CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE REALITIES OF PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA

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Introduction

The fast-expanding role civil society groups have assumed in the development of modern society has become so important that no government desirous of exploiting and harnessing the potentials of its citizens for national development can afford to ignore (Chukwuma, 2005). The wide spread consensus is that development challenges can be confronted more effectively through creation of alliances between government and the civil society (Diamond, 1995; Gyimah Boadi,1997; Putnam, 2000; Egbe, 2004; Egwu, 2008; Nwachukwu, 2013). Lessons from the experience of today's developed countries show that countries who adopt participatory socio-economic programs to involve the civil society tend to do better, in real terms than countries with centralized public systems (Gonazalez and Alfaro 2001). The quality growth report of the world bank in (2001) also noted that the civil society involvement in the decision making and functioning of the public sector has been a crucial instrument to improve governance.

The state, governance and development crises that Nigeria and other African states have faced led to a rethinking of the development discourse by the late 1980s particularly in relation to the need for private sector driven development and the possible roles of civil society in development

efforts in order to promote participatory development efforts and deconstruct state centralized and top down development (Kew, 2004; Ikelegbe, 2013).

Civil Society have played a major role in the development and governance processes of Nigeria. With the exit of the military in 1999, the focus of civil society organizations in the country is shifting gradually from defense against repression and abuse of human rights to deepening the democratic space and attaining good governance (Ikubaje, 2011; Fadakinte, 2013). Citizens are also now realizing that democracy should extend beyond conducting free elections and are increasingly demanding governing process that are transparent, free of bureaucratic and administrative corruption, patronage, nepotism, diversion of public funds, and stealing of public assets (Essia and Yearoo, 2000). Consequently, Nigeria has experienced an emergence of vibrant network of civil society associations working on various socio-economic issues to "reestablish the culture of transparency, accountability, integrity and respect for human dignity in order to attain good governance. Despite these efforts, Nigeria is still socio-economically backwards and abject poverty, rising insecurity, political instability, high child and maternal mortality rates and, lack of accountability and transparency with increasing corruption seems to be thriving in the country. This leaves much to be expected from the civil society in promoting good governance and accountable interaction between citizens and government.

This paper will therefore help to provide insight on the role of Nigerian civil society as catalysts for transparent and effective governance, their challenges particularly in the present democratic dispensation and possible recommendations that could aid their role in promoting good governance in Nigeria. Given Nigeria's size and influence within Africa, a dynamic and

progressive civil society environment would have much positive impact in a region mired by poor economic and political performance.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

The notion of Civil Society

There is a tendency to refer to civil society as non-governmental organisations (NGO's). Rather, civil society is a broader concept encompassing the set of institutions and organizations that inter-phase between the state, business world, and the family (Carothers, 1999). According to Chabal (1986), civil society is a vast ensemble of constantly changing groups and individuals whose only common ground is their being outside the state, and who have acquired some consciousness of their externality and opposition to the state. In as much as this definition acknowledges the plurality of association in civil society, it reduces the activities of civil society to that of opposition. It does not take into cognizance the fact that civil society does not always need to be at odds with the state. John Keane (1988) defines civil society as "an aggregate of institutions whose members are engaged in non-state activities - economic and cultural production, household life and voluntary associations - and who in this way preserve and transform their identity by exercising all sorts of pressures or controls upon state institutions". However, he warns against the danger of idealizing civil society and demonizing the state. He pointed out that "without the protective, redistributive and conflict-mediating functions of the state, the struggles to transform civil society will be ghettorized, divided, and stagnant, or will spurn their own new forms of inequality and unfreedom."

Diamond (1995) defines civil society as the realm of organized social life that is voluntary, self-generating, self-supporting, autonomous from the state, and bound by the legal order or set of

shared rules. This involves citizens acting collectively in a public sphere to express and exchange their interests, passions, ideas, information, achieve mutual goals, make demands on the state, and hold state officials accountable. The participants representing West Africa in a workshop organized by the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) between 1998 and 1999 agreed that civil society is made up of social movements that act in the public realm, and is located between the family and the state and serves the concerns of a well-defined group whose members are mobilized to reach more or less clearly-defined objectives (Civic Agenda, 1999).

While the definition of civil society varies, there is a general agreement that it is a sphere outside the state and seen to be an indispensable tool in the administration of the state so that citizens should be able to actualize their goals. Civil society therefore include institutions such as nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), private voluntary organizations (PVOs), peoples' organizations, community-based organizations (CBOs), civic clubs, trade unions, gender groups, cultural and religious groups, charities, social and sports clubs, cooperatives, environmental groups, professional associations, academia, policy institutions, consumer organizations, the media. and any other kind of association in which people try to advance their vision of a good life (Carothers,1999).

Good Governance.

A good starting point in understanding the concept of good governance is to understand what constitutes governance. A UNDP report (2000), defined governance as the legitimate exercise of political, economic and administrative authority to manage national affairs. A related definition

is provided by the World Bank (2000) stating that governance consists of 'the manner in which power

is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development'.

It identified three distinct aspects of governance to include: the form of political regime; the

process by which authority is exercised for managing a country's economic and social resources

for development; and the capacity of governance to design, formulate and implement policies

and discharge functions. For Getu (2001), governance often consists of complex arrays of

processes, organizations and institutions that act as channels for citizens to exercise their legal

rights, attempt to resolve differences, fulfill their obligations to the society and express their

concerns and interests. Fadakinte, 2013 on his part narrowly defined, governance as process of

the exercise of political power in managing the affairs of state.

It has been argued that without an appropriate governance structure, developing countries will

not be able to either sustain economic growth or a momentum towards rapid poverty reduction

(The World Bank Development Report, 2004). Olowu and Akinola (1995,) provided some

parameters for measuring good governance. These include managerial and organizational

efficiency, accountability, legitimacy and responsiveness to the public, transparency in decision-

making and pluralism in policy options and choices. In a broader sense, The UNDP (1997),

maintained that good governance is "participatory, transparent and accountable, effective and

equitable, and it promotes the rule of law. It ensures that political, social and economic priorities

are based on broad consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and the most

vulnerable are heard in decision-making over the allocation of development resources." In this

definition, UNDP identified and explained the core characteristics of good governance as, rule of

law, participation, transparency, responsiveness, consensus, orientation, equity, effectiveness and efficiency and accountability. Diamond (2005), posits that good governance must entail the capacity of the state to function well in the service of public good, and must be committed to the public good. For him, good governance must include the transparency on how government makes decisions conduct business and spend their public funds. In the views of Igbuzor (2009), good governance entails the respect for the rule of law, ensuring effective delivery of public goods and services, participation of all men and women in decision making process, institutional effectiveness and accountability. In the same vein, Fadakinte (2013), refers to good governance as the various processes about how leadership is engaged in policy making, in determining how power is exercised to embody transparency, accountability and rational and prudent resource management. It also ensures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making. Therefore, the outcome of the process, in terms of the quality of life of the people and in the way the rulers amicably partner with the people, is what defines good or bad governance. And while good governance promotes better welfare for the people, resulting in growth, development and prosperity, bad governance accounts for the roots of most of the ills within the society.

To this end, the paper will adopt the social capital theory particularly because it recognizes the importance of social associations in shaping the norms of society and it explains the value derived from strategic alliance with regard to economic and societal development. Coleman (1994) defined Social capital as a variety of different entities, having two characteristics in common: they all consist of some aspect of a social structure, and they facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure. He defined social function by its capital not as a

single identity. A major contributor to the theory, Putnam (2000) opines that social capital "refers to the collective value of all 'social networks' and the inclinations that arise from these networks to do things for each other. He wrote from a background in political science and, as such, brought out some important dimensions. Based, initially, on a detailed study of Italian political institutions he argued for the significance of social capital and the quality of civic life in the cultivation of democratic society. He added that social capital is important in different ways. First, social capital allows citizens to resolve collective problems more easily. People often might be better off if they cooperate, with each doing their share. Second, social capital greases the wheels that allow communities to advance smoothly. Where people are trusting and trustworthy, and where they are subject to repeated interactions with fellow citizens, everyday business and social transactions are less costly. A third way is which social capital improves our lot is by widening our awareness of the many ways in which our fates are linked. When people lack connection to others, they are unable to test the veracity of their own views, whether in the give or take of casual conversation or in more formal deliberation. Without such an opportunity, people are more likely to be swayed by their worse impulses. The networks that constitute social capital also serve as conduits for the flow of helpful information that facilitates achieving our goals (Putnam, 2000).

Coleman (1990) defined social capital as a variety of different entities having similar characteristics in common, which all consist of some aspects of a structure and they facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure. He maintained that social capital can take three forms; the obligations and expectations which depend on the trustworthiness of the

social environment, the capacity of information flow through the social structure to provide a basis for action and the presence of norms accompanied by effective sanction.

The interconnectedness of social capital to good governance is that high levels of social capital can produce trust which increases citizen participation in groups and networks that help them identify common priorities and effectively voice their demands. When citizens are able to articulate their demands, they are also better able to monitor government services and demand good governance. This demand for good governance precipitates responsiveness, transparency and accountability from government.

The Emergence of Civil Society in Nigeria

 Civil society in Nigeria can be traced back to the pre-colonial period when the entity known as Nigeria was a collection of Kingdoms, empires and autonomous political units of various sizes and unique histories. These include the Kanem Borno empire, the Fulani empire, the Oyo empire, the Benin and Ife Kingdom, the decentralized but culturally homogenous Ibo's of 'Eastern Nigeria and smaller tribes of Plateau and Benue. Wide-ranging trading networks and routes had developed amongst the different communities and societies because most of them interacted with each other (Crowther, 1966; Osaghae, 1998). Citing the trade relationship of the Ondo in 1881, Akintola (2002) noted that the people from Ondo obtain various items from their neighbors in the North which they trade with Ibo Bini, a western Ijo town and Ikale on the south. The also get slaves, clothes, beads, potash, ivory and carved calabash from Ife and Ilesha. The Ikale's on the other hand bring yams, corn, plantains, groundnuts, palm oil, Palm Kernel, skin and wild birds for sale.

The British entrance in Nigeria which first occurred through Merchant trade laid the fertile ground for corruption and lack of accountability in governance as it was based on falsehood (Osoba, 1996; Mulinge and Lesetedi, 2002). The trade saw the exchange of Africa's virile young men for items such as drinks, walking sticks, mirrors etc (Tignor, 1993). In some cases, they offered protection and questionable treaties that turned out to be scamming and manipulating the chiefs, to let off their kingdoms without knowing. For instance, in 1861, a British Naval Commander forcefully secured the cooperation of the king of Lagos, Dosunmu, to sign the cession of Lagos with all its rights and territories to Britain. The British Crown later granted him "an annual pension of 1,200 bags of cowries for his life time (Tignor, 1993). Any opposition by some chiefs to resist giving out their kingdoms was dealt with force fully. This was the case of King Jaja of Opobo who was forcefully exiled because he challenged the British over claiming the Opobo Kingdom as their territory (Osoba, 1996).

The indirect rule system used by the British to rule Nigeria during colonialism later made the indigenous leaders collaborators who were happy with the prospects presented by the colonial structure. They exploited the advantage they had to access wealth from the colonial economy and were able to generate additional income by illegal manipulation of the taxing system (Mamdani, 1996). As a response to the unjust system of administration and governance in Nigeria, the formation of groups and coming together of the people to make life more comfortable for themselves and in other cases revolt against colonial rule was witnessed in the country (Abutudu, 1995). Many cooperative societies, hometown and voluntarily associations were formed in the rural areas to meet the various needs of the communities.

With increase in education and creation of urban cities in Nigeria, voluntarily groups were also formed to address the needs of the urban ethnic and kinship communities. Among these groups were the Egbe Omo Oduduwa, a Yoruba Cultural group, the Jamiyar Mutanen Arewa (Nothern People's Congress) and the Ibo State Union. Associations such as the trade Unions Sporting associations, literary and debating societies, old students' associations and others which transcended ethnic ties were also formed by the new urban elite (Akintola, 2002; Tar, 2009; Mgba, 2015). Their objectives were expanded to embrace inclusion in the political arena, resistance of stringent taxation measures and demand for independence. For instance, the Aba women's riot in 1929 involved women from the Igbo, Ibibio and Opobo communities. Coleman (1958) asserted that 'the movement revealed an amazing capacity for organization and united action which transcend clan and tribal boundaries'. Other Civil organizations such as the Press, labour unions, Nationalist movements and Political Parties continued to put pressure on the colonial movement till Nigeria was granted independence in 1960.

Despite the promising outlook and the vibrancy of the civil society in the colonial era, it did not play a vital role in governance during the immediate post-independence era. The leaders who were bequeathed authority exploited the ethnic divide that was already in existence to consolidate their power. Since there was no system of accountability in place, the state was insulated from public control (Adedeji, 1989; Ogebidi, 2012). Though the press was relatively free and no media house was reported to be short down, it was ethically biased and politicized (Akintola, 2002).

Civil Society and the Struggle for Democracy During the Military Era

Though the struggle by the civil society for good governance has been a feature of the Nigerian political history even before the country's independence in 1960, it became more pronounced during the military era far more rigorous between 1985 and 1999 than in any period in Nigeria's political history (Alemika, 2003; Ikubaje; 2011: Ikelegbe, 2013). Most civil society organizations were in conflict with the state over issues of human rights and democratic freedom. The military government on the other hand employed various strategies in resisting opposition and suppressing the civil society. When students protested against Gowon's economic mismanagement of the oil boom, the University of Ife and Lagos were closed down as a result of the continuous boycott. The Obasanjo's regime banned the National Union of Students organization and arbitrarily arrested and detained journalists who criticized the policies of the regime (Falola and Ihovbere, 1985; Siollun, 2013). Apart from the violation of human rights that characterized the implementation of the War Against Indiscipline and its fight against corruption, Buhari's government also enacted draconian decrees in its attempt to deter the press from publishing disagreeable information (Siollun, 2013; Iyaniwura, 2014).

Civil society organizations proliferated in Nigeria during the regimes of General Babangida and General Sani Abacha from 1985-1998. This was in response to the autocratic leadership of their governments characterized by gross mismanagement of state resources and violation of human rights. The policies resulting from the implementation of Babangida's structural adjustment program inflicted hardship on many of Nigerians and consequently encountered resistance from the civil society and citizens at large (Ihonvbere, 1997; Osaghae, 1998). The Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS), the Academic Staff Union of Nigerian Universities, (ASUU) particularly opposed the removal of subsidies and

privatization of public enterprises with mass protest and rallies, strikes and violent demonstrations (Newswatch, March 11, 1988; Ihonvbere, 1997; Osaghae, 1998). Babangida's government responded by arresting many journalist and human rights activist, shutting down some universities and intimidating those who opposed and criticized the government. Its annulment of the June 12 election further deepened agitations and protest with violent demonstrations from civil society in some parts of the country. The intense pressure from the civil society and the international community is perceived to have contributed to Babangida reluctantly handing over to a transition government in August, 1993 (CLO Report, 1993; Diamond, 1995; Ikubaje, 2011; Ikelegbe, 2013).

Abacha's regime was opposed by the civil society from inception as his maiden speech announced the banning of political parties and political activities, dampening any hope of restoring the country to the path of civil rule. The government also arrested and detained several Journalist and human rights activists. Though Abacha's government suppressed the civil society and also attempted to coopt some of its members, the opposition to his regime continued. For instance, the National Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers(NUPENG) and the Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGASSAN) and the NLC embarked on strike demanding the release of Abiola (Kew: 2004; Egbe, 2004; Tar, 2009). The government's gross violation of human rights was widely condemned by the civil society and international community when it sentenced to death, Ken Saro Wiwa alongside eight activists of then Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People for allegedly killing of four Ogoni Chiefs (Diamond, 1999; Egbe, 2004). Many Non-Governmental Organizations such as the Civil Liberty Organisation(CLO), the Campaign for Democracy (CD), Constitutional Rights Project

(CRP) and Committee for Defense of Human Rights (CDHR) fearlessly confronted the state in order to ensure that military relinquished power to a democratic regime.

Civil Society and Good Governance in Nigeria's Fourth Republic

Civil society organizations continued to blossom with the inception of a new democratic regime in 1999. However, their focus shifted from democracy and civil rights to good governance and deepening the democratic space. Non-governmental Organizations that address diverse other issues that range from economic empowerment, conflict and peace building, governance, anti-corruption and natural resources also proliferated. The number of registered non-state actors particularly NGO's in Nigeria as at 2009 was estimated at about 46,000 (This Day, September 23, 2009). The relevance and the vibrancy of the sector necessitated the appointment of a Special Adviser to the President on Civil Society during the Obasanjo's Presidency.

In their struggle to promote good governance in Nigeria, some civil organizations have been in the forefront of the struggle for accountability, transparency and campaigns against funds and financial recklessness by agitating for openness and information on governmental affairs. Civil society organizations have monitored governance issues and brought excesses to public scrutiny. For instance, the exposure of the former speakers of the House of Representatives Salisu Buhari who was found guilty of forging his certificate and Patricia Etteh for diverting public funds was carried out by the press. Some Non-governmental organsiations and labour unions have also lunched campaigns against corruption and some policies of government it considers injurious to the society (Aderunmo, 2011; Oyedele, 2013).

They CSO's have sought sanctions and even supported court litigations against exposed or implicated public officials. In September 2007, a coalition of civic groups announced that it would mobilise 500 lawyers, including twenty-five from the senior Advocates of Nigeria to support prosecutions of corrupt public office holders (Enweremadu, 2012)

The Civil society in the fourth republic have been able to construct broad platforms for the coordination, cooperation and mobilistaion and action on issues of public interest. These platforms are usually led by professional associations and trade unions, particularly Nigeria Labour Congress, (NLC) Trade Union Congress and Professional organisations such as the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Nigeria Medical Association(NMA), Nigeria Bar Association (NBA) and Human Rights Advocacy groups (Lee, 2007). The Nigerian Labour Congress for instance has periodically constructed national platforms for popular actions and mobilized citizens protest around issues such as fuel subsidy and minimum wage. Apart from being a CSO that is less dependent on foreign donors, the NLC has been able to mobilize its members to go on strike when it feels there is need to draw governments attention to issues concerning the interest of its members or the masses. As captured by Nwoko, (2009) "the Nigerian Labour Congress and civil society has since, return of Nigeria to democracy in 1999, been the platform for the Nigerian people to query government policies, actions and inaction, not only for the Nigerian working class, but the entire Nigerian people. Such polices include: privatization and commercialization of public institutions and services, incessant fuel hikes, retrenchments of workers and implementation of prescribed conditions and unfavorable policies".

The CSO's have also been involved initiating citizen-based initiatives in the pervasive and critically unsettling areas of religious based conflicts in an attempt towards conflict resolutions and transformations. The interfaith Mediation Center, and the Muslim Christian Dialogue forum(IMC-MCDF) and the Nigeria Inter Religious Council (NIRC) are emergent CSO's concerned with peaceful coexistence (Okpanachi, 2009).

Specialized advocacy groups such as the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD); Centre for Research and Documentation (CRD); Centre for Advanced Social Science (CASS) and African Leadership Forum amongst others have contributed in research and advocacy, have established cordial relationship with foreign donors and Nigerian policy makers in attempt to promote good governance and deepen democratic space.

The CSO's in the Fourth Republic have also made significant effort in networking and forming coalitions to campaign for specific changes in the country's policy and legal framework. The Citizens Forum for Constitutional reform (CFCR) was set up to advocate for a nationally acceptable Nigerian Constitution, the Electoral Reform Network (ERN), was set up to campaign for a legitimate National electoral law and the Transition Monitoring Group(TMG) was set up to monitor transition programs and elections. The Freedom of information Bill was also initiated by the Freedom of Information Coalition and passed to the legislatures for passage into law

Challenges of Civil Society in Promoting Good Governance in Nigeria

Despite the overwhelming evidence of public trust in civil society, a closer look at many civil society organizations in Nigeria reveals serious deficiencies. The effectiveness, actual

performance and contributions of the CSO's particularly in the fourth republic have raised concerns because the CSO's tend to have achievements that are modest and temporary without promoting substantive changes in governance.

Civil Society in Nigeria is still predominantly a terrain of the privileged middle class and elite class and the leadership of the human rights movement is similarly drawn predominantly from a narrow group of privileged urban elites most of whom are detached from the social reality of the poor rural majority (Lee, 2007; Ibhavoh, 2007). Most local or grass roots-based organizations are welfare and existential associations. The neglect of rural areas has deprived the leadership of the potential support from the grassroots that host many of the Nigerian population who are most affected by poor leadership. Sanjay (2007) opined that, the urban-based and elitist nature of the civil society's coalition as well as its failure to explore the socio-economic rights of those at the grassroots precluded the possibility of its campaign emerging as a mass movement. In a Democracy Perception Survey accomplished by the Civil Liberties Organization in September 2003, it was pointed out that most of the people at the grassroots felt they did not have access to civil society organizations and quite a few thoughts that these did not exist at all. It was also felt that these organizations did not have impact on social issues.

The mode of actions of the civil society in Nigeria is devoid of critical engagement, either in participation, willingness to take the risk of retaliation on repugnant state polices/actions or in voicing criticism on public policies that do not favour the ordinary citizen. The country has continued to witness an upsurge of inflation, unemployment, terrorist attacks, regional militancy,

kidnapping, increased rate of corruption, inefficient and decaying infrastructures without strong

opposition from the civil society (Egbe, 2004).

Some NGO's in Nigeria have become a lucrative commercial sector by the virtue of their

involvement in consulting and direct provision of social services. The emergent business

orientation is weakening the voluntarily and selfless role of civil society and fashioning an

environment where many profit making and exploitative organisations, are operating as NGO's

(Ikelegbe, 2013).

Many CSO's in Nigeria have little or no structure for internal source of funds and often survive

on grants and funding from donor agencies or countries, cooperate organizations or politicians

and government agencies. The patrons, and sponsors of such funds often use the NGO's to

pursue the ideologies and interest which do not take into consideration the peculiarity of the

Nigerian society (Gyimah 1999). Reliance on external funds has also weakened the autonomy of

the organizations because they are at risk of being biased or covering up agencies that support

them. The media for instance has played a useful intermediary role between the government and

the citizens. It is however perceived to be biased because of its reliance on government

patronage. The legitimacy of CSO's in Nigeria has been in doubt as most of them receive large

funds but are unable to account or manage these funds. In some cases, donors and partners

withdraw funds from these organization due to their lack of accountability.

The freedom of information bill which should be a viable tool for civil society particularly the media in demanding accountability and transparency is under utilised. Instead of taking advantage of it to access information about the activities of government, civil society tend to be reactionary while the media also report stories or rumors without thorough investigation. (Osa-Oghogho, 2015).

The leadership capacity of CSO's is threatened as members are coopted by the state while others voluntarily join politics with the advent of democratic rule (Fadakinte, 2013). Also, civil society still reflect the nations divisiveness, divergent interest and particularistic sentiments along religious, ethnic and partisan lines (Nwachukwu, 2013). These divisions have hindered the organizations from cooperating and actively engaging the state to pursue common a course when necessarily.

The role of civil society in Nigeria as described in this paper was fiercer during the military era. Now, the scenario has changed and the visible civil society organisations seem to be passive and preoccupied with economic survival and maintaining their jobs. This has allowed room for mismanagement of resources and poor governance with grave consequences for the society.

Conclusion

Civil Society has become an important subject in development discourse because it now widely agreed that the involvement of civil society organizations in the development process has potential to improve the general wellbeing of a society. Apart from creating a platform for people to express their interest and ideas, civil society also creates an opportunity for citizens to make demands on the states, to hold the state officials accountable and promote good governance.

The civil society in Nigeria has played a major role in the development and governance process of Nigeria. Despite the effort of civil society organizations in fighting for human rights, return to civil rule, resisting government's unfavorable polices and addressing issues of economic empowerment, conflict and peace building, it has not made a substantive impact in improving governance and development due to the numerous challenges it is needs to surmount.

Civil society organizations need to establish a local funding base to limit their heavy reliance on external funding. Such public funding should however be established within a politically neutral administrative framework, with well-defined criteria and procedures for accessing it. While the civil society's autonomy from the government is recognized, more effort should be made to build coalitions and constructive engagements between its organizations and government agencies. This will keep them abreast with the operations and challenges of public officials. Civil society must be proactive in confronting governance challenges and also be prepared to take the role of watchdog of the transactions between public and private organizations. Civil Society groups should therefore imbibe values of courage, impartiality and determination to promote good governance. It is also imperative to address issues of transparency and accountability among civil organizations in Nigeria. This is a necessary requirement in building the confidence and support of the community and its donor partners. Self-profiting organizations parading as NGO's should be delisted and mechanisms for transparency and accountability should be established in the sector

Finally, there is a limit to the contribution of civil society. The role of government in promoting good governance is critical. There is need for a well-structured institutional arrangement for

partnership between civil society organizations and government. Such arrangements should

make it easy for civil society and to partner with government in policy formulation,

implementation and monitoring with the ultimate goal of promoting transparency and

accountability.

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