations are themselves compelled to follow through force of public opinion. These four functions gradually grow in intensity as yet. These non-state actors are distinct from state actors and can act almost independently from states. They seek autonomy of action from states, and face an “autonomy dilemma” quite different from the security dilemma faced by states. They help national decision makers to make and enlarge the foreign policy agenda by serving as transmission belts. As a result, non-state actors can significantly affect the interests and behaviors of states on certain international issues.<sup>30</sup>

As earlier noted, NGOs have four functions: embrace setting agendas, negotiating outcomes, conferring legitimacy, and making solution work. By these functions, NGOs have formed the new diplomacy which is a constant inspiration to international affairs. According to Davenport, the new diplomacy means “the power politics and maneuvering of a group that called itself ‘like-minded’ states and their collaborators, the NGOs.” The various efforts of the new diplomacy are characterized by the terms “participation,” “empowerment,” “people-centered,” and “consensus. Of the many approaches to analyzing the roles of NGOs in international relations practice, some dominant approaches can be observed. One can be termed ‘top-down’ approach emphasizes traditional diplomacy, in which bilateral and multilateral bargaining is the chief instrument. National

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid

interests and the distribution of power are the primary determinants of outcomes (Simmons, 1998)<sup>31</sup>.

Clark (1991)<sup>32</sup> suggested that NGOs “can oppose, complement or reform the state but they cannot ignore it.” NGOs will always remain dependent for their “room for maneuver” on the type of government which they find themselves dealing with at international, national or local levels. Government attitudes to NGOs vary considerably from place to place, and tend to change with successive regimes. They range from active hostility, in which governments may seek to intervene in the affairs of NGOs, or even to dissolve them (with or without good reason) to periods of active courtship, “partnership,” (and sometimes “co-optation”) as governments and donors may alternatively seek to incorporate NGOs into policy and intervention processes. Advocacy NGOs work to shape the social, economic or political system to promote a given set of interests or ideology. They engage in lobbying, serve as representatives and advisory experts to decision makers, conduct research, hold conferences, stage citizen tribunals, monitor and expose actions (and inactions) of others, disseminate information to key constituencies, set/define agendas, develop and promote codes of conduct and organize boycotts or investor actions.

The work undertaken by NGOs is wide-ranging but NGO roles can be usefully analyzed as having three main components: implementer, catalyst, and partner (Lewis, 2007)<sup>33</sup>. The implementer role is concerned with the mobilization of

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<sup>31</sup> P.J. Simmons, (1998) “Learning to Live with NGOs,” *Foreign Policy*

<sup>32</sup> Clark, J. (1991). *Democratising development: The role of voluntary organizations*. London: Earthscan.

<sup>33</sup> Lewis, D. (2005). *Actors, ideas and networks: trajectories of the nongovernmental in development studies*. In U. Kothari (Ed.), *A radical history of development studies*. London: Zed Books.

resources to provide goods and services to people who need them. Service delivery is carried out by NGOs across a wide range of fields such as healthcare, microfinance, agricultural extension, emergency relief, and human rights. This role has increased as NGOs have been increasingly “contracted” by governments and donors with governance reform and privatization policies to carry out specific tasks in return for payment; it has also become more prominent as NGOs are increasingly responding to man-made emergencies or natural disasters with humanitarian assistance. The catalyst role can be defined as an NGO’s ability to inspire, facilitate or contribute to improved thinking and action to promote social transformation. This effort may be directed towards individuals or groups in local communities, or among other actors in development such as government, business or donors. It may include grassroots organizing and group formation, gender and empowerment work, lobbying and advocacy work, and attempts to influence wider policy processes through innovation, and policy entrepreneurship. In these ways, advocacy NGOs gives voice and provides access to institutions to promote social gain and/or mitigate negative spillovers from other economic activity.

A finer distinction between two types of advocacy NGOs – “watchdog” and “social movement” NGOs – is worth highlighting. The watchdog NGOs are less ideologically radical, relative to the communities in which they operate, and are generally satisfied with the broader economic, legislative, political and social institutions. Thus, the role of watchdog NGOs is not to radically change the system but ensure that the requirements of the system are actually being met by various other organizations, such as firms and regulatory and legislative bodies. By contrast, social movement NGOs are not trying to support the existing system, but to change or undermine it.

The more radical the social movement organization, the more radical the change they are pursuing. Meanwhile the service-oriented NGOs provide goods and services to clients with unmet needs. NGOs have long stepped in to serve as critical “safety nets” where politically challenged, indebted or corrupt states are unable or unwilling to provide for societal needs, and where global problems defy the conception of nation-state responsibilities. Examples of such service activities include relief efforts provided by the Red Cross/Red Crescent, natural resources monitoring by WWF and the distribution of medicinal drugs by Doctors Without Borders (Vedder, A. 2004)<sup>34</sup>.

## **1.6 Theoretical Framework**

This research is informed by the liberalist school of thought in International Relations whose roots lie in idealism. Liberalism is upbeat about human nature and human possibilities. According to Paul Sharp (1994) “diplomacy is conceived as an expression of a humane and liberal politics.”<sup>35</sup>

The foundations of the liberal theory can be looked at from three core assumptions; the basic liberal claims about the essential social actors and their motivations, the relationship between state and civil society and the circumstances under which states develop strategies and make choices in the international system.

The first core assumption of liberalism is that the fundamental actors in politics are members of domestic society who are individuals and privately constituted groups seeking to promote their independent interests. Liberalists propose and support that

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<sup>34</sup> Vedder, A., (2004), "Internet NGOs: Legitimacy and Accountability", Colloquium on Legitimacy of non state actors,(Electronic), <http://www.tilburguniversity.nl/faculties/frw/research/schoordjik/ctld/colloquia.html> [Accessed: 28 April].

<sup>35</sup> Sharp, P. Who Needs Diplomats, International Journal, Vol. 52, no. 4, Autumn 1994.



politics is embedded in a social context which constrains the purposes of government. Domestic society relations constitute the central issue of politics. In any society individuals and private groups are assumed to define their underlying preferences independently of politics and interact with others in an effort to realize them. Unlike realists, liberals do not take popular support for state policies for granted nor do they assume that the optimal state policy can be derived solely from the position of a state in the international political order.

The second core assumption is that all governments represent some segment of domestic society whose interests are reflected in state policy. Liberals analyze domestic institutions that link state and society as mechanisms for the representations of social interests. The principal – agent relationship that exists between the population and the state is a very important factors, variation in the extent of representativeness is equally very important.

The third core liberal assumption is that the behavior of states reflects the nature and configuration of state preferences. Liberals argue that states seek to realize distinct preferences or interests under constraints imposed by the different interests of domestic society amongst others.

In this study, NGOs could correctly be poised as a representation of the civil / domestic society. It is therefore correct to state, with reference to the first assumption, that NGOs are fundamental actors in politics and that NGO activities constrain the purposes of government. Form the second assumption it is correct to say that the interests of NGOs are reflected in state policy, arriving from the fact that they are

representatives of the domestic society. Thirdly, it can be argued that NGOs influence the choice of behavior for a state, in as much as states are free to choose how they behave.

### **1.7 Hypothesis**

NGOs contribute towards promoting interests of a given country using diplomatic tools.

### **1.8 Methodology**

This proposal is largely dependent on both primary and secondary data. Secondary data is to be retrieved from literature review such as academic reports, journals, daily newspaper published and unpublished books not forgetting to mention information from the internet. With the case study however, there are field visits and interviews to be conducted. Primary data in this case has to be retrieved through interviews with the NGO board and officials and staff of the Africa Peace Forum.

Due to the high number of NGOs registered by the NGO council, it will be impossible to cover them all thus a stratified random method will be used to select another in addition to APFO for the sake of data collection. This too is going to be a local NGO with programmes that have run for up to five years.

### **1.9 Limitations to the Study**

The NGO council which is the coordinating centre for NGOs in the country is currently going through infighting among its members and it is almost at the verge of collapse. This made it difficult to access its officials which would definitely have

added one or two important points. A council office which also houses the resource centre remains open with some staff present to offer the necessary support. An active vibrant office would have contributed more towards this study. This however did not deter my efforts to get most of the information required for my research.

## **Chapter Outline**

**Chapter one introduces the topic of the research study by giving an insight of what is in the study through the problem statement, justification, theoretical framework, hypothesis, literature review and the methodology used.**

**Chapter two gives an insight of the NGO situation in Kenya tracing back from the origins.**

**Chapter three looks at the extent to which NGOs have contributed in advancing Kenyas interest abroad.**

**Chapter four analyses the contributions of NGOs towards Diplomacy as they partake their duties.**

**Chapter five provides conclusion and gives recommendations from the study's findings.**

## CHAPTER TWO: THE NGO SECTOR IN KENYA

### 2.1 Activities of the NGOs at Pre and Post Independence

Voluntary development initiatives in Kenya have their basis in the emergence of church-based and independent secular organizations that were independent of the state in the colonial period. The church-based organizations were formed to address relief and welfare issues that were affecting the society. According to a document by the stakeholders on the Proposed NGO Policy 2004<sup>36</sup>, these voluntary development initiatives in Kenya also have their basis in the *harambee* motto. *Harambee* is a kiswahilli word that means pulling together for mutual assistance.

The policy further says that the NGOs in Kenya draw much of their local contemporary strength from *harambee* roots. Through *harambee* people in a given locality would organize themselves to accomplish certain production tasks and assist members in need. Through *harambee* also communities mobilized themselves and their resources and contributed freely to efforts to build local schools, health clinics, water-wells, cattle dips and later, village polytechnics. At independence Kenya faced serious floods and famine. The country became an international centre of focus and an entry point for many foreign relief agencies and local voluntary organizations. Many local volunteer and civil society bodies such as the Yong Women Christian Association (YWCA), Young Men Christian Association (YMCA) and Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organization expanded their activities during and after this period. By the late 1970s, Kenya had about 120 NGOs, both foreign and national, which were involved in more than relief and welfare activities. By this time most of these NGOs had expanded their scope to include community development activities in order to

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<sup>36</sup>Proposed Kenya Non-Governmental Organisations Policy by the NGOs co-ordination board as adopted by the stakeholders' forum may 2004.

address the root causes of these problems. Warm relations between the government and NGOs were exemplified especially by the support granted to the latter in terms of tax exemptions, secondment of government staff to NGOs projects and general collaboration in development endeavors. During this time Kenya became a favoured base for foreign NGOs operating in Eastern and Northern Africa. This was as a result of the relatively welcoming attitude of the government and also because of the absence of major political upheavals. The temperate climate of the Nairobi area and good international communications were also major factors. The new wave of famines in the region during the early 1980s was to lead to further growth in the presence of existing and new foreign NGOs.

Kameri-Mbote, P. (2000-2)<sup>37</sup> too notes that the NGOs in Kenya may be traced to philanthropy mainly in the colonial times. During this early period, the activities of NGOs largely focused on welfare. These activities later changed and developed to cover not only the provision of services but also political action and advocacy. The emergence of new democracies ushered in the era of a vibrant civic sector. These civic organizations reached their zenith in Kenya during the period after the re-launch of the multiparty politics era in the 1990s. This is largely attributable to the fact that political pluralism greatly enhanced the space for legal implementation of the right of freedom of association and the institutions of democracy.

During the colonial period in Kenya, freedom of association was not entertained<sup>9</sup> and the two main types of civic organizations operating were: religious/philanthropic associations and the so-called people's organizations. In the

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<sup>37</sup>Kameri-Mbote, P. (2000-2). The Operational Environment and Constraints for NGOs in Kenya. Strategies for Good Policy and Practice. IELRC Working Paper 2000-2

1940s numerous social groupings were formed and consisted largely of women groups. Perhaps these were the precursors of the present day maendeleo ya wanawake organizations (MYWOs). Generally, four broad categories of NGOs are discernible in this era. First, there were local charitable organizations, largely Christian initiatives such as the Young Men Christian Associations (YMCA) and the Young Women Christian Associations (YWCA). The Young Women Christian Organization (YWCA) was operational by 1930. Second, there were the indigenous ethnic welfare associations. These were mainly involved in self-help activities most of which were confined to urban areas. The third group comprised the secular service providing NGOs especially after the World War II. Among these organizations were the war veterans' associations and the Kenya Farmers Association (KFA). The KFA was originally a settler association although with time and specifically after independence it involved African farmers. Last, but not least, there existed occupational associations and professional bodies.<sup>38</sup>

Prior to the 1990 NGO Act there was no specific institutional and legislative framework to govern the NGO sector. The result is that NGOs were registered under various laws such as the Companies Act, the Societies Act, the Ministry of Culture and Social Services and the Trustees Act. Hence the major constraints at this time were related to the lack of a clear national framework for appreciating NGOs' role in development; institutional capacity weaknesses; poor co-operation and networking; tensions between NGOs and government; and geographical mal-distribution.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid  
<sup>39</sup>Ibid

In a survey conducted in the mid -1990s it was revealed that 75% of all registered NGOs were located in Nairobi. The administration of these NGOs prior to the 1990 NGO Act does not appear clear. After independence the Government was supportive of NGOs. This policy decision was taken in view of the fact that NGOs were largely seen as instruments to supplement the development programme of the public service. Accordingly the Kenya National Council of Social Services (KNCSS) was formed in 1964 as a quasi-governmental institution under the Ministry of Culture and Social Services. The main objectives of the KNCSS were to coordinate NGO activities and advise the Government. This Council apparently failed to meet the expectations of both the Government and the NGO sector. It was subsequently disbanded in 1990 and its activities taken over by the NGO Coordination Board established under the NGO Act. The absence of a clear and efficient NGO administration over the years has resulted in the dearth of comprehensive and coherent empirical information. For instance, there is contradictory empirical data on the growth of NGOs in Kenya. While some studies indicate that the overall growth between 1977 and 1987 was about 100%, others put the growth for the period 1974-1988 at 229%.<sup>40</sup>

The decade of the eighties in Kenya was characterized by an escalation of such problems as poverty, civil strife, conflicts, internal displacements, and general degeneration of the socio-economic and political systems. These and other related events adversely impacted the pattern of people's interaction. The development of NGOs in the 80s and 90s was phenomenal and appeared to be directly linked to the problems mentioned. By the end of the decade of the '80s indigenous NGOs in

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<sup>40</sup>ibid



Kenya had grown by over 150% in a period of ten years. Several factors account for this growth.

First, there were numerous economic ills in Kenya. It was apparent that the Government had failed to deliver the much-needed economic leadership. The World Bank and the IMF prescribed that market forces be used to address the worsening economic situation. These initiatives were not successful in tackling the problems. NGOs were therefore poised to fill the gaps where the Government and the market forces had failed. In some cases there was dire need for NGOs to assume functions, which had been abandoned by the state especially in the fields of social services. Second, the new wave of people's organizations was in search for a new basis for facilitating their struggle for participation in the decision-making process. The escalation of economic decline and market forces characterised by structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) and haphazard liberalisation of the economy (as prescribed by the World Bank and the IMF) set the stage for NGOs as these organizations were viewed by many as the panacea for those ills and the way forward for taking action on matters affecting the lives of the people. Third, NGOs were formed as development agents. Kenya is endowed with enormous amounts of resources. Unfortunately, there has been uneven allocation of these resources for development. In terms of development, NGOs were formed to rebel against this marginalization, to tap this wealth and to redistribute it on a win-win basis for all stakeholders.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid

In a broad sense, NGOs, though relatively recently identified with an acronymic label and as a “third sector” (Salamon & Anheier 1992)<sup>42</sup>, are not new in Kenya. Both local and international organizations have a long history in the country. Since 1963, the beginning of Kenya's history as an independent country, the government of Kenya has encouraged the development of indigenous not-for-profit organizations, locally called *harambee* groups – self-help societies or community-based organizations (CBOs). *Harambee* was the rally cry of Kenya's first President, Jomo Kenyatta, and it became the country's motto.

Kenyatta recognized that the Kenyan people would have to significantly contribute to the country's development efforts for it to advance. He called on local groups to pull together to achieve what they could on their own, promising that the government would supplement local efforts. The most common manifestations of this program were *harambee* schools and clinics; a local community would gather the resources to build a schoolhouse or clinic building, and the government would step in and provide teachers, administrators, nurses and clinicians. While this type of participatory development might sound ideal, much of the relationship between *harambee* groups and the government has been fraught with contention in Kenya. From early on, the *harambee* movement was largely co-opted by political motivations and corruption, weakening its effectiveness. *Harambee* was meant to legitimate the regime by redistributing wealth from the rich to the poor (Osodo & Matsvai 1997)<sup>43</sup>; it instead became a tool of control that strengthened the country's dependence on patronage politics. MPs began to vocally broadcast their contribution to local self-help programs

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<sup>42</sup>Salamon, L.M. and H.K. Anheier, 1992. *Toward an Understanding of the International Nonprofit Sector*. The Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project Series- No.1

<sup>43</sup>Osodo, Patrick and Simon Matsvai. 1997. “Partners or Contractors? The Relationship Between Official Agencies and NGOs – Kenya and Zimbabwe.” INTRAC: Oxford UK.

in their constituencies for political favor higher in the regime and electoral advantage, and local administrators would coerce their community into donating in order to gain the eye of their superiors. “The more the amount raised in a certain jurisdiction, the more the junior staff caught the attention of the powers that be. You could be promoted from District Officer I all the way to a district commissioner (DC) very quickly. ...At the higher levels and political circles, this was a publicity strategy. Politicians knew the function may be broadcast, so they had to be seen to raise big money.

Along with the development of indigenous non-governmental organization, the country also has a long tradition of largely well-intentioned outsiders – beginning with Muslim and Christian missionaries – providing social services at relatively low cost. During colonialism, European missionaries provided most of the modern health care in the country through both large hospitals and small clinics. Missionaries also brought formal Western schooling to Kenya beginning in the late 1800s, and remained the main provider of Western education before independence. Africans also began to open their own schools as part of the Kikuyu Independent Schools movement in the late 1920s and 1930s. These schools were a precursor to *harambee* schools, as they were established at the community level and later provided teachers by the government (Rosberg& Nottingham 1966, Natsoulas 1998)<sup>44</sup>. Many of the missionary-founded institutions still exist, though most of the schools were taken over by the government during the early independence period.

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<sup>44</sup>Rosberg, Carl and John Nottingham 1966.*The Myth of Mau Mau: Nationalism in Kenya*. New York: Praeger.

Clinics and hospitals, however, usually remained in the hands of the churches following independence. Today in Kenya, both local community-based self-help groups and foreign based other-oriented NGOs still exist. Both are registered with the government. The former, now numbering more than 220,000 (Kanyinga 2004)<sup>45</sup> are registered with the Ministry of Culture and Social Services under the Societies Act, and are often called CBOs. The later, for the most part, have morphed into NGOs, and along with similar Kenyan-based organizations, are registered with the NGO Coordination Board. These NGOs are largely secular organizations, though they are sometimes registered in association with a church or other religious organization, making the *strict* characterization of NGOs as “secular organizations” inaccurate. NGOs began to be registered qua NGOs in the early 1990s, after their numbers began growing noticeably. The sector now employs more than 300,000 people full-time, which is about 2.1 percent of the economically active population, and a sizeable 16.3 percent of non-agricultural employment.

The line between church-based development activities (not registered as NGOs) and NGO activities, like the line between CBOs and NGOs, is incredibly blurred. Often, individual churches or national-level church organizations run development programs, clinics, etc. Often, these are not registered as NGOs, but sometimes they are. Clearly, the somewhat messy reality of registration choice makes perfect interpretation of the impact of NGOs difficult. It is not surprising, therefore, that the growth trajectory of NGOs and CBOs over the past two decades has been similar – between 1995 and

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<sup>45</sup>Kanyinga, Karuti. 2004. “Civil Society Formations in Kenya: A Growing Role in Development and Democracy” in Okello, Duncan (ed). *Civil Society in the Third Republic*. National Council of NGOs: Nairobi.

2002, the number of CBOs grew from 90,000 to 220,000 (Kanyinga 2004)<sup>46</sup>. Arguably, the growth in registered CBOs is a reaction to the growth of NGOs; while CBOs can be seen as an expression of growing civic engagement, they are also often an expression of popular desire to access the resources brought by NGOs. CBOs cannot therefore be entirely delinked from NGOs.

Another factor confounding the appealing NGO/CBO distinction is the fact that many organizations registered as one type of organization actually have characteristics more typical of the other type. Usually, NGOs are better equipped with formal training, staff and material resources, and have a larger base of support. This said many small local NGOs register without funding, training or concrete plans in the hope that registering will attract these resources. These latter organizations more closely resemble CBOs. Moreover, some people critique the description of NGOs as “civil society” since many are based in foreign countries – unlike CBOs, which are clearly homegrown civic organizations. The truth is that the overwhelming majority of NGO employees, leaders and advocates in Kenya are Kenyans, advancing Kenya-specific social agendas – even when their funding is foreign. Given this reality, we can talk of NGOs as civil society organizations. Indeed, NGOs in Kenya – as elsewhere – played a significant civil society role in the democratization of the 1990s, often providing a “counterweight to state power” during this time (Edwards & Hulme 1996)<sup>47</sup>.

According to an undated paper by Elkana Odembo<sup>48</sup>, another stream of thought links the establishment of NGOs in Kenya to the Second World War. He says in an article

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid 5

<sup>47</sup> Edwards, Michael and David Hulme. 1996. “Too Close for Comfort? The Impact of Official Aid on Nongovernmental Organizations.” *World Development*

<sup>48</sup> Odembo E., *Credibility, Image and Identity: A Crisis in the NGO Sector in Kenya*

that among the most important outcomes of World War II in Kenya was the formation of numerous ethnic and regional based associations and groups. Some were political, some economic while others had a social orientation. The wars therefore catalysed the formulation of indigenous non-profit organisations (NPOs), and also lead to the rise of self-help groups that aimed at fostering the welfare of people affected by the decline in social services due to the war. Civil society in East Africa, as commonly understood elsewhere in the world, denotes all private (non-governmental) institutions serving citizens and providing vehicles for citizens to associate and express their citizenship. Civil society is larger than the non-profit sector, and also larger than the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) sector as defined by law in any of the three East African countries. Thus though all non-profit organisations (NPOs) are parts of civil society, not all civil society organisations (CSOs) are non-profit. Neither is it the case that all CSOs are registered (nor desire to be registered) as NGOs under the various NGOs legislation in the three countries. The NGOs in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania are therefore a part of and not equal to the NPO sector, nor are they equal to civil society. During the colonial era, especially in Kenya, the non-profit sector consisted of organisations run by indigenous populations or foreigners.

In an analytical paper, Odemba who was then the Executive Director of an NGO, Ufadhilli said that the non-profit organisations that were initiated by the indigenous people consisted of self-help groups, funeral committees, age groups, and farming and herding groups. These organisations were entirely owned and managed by the Africans and were aimed at promoting indigenous people's welfare. The organisations were part and parcel of the general population. On the other hand, non-

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profit organisations started by the missionaries and other foreign institutions were typically formal and independent of their members or the population they served.

In Kenya, NGO growth has been truly staggering: in 1974, there were only 125 NGOs in Kenya. By 1990, there were over 400 registered with the government, soaring to nearly 3000 in 2004, and well over 4200 by 2007 (Bratton 1989 citing USAID, National Council of NGOs 2005, NGO Coordination Bureau 2006)<sup>49</sup>. While most of these non-governmental actors are not directly hostile to the state, they are providing welfare and other services that are traditionally associated with and often explicitly promised by governments in Africa (Campbell 1996: 9, Cannon 1996, Whaites 1998)<sup>50</sup>, such as education, health care, child and women's assistance, agricultural extension services, employment, and even in some cases, roads, wells and other infrastructure.

Since independence, African governments have predicated their legitimacy on the promise of distributing developmental services and employment to the populace (Young 1988)<sup>51</sup>. This was a major change from the colonial era, when governments refused to provide services to most of the native African populations. As Julius Nyerere, the first president of Tanzania and a pan-African leader, once said, "Freedom to many means immediate betterment, as if by magic. Unless I can meet at least some of these aspirations, my support will wane and my head will roll." Fortunately for Nyerere and others, new African states were able to make good on promises of service provision, rapidly expanding the government at a time when

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<sup>49</sup>Bratton, Michael. 1989. "The Politics of Government-NGO relations in Africa" *World Development*.

<sup>50</sup>Campbell, Will. 1996. The potential for donor mediation in NGO-State Relations: An Ethiopian Case Study. Institute of Development Studies, Working papers. Institute of Development Studies.

<sup>51</sup>Young, Crawford. 1988. "The Colonial State and its Political Legacy" in Rothschild and Chazan (eds) *The Precarious Balance: State and Society in Africa*.

Keynesian state-led development was de rigueur, world market commodity prices were booming, and loans were easy to obtain. Thus, young “developmental state” governments became pervasive, involved in all elements of the economy, service provision and welfare (Mkandawire 2001)<sup>52</sup>.

During the pre-colonial period, the colonial administration was in charge of events in the country that might have affected the non-profit sector. The colonial government’s policies coupled with the struggle for independence would therefore be a determinant of the type of Non –Profit Organisations emerging in the colony following the war and prior to independence. The struggle for independence also meant that the colonial government would develop stringent and controlling policies on the activities of civil society groups. Many groups operated “Underground”. (Odembo, E)<sup>53</sup>

The period following independence in Kenya witnessed tremendous growth in the size, scope, and activities of present day non-profit sector. Important changes in the non-profit sector over the last 20, or so, years include:

1. Expansion or diversification of the roles of the non-profit sector
2. Growth in number, size, and geographical spread of non-profit organisations.
3. Expansion and prominence of the secular NGOs.
4. Increase in non-profit sector revenues and deeper involvement of non-profit organisations in service provision and development work.
5. Change in the relationship between the non-profit sector (particularly the secular NGOs) and the state. State-NGO relations changed from being cordial

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<sup>52</sup>Mkandawire, Thandika. 2001. “Thinking about Developmental States in Africa.” *Cambridge Journal of Economics*.

<sup>53</sup>Supra note 8



and partneristic in the 1970s to a hostile and competitive one in the 1980s and 1990s.

6. The state paid more attention to the work of NGOs, monitored their activities and state hostility towards the sector influenced media and public opinion and attitudes towards NGOs.
7. IMF and World Bank conditionalities in the 1980s forced the state to decrease resources allocated to social services and therefore be more dependent on NGOs to provide some of the social services.
8. Introduction of the NGOs Act of 1990, in the absence of a policy framework for the sector.

The activities of NGOs have increased since 1980s. The 1980s and 1990s was a period in which Kenyan NGOs changed in several ways. They shifted their focus away from concerns about relief to more general interests in development. They increased their involvement in socioeconomic matters. The range of activities in which they began to involve themselves widened to include sectors such as energy, environment, primary health care, nutrition, education, and vocational training. The government of Kenya and development partners recognizes the role of NGOs as agents of development and positive change (Proposed Policy 2004)<sup>54</sup>.

NGOs are increasingly active partners in *governance*. Contrary to both normative arguments that government should “steer” the ship of state (make policy) while private actors “row” (implement policy), and the belief that government is eroding or becoming irrelevant to the governance process, this dissertation shows that NGOs are

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<sup>54</sup>Supra note 1

now *joining* public actors and agencies at many levels in decision and policymaking regarding service provision. NGOs regularly sit on government planning boards; government integrates NGO programs and budgets into local and national plans; and NGOs help to write state legislation. Governance is not the removal of government, but the addition and acceptance of other actors, including NGOs, in the steering process. Moreover, NGOs have influenced governance strategies within public administration. Individuals and departments in government have learned from NGOs, and have begun to mimic the tools they have seen NGOs use successfully for years, calling for participatory development and civic education so that their agencies can better serve the community. This facilitates accountability, and reflects a very slow process of change toward more democratic governance practices among civil servants. Such improvements in governance are related to NGOs' positive impact on state *capacity* to provide services. NGOs extend the service arm of the state to places and locations for which government counterparts lack sufficient funds; they also provide indirect services that the government is not able to provide, particularly in relation to HIV/AIDS programs, but also in many other service sectors. Often, NGOs work collaboratively with government on programs neither could do alone, and they generally use their funds expediently and cost-effectively (with the possible large exception of training expenditures). Furthermore, by way of positive example, NGOs influence government offices and employees to improve the quality of services they provide. In so doing, NGOs and government both see the role of NGOs as "gap-filling," complementing the state. The government, for the most part, provides primary education and security, allowing or asking NGOs to supplement these services and expand their reach in other areas. Contrary to some claims, NGOs are not replacing the government in service provision. This parallels similar findings in

Nigeria: "Any expectation that the NGOs will supplant the state in service provision is likely to be utopian" (Obiyan 2004)<sup>55</sup>.

By this definition, any organisations that is both non-governmental and non-profit, in fact anything remotely answering to this broad criteria, can and has been called an NGO. These range from merry-go-rounds, ethnic groups, estate welfare groups to churches and trade unions to universities and private hospitals to professional sporting leagues and so on.

Their contribution to various sectors of development has also increased tremendously as they are to be found providing relief and risking life and limb delivering services to Kenyans in places the government does not even know exist.

NGOs provide between 45-50 per cent of all health-care services and over 50 per cent of all family planning services. Within the education sector, NGOs are particularly active in the arid and semi-arid areas, where their NGOs make it difficult to generalize despite claims that NGOs are "cost effective". The extent to which the beneficiaries "participate" or are involved and the utilisation of this "participation" is in itself an issue at the heart of the debate concerning the evaluation of social development and the debate surrounding issues such as empowerment. Lately, claims of mismanagement and lack of accountability and transparency have dogged the sector. Some of these claims may be justified and may arise from the fact that many

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<sup>55</sup>Obiyan, A., Sat. "A Critical Examination of the State versus Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the Policy Sphere in the Global South: Will the State Die as the NGOs Thrive in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia?" *Journal of Asian and African Studies*

NGOs do not have proper institutional structures and therefore cannot function properly.

This could be attributed to the way in which NGOs are constituted. Many of these organisations were formed to respond to a certain perceived need. Institutional development is usually not a priority for many NGOs. Many donors do not also support institutional capacity building which would include the development of structures and accountability systems.

NGO activity areas and types of programmes:

### **Agriculture**

- Introduction of nutritional or drought resistant crops
- Training on livestock rearing technologies
- Pastoralist support programs
- Agro-business development

### **Education**

- Maintenance or construction of school infrastructure
- Sponsorship programs for education fees
- Technology-in-schools programs
- Adult education programs
- General skills training for enterprise development (e.g. an NGO that trains in carpentry, dress-making, masonry, catering, welding and hairdressing)

## **Environment**

- Water programs not specifically tied to agriculture
- Forest, water, land, habitat, wildlife protection
- Promotion of energy-saving devices (*e.g.* solar cookers, lighting)

## **General Development**

- Programs that aim for general social and economic betterment and/or poverty reduction in the communities in which they work
- NGOs with projects in two or more of the activities (*e.g.* an NGO that has education, health, environment and youth programs)
- Business or development not specifically related to another activity area, such as business skills training programs or micro-finance programs.

## **Health**

- Support for maintenance or construction of health facilities
- HIV-related programs, whether educational, counseling or purely medical
- Malaria, TB, or other specific illness programs
- Training for doctors, nurses or community health workers
- Support for women's groups
- Non-education-specific children's programs (*e.g.* street children's programs)
- Programs targeting the youth (young adults between the age of 15 and 35)
- Support for the disabled
- Support for the elderly

## **Peace and Governance**

- Anti-corruption, transparency and accountability promotion
- Support for civil education, voter registration, voter rights, democracy
- Peace-building or conflict-reduction efforts
- Programs promoting social justice and equity

### ***Relief*** - Refugee and internally displaced persons-related programs

- Emergency assistance, including that caused by conflict in neighboring countries, natural disasters and road accidents

## **Other**

- Religious proselytizing
- Art or cultural exchange or preservation programs
- Umbrella NGOs not connected to a specific activity (e.g. linking NGOs to donors, linking NGOs to each other in a district or province)
- Housing activities
- Transportation-related programs
- Promotion of sports
- Ex-con rehabilitation programs

Approximately half (47 percent) of the organizations in Kenya are involved in “general development.” Because this term is broad, it deserves clarification: it signifies either that the organizations do not specify an interest area, but have mission statements like, “to promote, encourage and facilitate holistic development that enhances effective and meaningful livelihood changes in the life of the poor and disadvantaged communities” or that they list two or more activity areas in their

mission, such as, “to enhance ecology, food security, health, and nutrition in Kenya’s arid and semi-arid lands” (NGO Board 2006)<sup>56</sup>. The next most common type of organization focuses on marginalized groups – women, children, youth, disabled and elderly (WCYDE) – but does not specify only one particular sector in which to work.

## **2.2 Conclusion**

While during the 1970s and early 1980s, donors tended to regard NGOs as democratic and efficient organisations, in the 1990s the management and effectiveness of NGOs became an issue. This is also the point at which the mandate, credibility, and image of NGOs began to be questioned. Over-reliance on external donor funds has led to the inability of NGOs to sustain themselves or their projects. NGOs loyalty and accountability has been toward their external donors rather than to the local stakeholders. This further erodes credibility. Until recently, NGOs have not considered local donors as a possible source to support the activities of the sector. The NGO sector now finds itself in a dilemma: How to mobilize local resources from a society that sees the sector as well-funded by external donors, having a questionable impact on society, and poor credibility and image. Among the biggest challenge the NGO sector faces in Kenya is the question of identity. As the sector grows in size there is a need to clearly define the role of NGOs and value of NGOs to society. Secondly, the sector cannot continue on the path of total dependence on external donor funds, as this contradicts their role as facilitators of sustainable development and self-reliance.

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<sup>56</sup> NGO Board (2006)

There is no doubt that NPOs and NGOs serve a valuable and unique role in the development of Kenya. Nor is there any doubt that NPOs and NGOs in Kenya have the right to solicit contributions of time, materials, and money in pursuit of their missions. The public on the other hand expects that NPOs and NGOs will conduct themselves in an accountable, transparent, ethical and effective manner. There is no doubt that the credibility of NPOs in general, and NGOs in particular, is lacking. The mental picture of the public towards NGOs is negative. In order to address the credibility question, Kenyan NGOs must urgently address a number of issues (Odembo, E.).<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>Supra note 8



## **CHAPTER THREE: NGO AND DIPLOMACY IN KENYA**

### **3.1 Pre and Post Independence Diplomacy**

Diplomacy is the art and practice of conducting negotiations between representatives of groups or states. It usually refers to the conduct of international relations through the intercession of professional diplomats with regard to issues of peace-making, trade, wars, economics, cultures, environment and human rights.(University of Qaran (UOQ)<sup>58</sup>.

The main task of individual diplomatic services is to safeguard the interests of their respective countries abroad. This concerns as much the promotion of political, economic, cultural or scientific relations as it does international commitment to defend human rights or the peaceful settlement of disputes. Thus diplomacy is the means by which States throughout the world conduct their affairs in ways to ensure peaceful relations. Negotiation is the one of most important means of conducting diplomacy, and in many cases results in the conclusion of treaties between States and the codification of international law, (ABC of Diplomacy, 2008)<sup>59</sup>.

But according to (McDowell, 2008), diplomacy has to entails a role for the state. There must be an element of government intention and participation—not necessarily undertaking the entire conception and execution of a project but at least playing a role, working with civil society partners, funding, coordinating, and/or directing.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>UniversityofQaran(UOQ)<http://www.edipcourse.diplomacy.universityofqaran.com/about.html>

<sup>59</sup>ABC of Diplomacy, 2008, Swiss federal department of foreign affairs.

<sup>60</sup> Public Diplomacy at the Crossroads: Definitions and Challenges in an “Open Source” Era, Mark McDowell, 2008)

Diplomacy has been practiced in Kenya since time immemorial. For instance the Kenyan coast had served host to communities of ironworkers and communities of subsistence farmers, hunters and fishers who supported the economy with agriculture, fishing, metal production and trade with foreign countries. This kind of trade was made possible through the diplomatic interactions among the people involved.

In the centuries preceding colonization, the Swahili coast of Kenya was part of the east African region which traded with the Arab world and India especially for ivory and slaves. Initially these traders came mainly from Arab states, but later many came from Zanzibar.

The use of gun diplomacy was most preferred during this period. For instance on 7 August 1885 five German warships steam into the lagoon of Zanzibar and train their guns on the sultan's palace. They had arrived with a demand from Bismarck that Sultan Barghash cede to the German emperor his mainland territories or face the consequences. But in the age of the telegram, gunboat diplomacy was no longer a local matter. This crisis escalated immediately on desks in London. Britain, eager not to offend Germany, suggests a compromise. The two nations should mutually agree spheres of interest over the territory stretching inland to the Great Lakes. This plan was accepted before the end of August.<sup>61</sup>

This is just but one example on how diplomacy, albeit through the use of force way used to allow the colonialist to exercise their territorial influence on conquered lands. Kenya became a protectorate in 1895 (British East Africa Protectorate). Before then,

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<sup>61</sup>Africa studies center –University of pennsylvania(<http://www.africa.upenn.edu/NEH/kforeignrelation.htm>)

she was a business concern that was run by the Imperial British East African Company (IBEACo) from 1888 under Sir William Mackinnon. Kenya's boundaries were demarcated without the consultation of Kenya's people. It can be conceded that the colonial boundaries led to the establishment of a large territorial entity. But they arbitrarily brought together over forty previously independent communities into one territorial entity (Ogot, 2000)<sup>62</sup>.

The British government took her over after the IBEACo ceased to be profitable. She then became a colony in 1920 and was then renamed Kenya. During this time, Kenya's foreign policy was British foreign policy because a colony was part of the empire though administratively autonomous. But before this and for many millennia the many communities in Kenya adjusted themselves to their ecological niches (Sheriff, 1985)<sup>63</sup>. These made various communities such as the Agikuyu and the MijiKenda to develop agricultural economies, while others, including the Maasai and the Samburu practiced pastoralist forms of production. The majority such as the Luo and the Abagusii adapted themselves to a mixture of crop cultivation and livestock keeping. Besides there the Ogiek who thrived on hunting and gathering. Labour was largely cooperative within the family and the larger kin group. Regional and long-distance trade involved prestige goods and influenced society only minimally. So basically, these communities used diplomacy to co-exist through Inter-ethnic interactions were characterized by trade, intermarriages and limited and intermittent warfare.

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<sup>62</sup>Ogot, B. A. (2000) "Boundary Changes and the Invention of "Tribes"

<sup>63</sup> Sheriff, A. M. H. (1985) "Social Formations in Pre-colonial Kenya"

Even during the colonial period, Kenyans used diplomacy to demand for their rights. For instance during the 1930s Jomo Kenyatta, who later became the president, as the general secretary of Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) campaigned energetically on a range of linked policies, including land rights, access to education, respect for traditional African customs, and the need for African representation in the legislative council. His methods were peaceful negotiation, but he warned that lack of progress on these issues will result in 'a dangerous explosion - the one thing all sane men wish to avoid'. In the early 1950s these half-hearted steps towards reform were suddenly overtaken by a much more powerful and alarming challenge to the steady pace of British colonial rule by a militant independence movement calling itself Mau Mau.<sup>64</sup>

Kenya's foreign policy is best seen in terms of its political and economic moderation and of its continuing reliance on the Western world. Its most significant international affiliations are with the East African Community, the Organization of African Unity and the Commonwealth of Nations. The relationship with its East African neighbours is anchored on trade with Uganda and Tanzania are presently the two leading export markets, with Kenyan manufacturers the principal beneficiaries. Outside Africa, Kenya's most significant ally in the West is Great Britain. The two nations have maintained uninterrupted friendly relations since independence. Britain remains Kenya's principal trading partner, its chief source of economic and military assistance, and its major provider of private investment capital. The British government has traditionally practiced "quiet diplomacy" with Kenya, a policy it considers to bring about the greatest influence on Kenya.

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<sup>64</sup>Africa studies center –University of Pennnsvania (<http://www.africa.upenn.edu/NEH/kforeignrelation.htm>)

Kenya's foreign policy has changed in terms of themes and for a due to the changes in the international system. At independence Kenya practiced quiet diplomacy characterized by a low profile approach to international affairs. During former President Moi's era foreign policy was marked by active involvement in regional peace diplomacy. In the era of former President Kibaki, Kenya's foreign underwent a significant shift both in themes and fora. According to the draft foreign policy document, Kenya's foreign policy was now based on three interlinked pillars: Economic diplomacy, Peace diplomacy and Environmental diplomacy. The foreign policy was informed by the necessity to secure the regional and wider economic objectives. It focused on strengthening regional organizations particularly the EAC, (Nzibo, 2003)<sup>65</sup>

During this period, Kenya's foreign policy was informed by the necessity to secure the regional and wider economic objectives through strengthening regional organizations particularly the EAC. Kenya has already put in place a Look East strategy as a means of reducing their dependence on traditional Western markets. The rise of dynamic economies of Asia especially China and India provided new opportunities for Kenya and other African countries to develop new Asia – Africa ties. The new regional initiatives from these countries in Asia availed opportunities for increased cooperation at the multilateral fora for Kenya and other African countries. They also provided an opportunity to negotiate for increased market access, trade facilitation and promotion of foreign direct investment.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>Nzibo, Y.A, (2003) Kenya's Foreign Service in the 21st Century. Hanover Marriott Whippany, New Jersey, United States

<sup>66</sup> Ibid 8

Wanyama, L. (2003) says Kenya's foreign policy is actively directed toward the region through economic diplomacy in pursuit of its domestic development goals. As set out in *Kenya Vision 2030: a Globally Competitive and Prosperous Country* ('Vision 2030'), the country seeks to achieve those targets within the next 17 years. Kenya has identified six important sectors to deliver the 10% annual economic growth rate regarded as a central to its economic development policy. This has necessitated co-operation with neighbouring states to mould regional organisations into more viable economic blocs in an increasingly liberal economic environment.<sup>67</sup>

With the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, Kenya's foreign policy began to centre on East Africa. The general aim was to maintain peaceful co-existence with other nations; while promoting regionalism. Kenya sought integration and co-operation as a way to advance its own economic prosperity within the framework of international co-operation and multilateralism. Economic development through increased market access and enhanced technology became a high priority. For instance, Kenya is increasingly invested in renewable energy to improve power generation, so as to give small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) greater access to electricity. It is also investing heavily in the information, communication and technology sector (ICT). Regional integration formed a major component of its foreign policy and is pursued through various regional initiatives, such as the East African Community (EAC); Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (Comesa), African Caribbean and Pacific- European Union (ACP-EU), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and Indian Ocean Rim-Association for Regional Cooperation.<sup>8</sup> This position reflects realization that Kenya's

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<sup>67</sup>Wanyama, L. (2013). *The Economic Diplomacy of Kenya's Regional Interests*. Society for International Development (SID) for Eastern Africa

development is tied to that of its regional neighbours, as well as that of the global economic system.<sup>68</sup>

On peace diplomacy, Kenya has also participated in prominent regional diplomatic initiatives and provided leadership in solving regional conflicts, as it did during the Sudan peace process that culminated in the formation of the new state of South Sudan and the establishment of a transitional national government – later the transitional federal government – in Somalia. The country also has high diplomatic standing arising from its hosting some of the largest diplomatic missions and international agencies in sub-Saharan Africa, while maintaining a moderate profile in international politics by adopting a posture of ‘quiet diplomacy’. In most international controversies or crises, Kenya employs a ‘wait and see’ posture in accordance with its principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states.<sup>69</sup>

On economic diplomacy, Kenya has changed its policy and anchored it on a greater attention to trade and investment issues, what is referred as economic diplomacy. This policy became an important instrument in pursuing growth and it is hence its description by government officials as a principal pillar on which the country’s foreign policy is grounded in pursuit of its development objective of becoming a middle income and industrialized economy by 2030. Economic diplomacy, in the Kenyan context, is not a notion that describes distinctions of policy and practice, but rather a reaction to changes in the global environment. The main motivation for conducting foreign policy in this way is the search for increased capital flows into the country – and the region, given Kenya’s commitment to integration initiatives –

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid 10

<sup>69</sup> Ibid 10

through exploring alternative sources of development assistance and by promoting itself as a favorable destination for foreign direct investment (FDI), tourism and conferencing. Secondly, the necessity to support Kenyan investment within the region and beyond is motivated by a need to expand access to established markets worldwide. It was also meant to be an avenue through which to promote impartial rules of international trade while strengthening economic blocks like EAC and Comesa, to serve as competitive springboards to emerging and global markets.<sup>70</sup>

The deepening integration through the East African common market has consolidated a single trading and investment environment in which Kenyan firms have access to a large integrated market. Studies such as the analysis of trade policies and trends acknowledge that the high cost of trade has reduced Kenya's competitiveness in domestic and international markets. Trade policy therefore has been identified as the main instrument of economic diplomacy because a deepening in regional integration and bilateral trade agreements has increased opportunities for Kenyan business. The country is therefore keen to tap potential in agriculture, manufacturing and the emerging service industry, in order to become more competitive in the region and the world. It has sought to address factors that hamper its progress, such as poor policy co-ordination and implementation, in essence laying out strategies that will contribute to the pursuit of Vision 2030.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid 10

<sup>71</sup> Ibid 10



### **3.2 The Role of NGOs in Promoting Kenya's Interests**

There are different types of NGOs. The types of NGOs are classified by the level of organization, geographical location, and main purpose. Willetts (2001)<sup>72</sup> categorizes NGOs as local, provincial, national, regional, and global NGOs, depending on their areas of operations. The types of NGOs are classified by the level of organization, geographical location, and main purpose. Willetts (2001) categorizes NGOs as local, provincial, national, regional, and global NGOs, depending on their areas of project coverage. Local NGOs include organizations which have community-based programs and focus on smaller regions. National NGOs usually cover one nation. Regional and global NGOs' projects cover more than one country. These international NGOs are often called INGOs. Until the early 1990s, there were not many NGOs operating internationally, so most of NGOs were national NGOs. However, in the 1990s, many international NGOs emerged and some of them cover more than 100 countries in the world. Depending on the level of organization, the activities of NGOs and their relations with the governments can vary. International NGOs usually have a greater range of projects, so they have more resources than local and provincial NGOs. They also tend to work with governments from multiple countries.

In the study of International Relations, states have been typically identified as the central actors. Many theories assume that a state is a unitary actor and focus on the study of states. Besides states, international organizations, such as IGOs, have been widely studied as well. Mearsheimer (1994-95)<sup>73</sup> defines these international

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<sup>72</sup>Willetts, Peter. 2001. "What is Non-Governmental Organizations.", *UNESCO Encyclopaedia of Life Support Systems, Section 1 Institutional and Infrastructure Resource Issues*, Article

<sup>73</sup>Mearsheimer, John. 1994-5. "The False Promise of Institutional Theory." *International Security*

institutions as “sets of rules that stipulate the ways in which states should cooperate and compete with each other.” In the study of IGOs, states are still the main decision makers, so scholars still pay much more attention to the behaviors of states in the frame of international institutions.

With the state-centric view of international politics, non-state actors have been somewhat neglected. As non-state actors such as NGOs, transnational networks and coalitions, experts and epistemic communities, foundations, multinational corporations, multi stakeholders, and social movements have gained more power over the last several decades, scholars began to study how these non-state actors influence world politics (Kans and Mingst 2010).<sup>74</sup>

Nye and Keohane (1971)<sup>75</sup> define transnational relations as “the movement of tangible or intangible items across state boundaries when at least one actor is not an agent of a government or an intergovernmental organization.” They argue that non-state actors play a significant role in international affairs and they can be one of the main forces which can change state behaviors. They summarize the main effects of transnational actors into five categories: “attitude change, international pluralism, increases in constraints on states through dependence and interdependence, increases in the ability of certain governments to influence others, and the emergence of autonomous actors with private foreign policies that may deliberately oppose or impinge on state policies” (Nye and Keohane 1971)<sup>76</sup>.

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<sup>74</sup>Kans, Margaret and Karen Mingst. 2010. *International Organizations: The Politics and Processes of Global Governance*. 2nd Edition.

<sup>75</sup>Nye, Joseph and Robert Keohane. 1971. “Transnational Relations and World Politics: An Introduction.” *International Organization*

<sup>76</sup> Ibid 18

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<sup>74</sup>Kans, Margaret and Karen Mingst. 2010. *International Organizations: The Politics and Processes of Global Governance*. 2nd Edition.

<sup>75</sup>Nye, Joseph and Robert Keohane. 1971. “Transnational Relations and World Politics: An Introduction.” *International Organization*

<sup>76</sup> Ibid 18

Through transnational communication, the change of behavior in one country can affect attitude change of other countries. In addition, coordination among non-state actors can occur as they share common interests and values. They also argue that transnational organizations can become an instrument of powerful states as they depend on home government. Even though their definition of transnational actors includes a broad range of non-state actors, they point out that the conflict between transnational organization and their home government can emerge.

Huntington (1973)<sup>77</sup> also emphasizes the importance of transnationalism. He explains that the global extension of the United States during the two decades after World War II was one of the principal sources of transnational organizational revolution. Due to social, economic, and technological modernization in western states, especially the United States, transnational organizations expanded rapidly. Nonetheless, during the early 1970s, Huntington (1973)<sup>78</sup> did not anticipate the rapid increase of the influence of NGOs on world politics.

More interestingly, scholars have paid more attention to state-NGO relationships and how states and NGOs influence each other. There are no NGOs which can be absolutely free from the authority of the state since they reside and operate based on states. After the end of the Cold War, the number of NGOs increased significantly. Scholars then started to seriously consider systematic analysis of NGOs and state-NGO relationships. They believe that states can influence the existence and characteristics of NGOs.

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<sup>77</sup>Huntington, Samuel. 1973. "Transnational organizations in world politics." *World Politics*

<sup>78</sup> Ibid 20

Risse Kappen (1995)<sup>79</sup> argues that three components of domestic structures, the state structure, the societal structure, and policy networks, can determine the variation in the policy impact of transnational actors such as NGOs. In addition, domestic structures can even have an impact on the characteristics of NGOs. By focusing on domestic structures, he insists that transnational actors face two obstacles when they want to influence national policies and national governments. First, they must obtain access to the political systems of national governments. Second, they should gain more support from the public. According to his arguments, domestic structure determines how difficult it is for transnational actors to influence governments. The more open or plural a society is, the easier it is for transnational actors to influence governmental policies. In the United States, which is one of the most open and plural societies, NGOs could easily access the political system and also more effectively persuade the public to support their activities. In contrast, under authoritarian regimes such as that of China, NGOs are less likely to influence governments' decisions. Krasner (1995)<sup>80</sup> also argues that the sovereign states are the most important component of the institutional environment within which NGOs function. Therefore, the domestic structure of states can influence NGOs and sometimes determine the nature of NGOs themselves.

In Kenya and essentially in the developing world, there is a current view that NGOs constitute a viable alternative to government as channels of development assistance, particularly in developing countries. Some of the NGOs' functions and advantages,

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<sup>79</sup>Risse-Kappen, Thomas. 1995. "Bringing Transnational Relations Back In: Introduction." In *Bringing Transnational Relations Back In: Non-State Actors, Domestic Structures and International Institutions*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>80</sup> Krasner, Stephen. 1995. "Power Politics, Institutions, and Transnational Relations." In *Bringing Transnational Relations Back In: Non-State Actors, Domestic Structures and International Institutions*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

according to Streeten (1997)<sup>81</sup> are (1) they are good at reaching and mobilizing the poor and remote communities; (2) they help empower poor people to gain control of their lives, and they work with and strengthen local institutions; (3) they carry out projects at lower costs and more efficiently than the government agencies and (4) they promote sustainable development.

On the other hand, Stromquist (2002)<sup>82</sup> has noted three major functions for NGOs such as (1) service delivery (e.g. relief, welfare, basic skills); (2) educational provision (e.g. basic skills and often critical analysis of social environments); and (3) public policy advocacy.

In the past two decades, governments throughout the developing world have seen an explosion in the number of both foreign and local non-governmental actors (NGOs) providing social services in their territory. According to one estimate, the number of development NGOs based in rich countries grew from 6000 to 26,000 between 1990 and 1999 alone. In Kenya, NGO growth has been truly staggering: in 1974, there were only 125 NGOs in Kenya. By 1990, there were over 400 registered with the government, soaring to nearly 3000 in 2004, and well over 4200 by 2007. While most of these non-governmental actors are not directly hostile to the state, they are providing welfare and other services that are traditionally associated with and often explicitly promised by governments in Africa (Campbell1996), such as education, health care, child and women's assistance, agricultural extension services, employment, and even in some cases, roads, wells and other infrastructure.

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<sup>81</sup>Streeten P 1997. Non-governmental Organizations and Development. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*,

<sup>82</sup>Stromquist NP 2002. NGOs in a New Paradigm of Civil Society. *Current Issues in Comparative Education*

In Kenya like everywhere else, NGOs are now joining public actors and agencies at many levels in decision and policy making regarding service provision. NGOs regularly sit on government planning boards; government integrates NGO programs and budgets into local and national plans; and NGOs help to write state legislation.

Governance is not the removal of government, but the addition and acceptance of other actors, including NGOs, in the steering process. Moreover, NGOs have influenced governance strategies within public administration. Individuals and departments in government have learned from NGOs, and have begun to mimic the tools they have seen NGOs use successfully for years, calling for participatory development and civic education so that their agencies can better serve the community. This facilitates accountability, and reflects a very slow process of change toward more democratic governance practices among civil servants.

Such improvements in governance are related to NGOs' positive impact on state capacity to provide services. NGOs extend the service arm of the state to places and locations for which government counterparts lack sufficient funds; they also provide indirect services that the government is not able to provide, particularly in relation to HIV/AIDS programs, but also in many other service sectors.

Often, NGOs work collaboratively with government on programs neither could do alone, and they generally use their funds expediently and cost-effectively (with the possible large exception of training expenditures). Furthermore, by way of positive example, NGOs influence government offices and employees to improve the quality of services they provide.

### **3.3 Case Study: African Peace Forum**

#### **Background**

Africa Peace Forum (APFO) is a non-governmental organization based in Nairobi. It was established in 1994 with the aim of contributing to the effective management of conflicts and promoting peace in and security in the horn of Africa and the great lakes region. APFO boasts of an active international internship programme in which institutions of higher learning across the world take part in.

The strategic plan 2002 – 2006 of APFO (2003, P. IE) states APFO's mission, visions and objectives as follows.

#### **Vision**

Sustainable peace and security.

#### **Mission**

Contribute towards the prevention, resolution and effective management of conflicts of engaging state and non-state actors in developing collaborative approaches towards lasting peace and enhanced human security in country's in the greater horn of Africa and beyond.

#### **Objectives**

To accomplish its mission APFO focuses on supporting and promoting the development of capacity of APFO and its key partners for research and analysis on critical issues such as early warning, small arms, conflict management and peace building in the region.



Promoting community based peace initiatives by broadening space for debate analysis of security issues and encouraging the greater participation of women in conflict management and peace building at regional, national and international levels.

### **3.4 APFOs Activities**

APFO deals with four main areas of concern; Research and advocacy, peace initiatives and early warning systems. Women empowerment in peace building and institutional strengthening. This study examines APFO's activities in their areas of interest and their contributions towards diplomacy with regard to foreign policy objectives.

#### **Policy Research and Advocacy**

APFO advocates for improved research to inform policy and advocacy. According to APFO economic stability can only be effective with clear and adequate policies. In terms of peace and security, the linkages between policy and conflict should be discussed within National and International context. For example in order to be successful in the field of economic diplomacy, there should be a very good understanding of the relationship between economic reforms and conflicts. Adequate human security also contributes to positive economic achievement yet adequate human security can only be answered through various policy dimensions which have to be informed by research.

APFO also advocates for improved and increased policy research within the civil society at large to improve policy formulation, it attributes to the fact that the civil society has played an important role in monitoring policy implementations in Kenya.

For example during the constitution review process religious bodies were very active in agitating for change while the media played a critical role in informing the public and encouraging debate.

In some light APFO plays the role of building civil society capacity through policy research forums where they exchanged ideas, propose new strategies, engage policy makers amongst other things.

From this it is evident that APFO as an NGO strives to uplift other NGOs, especially those dealing with peace and securities which are important factors with regard to a nations development of any policy issues.

APFO in its struggle to contribute to the development of sound policies that promote peace and good governance takes part in raising awareness and interest in peace and security issues. In this process APFO conducts different activities consensus building workshops with other NGOs with interest in the same areas. This helps in giving a more informed report of the issues worked in the same areas. This helps in giving a more informed report of the issues worked on bearing in mind that NGOs have the advantage of grass root penetration. From this point it is therefore easy for APFO to engage in national and even international discussions from a broader perspective.

APFO also conducts strategic briefing and consultations with state and non state actors. This clearly shows that the state is informed not only from its official officers but also from collaborations with other non state actors. The state's diplomatic activities are not only about the physical interstate engagement portrayed in the open,

such open shows are just a continuation of other more important engagements that take place behind the scenes. It is therefore correct to say that NGOs engage in diplomacy, even though sometimes not directly.

The state has to first and foremost attain support from within in any policy issue before launching it to the foreign public and to this end APFO is seen by the state as an important point of contact on issues of peace and security keeping in mind that it commits totally its time and resources to those specific issues. APFO as mentioned before in this paper also conducts business both regionally and internationally. It conducts conferences at both levels which already gives it diplomatic actor capacity.

### **Peace Initiatives**

A stable region is an incentive for economic growth and investment. Kenya has over the years been playing the role of resolving conflicts that would otherwise compromise its development. It is no wonder then, that in support of its host country APFOs activities are spread throughout the greater home of Africa region. In its peace initiatives which includes both regional and international levels APFO focuses on peace supporting development policies aimed at enhancing peace in the country. According to APFO accurate, timely, relevant appropriately disseminated information are key to effective early warning.

While it is the responsibility for the state to provide and maintain security the task has in most countries of the greater horn of Africa Kenya inclusive proved to be a difficult one. Through APFO it has proven that collaboration between state and non state actors (NGOs) is one way through which this task can be effectively handle

**Towards this agenda APFO in activities such as promoting indigenous security structures within Kenya has worked with the government and other NGOs in conflict prone areas to ensure security exists from the very local level. APFO continues to advocate for indigenous local solutions to insecurity and also supports community participation in peace processes such as development of peace committees.**

**Constitutional reforms has been another of APFOs main concerns. Kenya's constitution before the new constitution of Kenya 2010 was reported to have had no mention of the word peace anywhere.**

**An examination of Kenya's current constitution reveals that there is no mention of the word peace anywhere...**

**Clearly the constitution should recognize the critical role of peace and security in consolidating national well being and development and that the overall objective of the new constitution is to guarantee peace and security.**

**Amani Africa Vol. 1 Iss. 2p. 44.**

**AFPO has been instrumental in the development of the national peace building policy and the Kenya national action plan for the control and management of illicit small arms and light weapons. [www.amaniaafrica.org](http://www.amaniaafrica.org).**

**APFO has taken part in mediating conflicts within its region of operation. For example it participated in promoting dialogue among different groups in southern Sudan which led to the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in January 2005 and its continuous support in Southern Sudan in it post war construction support in Southern Sudan in its post war construction.**

Former APFO's executive direction Ambassador Bethuel Kiplagat was the special envoy and chairman of the Somalia peace process that ended in December 2004 with the establishment of the transitional federal government which has most recently been replaced by way of the ballot.

APFO actively takes part in training advocacy and control of light weapon initiatives in Kenya. It aims at supporting and promoting issues of development of capacity for research and analysis in small arms and light weapons. APFO played a major role in setting up the current regional centre for small arms (RESCA) in Nairobi.

APFO seeks to identify and develop early warning and response indicators. It served as the national research institution for the implementation of IGADs conflict early warning program in Kenya.

APFO's strategic plan of 2002 -2006 indicates its intensive efforts through the different partnerships it has with great institutions concerned with peace initiatives. It indicates that APFO partners with KIA a governmental aim that is involved in the training/ capacity building of district and provincial leaders and also with Nairobi peace initiative based Pan-African Organization that is in search for peace in Africa through non violent approaches.

(Strategic plan 2003 p. 36).

### **Women Empowerment in Peace Building**

APFO has realized that women have an important role to play in the society with regard to peace making. Traditionally women have always been left out of the negotiating table, APFO acknowledges the need for inclusion of every potential thus

its decision to advocate for empowerment of women and youth in peace building. APFO in its program seeks to engender peace initiatives and processes as in the context of the United Nations Resolution 1325 of October 2000 on women, peace and security.

To this effect APFO has partnered with women organizations like Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organization (MYWO) in supporting their initiatives geared towards promoting women efforts in engaging in peace building activities. Amongst forums conducted by APFO are those organized specifically for women. An example is a training workshop that was organized for women parliamentarians of the Horn of Africa on conflict prevention, security and gender.

(Strategic Plan 2003 p. 30).

Conflict has in theory been categorized into three. First, in a gender blind way that does not tell male or female involvement, second, in a manner that portrays women as helpless victims of conflict and third and most recent in a way that portrays women as actors and not just victims of conflict.

APFO in its activities strives to build in the third account that tends to involve women more in conflict issues showing that women too have a stake in conflict.

### **Institutional Strengthening of Partner Networks**

APFOs other objective is to enhance its capacity and that of its partners so as to enable it carry out its mandate. For this purpose APFO strives to mobilize resources from different sources. It also works towards developing and strengthening the

essential communication infrastructures between it and its partners. APFO conducts a good number of forums with its partners during which they discuss such matters.

### **3.5 APFO and Diplomacy**

Africa Peace Forum in its day to day activities contributes toward diplomacy as discussed hereafter.

#### **Economic Diplomacy**

Conflict and insecurity have destructive consequences on economic activity. According to Mwangi this compounded by poor social and economic infrastructure distort the mechanism of commerce, influence the transaction costs of trade and disrupt production and consumption patterns. He continues to explain that armed conflict and social violence perpetrated with small arms use is one of the most serious obstacle to investment and tourism since it scares away tourists with all their foreign exchange earnings. Tourism in Kenya is known to be a major foreign exchange earner and any efforts of restoring tourism would be a great job towards Kenya's economy. It is correct therefore to state that APFO in endeavoring to secure peace through its activities, helps build a strong base for economic support the governments efforts towards peace diplomacy but also contributes a great deal the country's efforts of making Economic Diplomacy a success.

#### **Environmental Diplomacy**

Still in its peaceful endeavours for peace, APFO contributes towards environmental diplomacy. Conflict has severe negative effect on environment. Conflicts affect the ecosystems. Mwangi for example while making reference to pastoral communities

explains that the disruption of ecosystems affect the supply of water, pasture and food for these pastoral communities which then increases their vulnerability, affects their capital stocks, hinders coping mechanism, decreases livestock productive performance subsequently generating tensions.....'Natural resource degradation may be the cause and effect of social change that negatively affect the productivity and sustainability of pastoral livelihoods.' (Mwagiru 2008).<sup>83</sup>

Going by Mwagiru's view it is therefore implacable that if natural resources were conserved and well taken care of, then maybe there would be less vulnerability, more capital stock and productive performance of livestock leading to less tensions being generated amongst pastoralists and subsequently reduced or no conflicts at all.

APFOs peaceful endeavours in pastoral areas can therefore also be seen as measures that promote conservation of the environment and since environmental issues can never be addressed in isolation, a better pastoral environment would contribute to a more stable personal economy which would mean less conflict and more peace.

### **Diaspora Diplomacy**

The fact that APFO is registered and mandated to operate in all the countries of the Horn of Africa already credits it as a suitable candidate for Diaspora Diplomacy. APFO adds to the governments efforts of selling its foreign policy to the countries within the Horn of Africa. APFO is advantaged in that it is able to operate physically within these countries thereby being able to get first hand information whenever need be. It is therefore able to interact with the Kenyan Diaspora in this region more

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<sup>83</sup> Mwagiru, M., Human Security; Setting the Agenda for the Horn of Africa, (Nairobi: Africa Peace Forum, 2008)pp 83-84.



closely as compared to other NGOs or even the government. This gives it the advantage of being able to recognize and celebrate contributions of Kenyan Diaspora communities within those areas and also to support intra Diaspora collaborations.

### **Peace Diplomacy**

Clearly from its vision of sustainable Peace and security, Peace Diplomacy falls directly under APFOs area of operation.

APFOs peace initiatives within the Horn of Africa contribute towards selling out Kenya as a peace loving country not only in the region but to the whole world. They not only sell the country's foreign policy but also support peace efforts that benefit the country. By researching on the critical issues on conflict and insecurity in the region, they are able to provide the relevant stake holders with accurate information which is useful for policy formulation. Another important activity worth mentioning that comes out as a tactful way towards addressing conflict issues is APFOs concern and initiatives towards empowering women for peace making. Women have in many cases been associated with being naturally peaceful. APFO hereby strategically, I would say, involves women in their initiatives of peace building. The concept of women being naturally peaceful has on many occasions brought debate as to whether anyone is born naturally peaceful. Women however remain to be considered peaceful and the debate is then left to be how and why they are considered so.

According to Chesoni it is not purely so, that women are inherently peaceful. She states that nobody is biologically pre-destined towards being violent or peaceful. She continues to say that the nature of the world we live in is Western dominated and

patriarchal whose nature is exclusively discrimination based on settling conflict through violence or threats. She states

“Girls are not socialized to be violent. Indeed most women do not even know how to make a fist. Thus to survive in patriarchy women and girls have to cultivate many of the skills we associate with peace making.’(Chesoni).

We can therefore say that how we resolve our conflicts is a matter of socialization. Teachings in traditional African culture generally socialize women towards being peaceful, therefore most women however not born peaceful are peaceful due to the kind of socialization they go through.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

This research finds it agreeable to say that APFO has and continues to positively contribute towards Diplomacy in Kenya through its initiatives.

With reference to APFOs 2002-2006 strategic plan, some of their achievements include their role in the Inter-Governmental Authority on development (IGAD)’s Conflict Early Warning (CERWAN) as the leading consultant. APFO was also nominated to conduct a Foreign Policy study for East Africa Community (EAC) (Strategic p31). IN addition APFO has over the years organized and co organized numerous forums at different levels; National, Regional and International.

APFOs engagement in numerous activities in conflict analysis and peace building empowers it with a wide experience in issues of peace, conflict and insecurity. Armed

with this experience APFO maintains a strong working relationship with governments, inter-governmental and non-governmental bodies among many others.

APFO has produced individuals for key positions in major forums. For example Ambassador Bethwel Kiplagat, formerly the director of APFO was at one time appointed Kenya's special envoy for the Somalia peace process. He currently sits as the chairperson of the National Cohesion and Integration Commission.

Deducing from Africa Peace Forum's engagements, their implications and its achievements, this paper conclusively states that APFO as a NGO has cut a niche for itself as a credible and leading NGO in Kenya on issues of conflict and peace building.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: NGOs AND DIPLOMACY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter is an intended critical analysis. The concepts of NGOs and diplomacy which form the theoretical framework will be the centre of focus. Subsequently this chapter will look at the hurdles that may have prevented the success of the programme. Last but not least, this analysis constitutes an evaluation of the extent to which the hypothesis has been demonstrated.

It can correctly be said that NGOs in their activities contribute towards diplomacy either directly or indirectly. Their entry, acceptance and recognition the world over, as non state actors in the field of diplomacy attributes to this.

In theory, the concepts of NGO, diplomacy and others like diplomatic engagement can easily be put down on pen and paper. However the situation is much more complicated because the international environment which is the concern for diplomacy has been flooded by many other actors whose activities also and in relation to those of other actors contribute towards diplomatic achievements.

### **4.2 Critical Analysis**

Conventional definitions of diplomacy previously reserved for state actors increasingly apply to non-state actors such as non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, and international organizations. Development policy and intervention in the form of development aid has been reserved in the past to interactions between state actors such donor countries (developed countries) and beneficiary countries (developing or transition countries). While nongovernmental

organizations have always been active in the field of development aid as providers of services, they have not openly become political actors in the development policy field until recently. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are adding their voices to international development policy debates by organizing, campaigning and lobbying across national boundaries in order to have a greater influence on international development policy making. This trend has gained major momentum, evidenced by the active involvement of NGOs in international co-operation for development, by vocal criticism of unfettered capitalism, by conflicts with multinational companies in regard to the exploitation of natural resources, and by confrontations with national governments on various socio-economic development policy issues.

Faced with growing economic and political interdependencies of markets and states, governments have to cope with the increasingly complex postmodern environment, including the activities of NGOs. Governments need to find effective ways to interact with non-state “adversaries” such as NGO pressure groups. These competent and well-networked groups monitor and evaluate the performances of governments and multinational companies and demand greater accountability and transparency of their actions (Saner, R. and L. Yiu. (2003).<sup>84</sup>

A well-documented example of successful NGO influence on development policy was Eurodad’s advocacy in favour of debt relief of poor and least developed countries. Prior to the campaigns by Eurodad, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, faced with the staggering indebtedness of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries, thought that limited debt relief would make the debt of these countries “sustainable”

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<sup>84</sup>Saner, R. and L. Yiu. (2003). International economic diplomacy: mutations in post-modern times. The Hague: Clingendael Institute.

and allow them “to grow out of” their debt through economic growth. In contrast, however, Eurodad emphasized that partial debt relief could not manage the excessive debt of these countries, and that they required more substantial debt forgiveness to fight poverty (Bokkering and Van Hees, 1998). The persistent and well co-ordinated influence of Eurodad led international financial institutions to adopt a poverty alleviation based debt policy. The use of such tactics as monitoring of policies of international financial institutions, sharing relevant information with other NGOs, coordinating public pressures and promoting alternative policy frameworks, negotiating text revisions with representatives of the financial institutions and national governments constitute an excellent example of development diplomacy. The purpose of this article is to show how this broadening of mandate affects policy dialogue and policy negotiations in international development, and to define the new term “development diplomacy.”<sup>85</sup>

#### **4.3 Conclusion**

This study was based on two objectives which, have been fulfilled. The first objective aimed to examine the role of NGOs in enhancing diplomacy in their day to day activities as discussed in chapter two. The second was to evaluate the activities of Africa Peace Forum as an NGO with regard to promoting diplomacy. The findings indicate that NGOs daily activities influence and contribute towards diplomacy. For the second objective it is clear that APFO activities are great contributors towards Kenya’s diplomatic activities especially peace diplomacy.

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<sup>85</sup>Bokkering, S. and Van Hees, T. (1998).Eurodad’s campaign on multilateral debt: 1996 HIPC debt initiative and beyond. Development and Practice

The hypothesis of this study was also duly demonstrated. It suggested that NGOs use diplomatic tools to promote diplomacy in their day to day activities. This hypothesis is true as discussed in the paper and demonstrated activities of the NGO Africa Peace Forum. Their activities are seen in the study are not alien activities compared to those of other organizations. They undoubtedly contribute towards diplomacy and foreign policy and are indeed actors in diplomacy who are still yet to bring more changes in the field of diplomacy.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Conclusion**

This research concludes by highlighting on the achievements made by NGOs in Kenya.

#### **NGO Achievements**

Ryan Beckons that , their deficiencies notwithstanding, NGOs continue to provide welcome services and analysis, filling vaccums left by government and other large institutions including universities churches and other labour unions.(Ryan 1995 p27).

Many NGOs have grown in their modes of service provision. They have become more sophisticated in their analysis, their strategies and communication systems both locally and internationally. More and more conferences and forums are being organized by NGOs themselves for the purposes of sharing and developing ideas so that they can improve on networking and communication amongst themselves.

NGOs are mostly known for operating in environments of marginalized groups in one way or another. They in this case continue to offer a voice for those excluded by institutionalized power. They are credited with the inclusion of women and leadership positions.

NGOs have ceased to be seen as of and by uneducated people. They have acquired sophistication from having membership of intellectuals who have left their jobs to start or join NGOs, others from job retrenchments and also from educated and talented youth who have no employment. This has given NGOs power to organize and re organize structures for and within them.



Their competence on socio-economic and political issues and skills in practical and popular education is trendily growing to rival university faculties and even government bureaucracies. NGOs have brought to realization that what matters is not the size of an organization but the internal organization and the role they play in bringing their forces together to achieve the set objectives and fulfill intended interest.

NGOs have come to learn, accept and incorporate the importance of collaboration and information sharing. This is not to insinuate that this is the case for all NGOs but there is sufficient evidence that at least in recent times different NGOs have taken to organizing forums in which they invite other NGOs for information gathering and sharing. These positive working relationships between NGOs is a sign of good things to come.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

NGOs activities contribute largely towards government decisions. NGOs should therefore receive adequate support, not only financial but every other form of support that could be of benefit to them. NGOs themselves should also recognize and accept that they have certain shortcomings and seek assistance from relevant quarters where necessary. In all these they should strive to have a system which studies and documents their activities.

### **NGO relationships**

Depending on the administrative structures at the local levels, NGOs need to adequately research in order to know what government bodies or committees they may usefully work with. They should carefully analyze both formal and informal links

between government institutions since in some cases the actual relationship on the ground may not be what is on paper. There are a lot of government and NGO interrelationships which could be used to develop more formal types of collaborations between government at all levels and NGOs.

#### **NGO agenda**

NGOs to build up on issues that have been left out to form different agenda to avoid over duplication. For example on the issue of women and security, if women are believed to be peaceful then NGOs especially those dealing with issues of peace and security should capitalize on this and engage more women in their activities and even more in leadership and administrative positions. This would provide a platform if not a spring board for women to venture into even more senior decision making positions.

NGOs should form a system by which their activities are evenly distributed avoid having congestion of their activities in some areas and total abs others.

#### **NGO accountability**

NGOs should have a clear and credible way of explaining their activities also funding to avoid suspicion over misuse of funds and even illegal activities behind the scenes. They should have open doors to auditing and well laid down plans starting from funding down to execution.

#### **The Government of Kenya**

The government of Kenya should include serious NGOs in their policies. This therefore means that they should have a system through which as much as NGOs are

self regulated, the government can evaluate their performances for the sake of picking out the serious ones. On the same note government must be able to keep track of activities of NGOs which decide to partner with.

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