

POLICY DIALOGUE REPORT

The Role of CSOs as Peacemakers during Civil Unrest in South Africa

Date: 29th of September 2023 (Friday)

Time: 10:00-14:00

Background

The National Development Agency (NDA) in collaboration with Palmer Development Group conducted a research study on the role of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) as peacemakers during social unrest in South Africa. The research was completed in September 2023 for engagement in a dialogue with a range of sectors for purposes of understanding the role of civil society in prevention and responding to such incidences. The purpose of this dialogue was to present the research study outcomes and engage with key stakeholders, such as organs of the state, thought leaders, researchers, the private sector, the Civil Society sector, and policymakers in a comprehensive discussion regarding the significant role that CSOs play in maintaining social cohesion and promoting peace and stability during periods of civil unrest. South Africa has faced its fair share of challenges in recent years, and it is imperative that we explore effective strategies for collaboration between CSOs and government institutions to address these issues collectively. The dialogue gained insights into the critical role CSOs play in promoting peace during times of social unrest, engaged in meaningful discussions with experts, practitioners, and policymakers, and shared the organization's experiences and success stories relating to civil unrest and discussed policy, strategy and early warning systems recommendations based on the research findings, discussions and insights gained during the dialogue and develop practical policy recommendations that support CSOs in their peace-making roles

The NDA co-hosted a policy dialogue titled “The Role of CSOs as Peacemakers during Civil Unrest in South Africa” with Palmer Development Group. The dialogue was virtual on the 29th of September 2023. The dialogue was attended by seventy (70) participants on a ZOOM platform. The dialogue is part of the

secondary object of the NDA to promote consultation, dialogue and sharing of development experiences between civil society organisations and relevant organs of state and debate on development policy. This report is a summary of the key discussion points in the dialogue based on the policy brief.

Welcome Message by the Acting CEO for the NDA – Ms. Reekeletseng Hlapolosa

The Acting CEO of the NDA, Ms. Hlapolosa Reekeletseng opened the dialogue and welcomed all the participants and Panellists that connected on this virtual dialogue. In her welcoming message, she expressed her gratitude to all the participants from various sectors, including government, civil society, academia, and the private sector and indicated that their presence in the dialogue reflects a commitment to collaboration and a shared vision for a better future. She further indicated that the dialogue came at a pivotal moment in our nation's history, where the need for unity, dialogue, and constructive engagement is more significant than ever. The acting CEO further emphasised that as the social sector portfolio, we believe that CSOs play a fundamental role in fostering peace, reconciliation, and social cohesion in our society. In her welcoming message, she gave a context of Civil Unrest by acknowledging the gravity of the situation and indicated that Civil unrest, whether fuelled by political, economic, or social factors, can tear the fabric of our communities and nations. In her closing, she motivated all the participants to freely engage in this dialogue and emphasised the need to empower and support Civil Society Organizations to achieve lasting peace and development.

Setting the Tone for the Dialogue in relation to the NDA Strategic Shift

The Chairperson of the NDA Board Ms. Ruth Bhengu set the tone for the dialogue. In her opening remarks, she welcomed all the participants in the dialogue. She indicated that this is an important dialogue which should be a continuation in terms of facilitating the active participation of communities and the civil society sector in addressing the service delivery challenges and the ownership of the economy. She applauded those who have conducted the research and indicated that it is a positive research. She further elaborated that in the context of the NDA and the CSOs starting with the mandate of the NDA. In the context of the NDA, she elaborated that the mandate of the NDA is to eradicate poverty and its causes, meaning there is an acknowledgement that causes of poverty are man-made because if they were natural then no Organization would be mandated to focus on the causes of poverty. She put forward that poverty has been made by a person and as a result, it can also be dismantled by a person. She further emphasised that the decision for the NDA to be mandated to eradicate poverty and its causes it's a confirmation that we agree that poverty was created by the system, people who did not want inclusivity and equality, resulting in countries and continents, especially, the African continent which has enormous resources that would make Africa rich and therefore be in a position to take care of the people that exist in South Africa and Africa as a continent. The civil society sector and the NDA operate in an environment that needs to be changed which then requires a call for a policy shift that will enable both the CSOs and the NDA to effectively

address the eradication of poverty and its causes. She indicated that we first need to understand the role of CSOs in influencing policies at government and business levels and to pose alternatives that will enable citizens to equally benefit from the assets that exist within communities. In other words, the CSOs are agents for change, development and transformation. The chairperson further emphasised the broader role that CSOs have in enabling those who are in decision-making powers, which is the government and those who control the means of production, which is the private sector, to understand how their behaviour and the decisions that they make impact on the citizens. She continued to highlight that those who are in law-making space should then create a conducive environment for the CSOs together with the government and private sector to come up with alternative design systems and programs to allocate adequate resources to enable the communities led by CSOs to actively participate in their development and also in ownership of the economy. In her closing remarks, she summarised the role of NDA to actively engage in these discussions with the aim of advocating for a policy shift in addressing issues of poverty and empowering CSOs to build South Africa as a developmental state and to eradicate causes of poverty and poverty itself by enabling the communities especially those that are underdeveloped to actively participate in their development and also ownership of the economy by using the assets that exist in communities.

Overview and Background of the Dialogue

The Executive Director for the Development Management and Research Division at the NDA, Mr. Bongani Magongo gave a contextual background on why the NDA is hosting this policy dialogue. In his speech, he recognised all the participants, all the Panellists and the Minister of Social Development in absentia. He indicated that over the past five years, the NDA has been hosting these dialogues as part of its responsibilities and expectations in influencing development policy through research that is then converted into these engagements. He further said the outcome of this is to enhance development policy and ensure that the policies provide an environment that is supportive of fighting poverty. He referenced the Civil Unrest that took place in July 2021 in Gauteng and Kwa-Zulu Natal found the Government unprepared for such events and cautioned the Government and the Civil Society sector that we need to be prepared for other similar waves and put measures on how the country going to deal with such. He further stipulated that part of the assets that the country has in preventing, preparing and responding to that are the organisations that exist within the communities which are mostly defined as CSOs, or some called NGOs, NPOs etc, their main objective is to protect the interests of the communities they live and operate in. After the July incident and the shock that came with it, the NDA as mandated to eradicate poverty needed to understand this phenomenon and also how to look at the roles of the assets that the country has on the ground, which are CSOs and how can they be utilised to build trust, cohesion and an environment where people do not come to a point where they become disruptive. In his closing, he indicated that the context behind this dialogue is for us (participants and Panellists) to engage on how we prepare, prevent and respond to such events that can easily become catastrophic.

Keynote Address: Understanding the Significance of CSOs in Peacemaking

Mr Papi Pikoli the Minister's advisor delivered a keynote address on behalf of Minister Lindiwe Zulu in absentia. In her address, the Minister thanked all that are in attendance at the dialogue. She extended her appreciation to the Board and the Executive members of the NDA for organizing this critical dialogue and was also pleased to see experts and stakeholders in attendance. Her view was that more time was needed and broader discussion to engage constructively for future deliberations. In her speech, she indicated that she participated in the site event of the UN General Assembly special session that was organised by Pathfinders for a peaceful just an inclusive society which was centred around the cost of violence in three countries, namely, South Africa, Costa Rica and Switzerland. At the heart of the discussion was how we can work together to halve violence in all its forms and its associated costs at national and global levels. Civil society plays a very important role in violence prevention and peace-making. The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 16) of the 2030 Sustainable Agenda, calls for peace, justice and strong national institutions including CSOs to end all forms of violence. This has particular relevance for South Africa because our history has been marked by moments of turbulence, often rooted in social, economic, and political disparities. Recent civil unrest events in July 2021 have highlighted the need to examine the role CSOs play in promoting peace and stability. In these turbulent times, the contributions of CSOs cannot be overstated. They serve as beacons of hope, working tirelessly to foster peace, reconciliation, and social cohesion within our communities.

The Unique Role of CSOs and Pillars as Peacemakers]

- **Community Trust and Credibility:** CSOs operate at the grassroots level, bridging gaps between communities and the government. They cultivate trust and foster dialogue, essential for conflict resolution.
- **Advocacy, Awareness and Social Justice:** CSOs play a crucial role in raising awareness about the root causes of civil unrest. Through their advocacy and research efforts, they help shine a light on the issues that need to be addressed. They are tireless advocates for justice, equality, and human rights and further play a critical role in addressing the root causes of civil unrest by pressing for systemic change.
- **Conflict Resolution and Mediation:** CSOs have specialized knowledge and skills in conflict resolution and mediation. Their impartiality and commitment to peace make them effective mediators and peacemakers in times of crisis.
- **Capacity Building:** CSOs empower communities with the skills needed to manage conflict peacefully. This includes training in conflict resolution, dialogue facilitation, and leadership development.

However, the work of CSOs is not without its challenges:

- **Funding and Sustainability:** CSOs often face financial constraints that limit their effectiveness. As

policymakers and stakeholders, we must explore avenues to provide stable funding and resources to support their vital work.

- **Legitimacy and Trust:** To effectively mediate during civil unrest, CSOs must maintain their legitimacy and the trust of the communities they serve. This means adhering to high standards of transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct.
- **Government-CSO Partnerships:** We must foster effective partnerships between CSOs and government institutions. These collaborations should be based on mutual respect and the shared goal of promoting peace and social cohesion.
- **Harnessing Technology:** CSOs can leverage technology and innovation to expand their reach and impact. Government support for technological initiatives can be instrumental in enhancing their work.

As we discuss the role of CSOs in peace-making during civil unrest, I want to emphasize the need for a coordinated and multi-sectoral approach. Governments, CSOs, and other stakeholders must work together to address the underlying causes of civil unrest and build more resilient and inclusive societies. In conclusion, the role of Civil Society Organizations as peacemakers during civil unrest in South Africa cannot be overstated. They are the voices of hope, resilience, and unity in our nation's most challenging moments. As we move forward, let us commit to supporting and empowering CSOs as they continue their vital mission to build a more peaceful and just South Africa. I look forward to the insights and recommendations that will emerge from this dialogue and the findings of the research conducted by the NDA, and I am committed to supporting policies and initiatives that strengthen and support CSOs in their peace-making and social cohesion roles.

Thank you for your attention, and I am eager to hear the perspectives and ideas that will be shared during this webinar on how we can collectively strengthen the role of CSOs in securing a brighter, more peaceful future for all South Africans.

CSO experiences during the Civil Unrest in Gauteng and Kwa-Zulu Natal

Ms. Nontobeko Gcabashe from Afesis, a program manager from Kagisano programme shared the experiences of CSOs during the July unrest. The Kagisano programme is implemented in six of the nine provinces (Kwa-Zulu Natal, Gauteng, Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Limpopo and North West) and this is across sixteen(16) sites across the country. In 2017, the study conducted by Freedom House characterised these as low-income communities and as the most violent sites in the country. Kagisano works towards building and strengthening social cohesion and preventing collective violence in the communities. In her reflection on CSOs' experiences during the Civil unrest, she shared that during the July 2021 unrest, the social-political unrest was sparked by protests in parts of Kwa-Zulu Natal against the arrest of former President Jacob Zuma. She indicated that the consequences of these protests slowed down the national economic growth, disrupted critical programs that were responding to COVID-19 at the

time, also resulted in some factories closing down in KZN and the ripple effect of that was the increased rates of unemployment and poverty. She further expanded on the ripple effects of these as damaged properties, and shortages of fuel and food due to the closing down of major highways, all of which led to an estimated loss of R50 billion. She spoke on the response by the government in restoring calmness, law and order, however, from the CSO perspective peacemakers had to provide non-partially and non-politically protection to the communities as well as monitor and assess situations that arose on the ground. She mentioned that during the July unrest, the nation did not have adequate early warning systems and the response from the government and civil society sector was even slower. She indicated that the response was in two folds both from the government and Civil Society where the CSOs provided some humanitarian support where they provided medical and food support in different areas. She emphasised that in the Civil Society sector, there was no coordination, collaboration and preparedness in responding to such a crisis. In her closing remarks, she shared the lessons learned by the Civil Society sector during the unrest, and one of the lessons is for the sector to be more intentional when engaging the government in terms of strengthening its relations with the government. In her reflections on the role of CSOs as peacemakers during the civil unrest, of noting she emphasised the importance of collaboration, coordination and sharing of accurate and reliable information for effective response.

Findings from the Research, Insights and Policy Recommendations

The team from Palmer Development Group (Ms Nazreen Kola and Ms Mildred Nakkungu) presented the findings of the research. Ms. Kola indicated that indeed the presentation by Afesis is exactly what they found during the research. In her presentation, Ms Nakkungu mentioned that the research considered the contextual dynamics of protests in South Africa and the nature of the unrest, furthermore, the research was on the perspectives of CSOs. In her presentation of the research findings, she shared the key findings from the research as lack of consistency and preparedness, Poverty, unemployment, lack of service delivery, lack of responsiveness and slow response rates, lack of identification of underlying causes, Failure to listen and understand the people, lack of education and awareness, weak intelligence and resource allocation, absence of community participation, Lack of consequences for wrongdoing, Insufficient resources and funding. In her closing, she provided recommendations from a policy perspective as Co-create long-term integration programs, intergovernmental dialogues, and community development projects and collaborate with CSOs across government departments and sectors in service delivery projects, involve CSOs in policy planning, changes, and decision-making processes, promotes government organizing, supporting, and creating spaces for direct engagement with the community, recognize and acknowledge the valuable work of CSOs and include them in government benefits. She further recommended that the role of NDA should advocate for CSOs to play a proactive role in addressing social challenges and promoting peace and stability, facilitate coordination and collaboration between CSOs and the NDA to maximize the impact, provide funding opportunities and support from the NDA available for CSO initiatives, with clear criteria and evaluation and engage in and enable broader multi-

stakeholder dialogue and consultation with CSOs to shape policy priorities, providing feedback and recommendations to improve policies and programs.

Question/ Remarks/comments	Answer/Response
<p>Mr Mondli from the Food and Nutrition Coordination from the Department of Social Development indicated that part of their responsibilities is to provide food relief during difficult times or disasters and Civil Unrest was one of the incidents where they actively provided support. He indicated that their surveys show/suggest that there is a huge demand for food relief in some disasters however, it is difficult to cater for all communities. In most instances, they had to use SAPS to accompany CSOs that were supplying food to communities because CSOs were getting looted while providing the food. He indicated that some of the challenges they faced at the time as government officials whereby CSOs not wanting the government to coordinate them or introducing certain organizations to operate in some areas/communities. In sharing his experiences, he indicated that there are lessons that can be learned by collaborating and coordinating the work of government and CSOs to better service the nation.</p>	
<p>Mr Lemisa Labane from the NDA asked the question relating to the findings of the research. His question was what was the most prevailing cause of the unrest?</p>	<p>Amongst the CSOs, there is a strong belief that service delivery and meeting basic needs fueled the unrest in July 2021. However, it is also important to note that in the context of unrest, there were two separate realities which were those who intentionally sought to sabotage the country and the second reality was those who were participating in a snowball fashion. The research also showed that even those whose basic needs were met just participated in the looting of the stores. In that context, even if you do not deal with the issues of sabotage or political</p>

	influence, you can deal with socio-economic factors that allow more people to join and participate in damaging properties and looting.
<p>Mr. Lunga Dweba representing Geopolitical Intelligence made a remark on the statement made by Ms. Gcabashe from the Afesis/Kagisano Program. The statement was related to insufficient adequate early warning systems before and during the July 2021 unrest. He is in agreement with that statement but indicated that it is important to note that there are and were indications that were communicated to relevant government entities, and for some reasons which by the way also links to the findings of the research, lack of trust was a serious problem whereby the indicators were presented to Government and no actions were taken by government. He further indicated that a few weeks before the incident, information was shared with the government but without any mandate or arrangement with certain departments it became difficult for action to be taken, as a result, no actions were taken. There was a talk of long-term projects and the establishment of MoU and as an organisation, they have entered into an MoU with the police department their recommendation as Geopolitical Intelligence is that a number of these interventions will work best if they are long-term based. Furthermore, there are workshops on Early warning signs that will be done and they will simply share the concept with communities.</p>	

Closing Remarks and Way Forward (Committing to Action)

The Chairperson of the NDA Board, Ms Ruth Bhengu provided the closing remarks and crafted a way forward. In her remarks, she thanked everyone who organised the dialogue and all the participants. She indicated that the Masakhane document should be used as an instrument because it talks more about how the government envisaged working with communities, and from the perspective of the NDA, the focus is going to be more on poverty eradication and looking at the impact of the 1913 land Act and whether it is correct for parliament to keep on debating on land redistribution without compensation or we can go to Vietnam to look at the impact of giving each poor family 25 hectares of land, then come back and think

whether we as South Africans are missing the point when we keep debating land redistribution issues. In her closing, she indicated that there are people who own thousands of hectares of land that are illegal and unethical by the 1913 Land Act, and there are landless people, as a result, they are poor and what do we say as the NDA that is charged with the responsibilities of eradicating poverty and its causes.

The dialogue was adjourned at 13:00

WEBINAR PROGRAMME

TOPIC: The Role of Civil Society Organizations as Peacemakers during Civil Unrest in South Africa
Friday, 29 September 2023 (10:00 – 14:00)

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09:30 - 10:00	Online log-in	All
10:00 - 10:15	Welcome	Ms Reekeletseng Hlapolosa – (Acting CEO - NDA)
10:15 – 10:30	Setting the Tone for the Dialogue in relation to the NDA Strategic Shift	Ms. Nozabelo Ruth Bhengu (Chairperson of the NDA Board)
10:30 - 10:40	Overview and Background of the Dialogue (Context)	Mr Bongani Magongo (Executive Director DMR – NDA)
10:40 – 11:00	CSO experiences during the Civil Unrest in Gauteng and Kwa-Zulu Natal	Ms Nontobeko Gcabashe (Programme Manager – Afesis/Kagisano)
11:00- 11:30	Findings from the Research, Insights and Policy Recommendations	Ms Mildred Nakkungu and Ms Nazreen Kola – Palmer Development Group
11:35-13:10	Q&A Session (Questions, Discussions & Proposals)	All
13:10 – 13:20	Introduction of the Minister of Social Development	Mr Linton Mchunu – Acting DG (Department of Social Development)
13:20 – 13:45	Keynote Address: Understanding the Significance of CSOs in Peace-making	Hon. Lindiwe Zulu (Minister for Social Development)
13:45 - 14:00	Closing Remarks and Way Forward (Committing to Action)	Mr Thulani Tshefuta (Overall Convenor, NEDLAC Community Constituency)



WEBINAR INVITATION

TOPIC: The Role of Civil Society Organizations as Peacemakers during Civil Unrest in South Africa

Friday, 29 September 2023 (10:00 – 14:00)

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MODERATOR

Mr Xolile Brukwe

Senior Manager - Stakeholder Management (NDA)



Ms Lindiwe Zulu, MP

Minister of Social Development



Mr Linton Mchunu

Acting Director General -DSD



Ms Nozabelo R. Bhengu

Chairperson of the NDA Board



Ms Reekeletseng L. Hlapolosa

Acting CEO

National Development Agency



Mr Bongani Magongo

Executive Director-Development
Management & Research (NDA)



Mr Thulani Tshefuta

Overall Convenor
NEDLAC Community Constituency



Ms Nontobeko Gcabashe

Programme Manager
Kagisano



Ms Mildred Nakkungu

Palmer Development Group



Ms Nazreen Kola

Palmer Development Group



Nazreen Kola & Mildred Nakkungu
29 September 2023

Findings, Insights and Policy Recommendations

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON THE ROLE OF CIVIL
SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS (CSOs) AS PEACEMAKERS
DURING THE SOCIAL UNREST IN SOUTH AFRICA

Introduction to Research

The research report on the Role of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) as Peacemakers during the Social Unrest in South Africa in July 2021.

The research sought to explore and understand means for mitigating and preventing similar unrest with the aid of CSOs.

The research considered the contextual dynamics of protest in South Africa and the nature of unrest.

The focus of the research was on the perspective of CSOs.

Evidence-based research and findings

The Findings came from a combination of primary and secondary data sources:



Document and literature review



An online survey completed by 76 CSOs



Focus groups with CSOs in 4 provinces: Gauteng, Kwa-Zulu Natal, Western Cape and Eastern Cape



Key stakeholder engagements with state officials

Themes

The Findings have been structured into three themes:



Understanding Unrest: CSOs' perspectives on the recent Civil Unrest.



The Work of CSOs: Processes and approaches CSOs undertake to work with and engage communities.



Institutional Realities: The state, and how CSOs operate in and around the structures formed by government.

Findings

Understanding Unrest: CSOs' perspectives on the recent Civil Unrest.



Findings

July 2021
Unrest:

Causes



Political influences

Corruption and mismanagement

Arrest and incarceration of former
President Jacob Zuma



Socioeconomic factors

Frustration and disillusionment

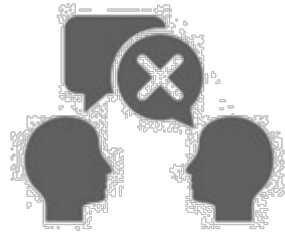


COVID-19 pandemic

Findings

July 2021
Unrest:

Gaps in
Peacebuilding



Lack of open and honest dialogue

Insufficient community engagement
and involvement

Lack of peace education

Ineffective intervention



Lack of leadership and
communication

Lack of trust and accountability

Disconnect between police and
community

Lack of sustained change

Political factors



Financial constraints

Findings

July 2021
Unrest:

Failures in
mitigation

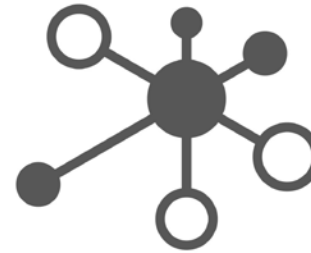


Lack of consistency and preparedness

Poverty, unemployment, and lack of service delivery

Lack of identification of underlying causes

Lack of education and awareness



Lack of responsiveness and slow response-rates

Corruption and lack of accountability

Failure to listen and understand the people

Weak intelligence and resource allocation



Insufficient resources and funding

Absence of community participation

Empty promises and lack of trust

Lack of consequences for wrongdoing

Findings

July 2021
Unrest:

Suggested
resolution of
the gaps in
peacekeeping
efforts



Funding and supporting
CSOs

Dialogues, consultations and
community engagement

Feeding schemes and
educational opportunities

Utilizing existing community
structures



Honoring promises,
enforcing accountability, and
ensuring transparency

Improving governance,
promoting ethical leadership

Collaborate with CSOs



Eliminating exploitative
systems like tenders and
labour brokers

Sustainable Job creation and
addressing inequality

Youth empowerment

Research on protest action demonstrates that protests are growing in frequency and becoming increasingly violent.

Realities of Unrest



This begs the question:
Should there should be a differentiation between Unrest and Protest?



Realities of Unrest

CSOs provided the following views:



- For some, the distinction is clear: civil unrest is unplanned and untargeted, while protests are planned and directed at a specific entity.
- Protests can be co-opted by different parties with alternative agendas, leading to disruption similar to civil unrest.
- Motivations and methods of protest are complex, making it challenging to draw a clear line between protest and unrest.



Realities of Unrest

CSOs provided the following views:



- Protests, particularly service delivery protests and taxi strikes, can be consistently volatile and susceptible to violence.
- Community-wide distrust and social fragmentation can result from blockades, harassment, and violence during protests.
- While not as extreme as the July 2021 unrest, there is still a concerning level of frustration in affected communities.



Realities of Unrest

Case Study: Looking at Western Cape we can see the blurriness between the distinction of unrest and protest



- Gang violence in the Western Cape has reached alarming levels, causing distress and division within communities, similar to the effects of civil unrest.
- Some participants argue that gang violence should not be separated from protest because gangsters are a product of dissatisfaction with socioeconomic circumstances.
- While some participants differentiate between violent protest and gang violence, they agree that the impact on affected communities is the same, leading to the need for similar support in the aftermath.
- Participants emphasize the interconnectedness of various forms of violence in society, including gender-based violence (GBV), corruption, protest, and unrest.

Realities of Unrest

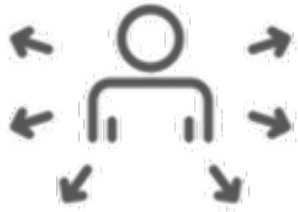
Case Study: Examples of Unrest and Protest in Eastern Cape



- In the Eastern Cape, rural protests differ from urban protests, with a focus on specificity and peacefulness.
- Rural protests are often targeted and less prone to becoming violent.
- In Port St Johns: The blockade of main roads, often employed as a protest tactic, cause significant disruptions, preventing rural residents from reaching regional service centers for essential healthcare and services.
- In Majola Village: Heightened levels of violence, with killings leading to people being displaced to neighboring villages. The root cause of violence in Majola is stock theft, and this conflict has persisted for several years.
- These persistent escalated forms of violence, as seen in Majola, can be classified as a manifestation of unrest, emphasizing the importance of considering historical patterns of violence in peacekeeping efforts.

Realities of Unrest

Involvement in or proximity to protests takes a toll on CSO members:



- Exposure to harm during protests impacts their ability to provide support.
- Trauma and constant upheaval demoralize and demotivate CSO workers.
- CSO workers may be at risk, even when serving as observers at protests.

Findings

The Work of CSOs: Processes and approaches CSOs undertake to work with and engage communities.



Bringing People together



- **Post-Unrest Support:** CSOs play a vital role in helping individuals and communities cope with the physical and psychological aftermath of unrest.
- **Trauma Processing:** CSOs use small group sessions as a tool to facilitate trauma processing and emotional expression among affected individuals.
- **Peacebuilding Initiatives:** CSOs believe in proactive peacebuilding, including sensitization training, health services, and support for marginalized communities, to prevent violence during and before unrest.
- **Community Empowerment:** CSOs engage in various community-focused activities, such as relief efforts, youth empowerment, and clean-up initiatives, to foster resilience and unity.
- **Complex Role:** CSOs navigate complexities within divided communities, striving to promote neutrality, unity, and reconciliation while avoiding taking sides in conflicts.

Community Entry and Identifying leaders



- **Challenges and Neutrality:** Engaging communities is challenging due to political tensions and gatekeeping. CSOs maintain neutrality to avoid affiliations with political parties.
- **Entry Strategies:** CSOs employ alternative entry methods, such as connecting with ward councillors, CSOs, CBOs, social activists, and community forums.
- **Established Organizations:** Established CSOs often have community members approach them, fostering trust and collaboration through joint agreements.
- **Working with Community:** CSOs emphasize cooperation with community leaders and members rather than working for them.
- **Identifying Community Leaders:** Recognizing community leaders, whether traditional or unconventional, is crucial for effective engagement. Leaders unite people through peaceful dialogue.
- **Vetting and Stakeholders:** Organizations verify the credibility of community leaders through vetting. It is important to ensure that community leaders are in fact representing their community.

Resource Constraints and Achieving Their Mandate



- **Resource Challenges:** Many CSOs face resource constraints, primarily in funding, staffing, and office space. Limited funding affects their ability to meet objectives and maintain stability.
- **Staffing and Space Needs:** Some CSOs require more human resources and office space to operate effectively. They also encounter challenges related to internet access and transportation.
- **Resourceful CSOs:** Despite constraints, CSOs demonstrate resilience. They have achieved their mandates, even if partially, by reaching communities, empowering youth, and addressing social issues.
- **Funding Dilemmas:** Some CSOs with good reputations struggle to secure sufficient funding, leading to reduced targets and operating on a smaller scale.
- **Importance of Fundraising:** CSOs emphasize the importance of fundraising, community support, and partnerships to overcome resource challenges and achieve their missions.

Findings

Institutional Realities: The state, and how CSOs operate in and around the structures formed by government.



Navigating Government Engagement and Regulation



- **NPO Directorate Registration:** Non-profit CSOs must register with the NPO Directorate under the Department of Social Development, with 276,000 organizations currently registered, ensuring accountability and legal compliance.
- **Promoting Good Governance:** The NPO Directorate plays a pivotal role in promoting good governance within the sector, especially among smaller community-based organizations, through consultations and campaigns.
- **Funding and Partnerships:** The Department of Social Development relies on social service NPOs to provide essential services, funding 21,090 organizations. However, these are a small portion of all NPOs, leaving a large gap.
- **Limited Government Support:** Despite frequent engagement, more than half of CSOs receive no support or capacity building from the government, highlighting resource constraints.
- **Varied Government Collaborations:** CSOs engage with various government departments, including Social Development, SAPS, Health, Education, Justice, and more. The frequency of engagement varies based on CSO prominence and specific project needs, with an emphasis on remaining politically neutral and productive engagements.

State-CSO relationship



- **Distrust and Discontent:** Many CSOs express distrust in the government and politicians due to issues like corruption, lack of service delivery, and political infighting. This sentiment mirrors the concerns of the communities they serve.
- **Engagement Challenges:** CSOs often face challenges in government engagements, such as a lack of follow-through after meetings, disrespectful treatment by officials, and reluctance to attend community gatherings. These issues impact their ability to foster peace in communities.
- **Government's Investment:** Survey results show mixed opinions among CSOs regarding the government's investment in their work. While some believe the government is invested, others feel that government engagement may compromise their ability to speak out.
- **Limited Collaboration:** Collaboration between CSOs and government is often limited by government procurement procedures, which can restrict CSOs' involvement in program design and planning. Inclusive approaches are needed to fully utilize CSOs' expertise.

State-CSO relationship



- **Resource Challenges:** CSOs face resource challenges in working with local, provincial, and national government entities. They often find themselves doing work that government officials should handle due to resource constraints.
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State-CSO relationship



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- **Community Empowerment:** CSOs aim to enhance and empower community structures, bridge the gap between society and government, and ensure the government's proactive engagement with communities.

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Recommendations

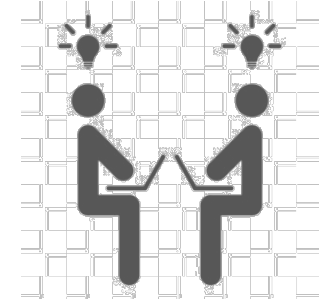
The recommendations are structured into 5 sections



From a Policy Perspective



The Relationship Between the State and CSOs



Community-Based Appreciative Inquiry



Building Trust



Role of the NDA

Recommendations

From A Policy Perspective



- Co-create long-term integration programs, intergovernmental dialogues, and community development projects.
- Collaborate with CSOs across government departments and sectors in service delivery projects.
- Involve CSOs in policy planning, changes, and decision-making processes.
- Promote government organizing, supporting, and creating spaces for direct engagement with the community.
- Establish formal Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and provide financial support to CSOs.
- Recognize and acknowledge the valuable work of CSOs and include them in government benefits.

Recommendations

The Relationship Between the State and CSOs



- Foster collaboration and partnerships between CSOs and the state through ongoing dialogue and feedback exchange
- Ensure transparent, open communication channels between CSOs and government entities.
- Establish formal mechanisms for engagement, such as joint working groups or advisory committees.
- Recognize and value CSOs' expertise and contributions in policy development and implementation.
- Enhance coordination and cooperation between state entities and CSOs in addressing societal challenges.

Recommendations

Community- Based Appreciative Inquiry



- Promote the use of appreciative inquiry methodologies in community development projects.
- Value and build upon the strengths and assets of the community when designing interventions.
- Encourage CSOs to engage in participatory approaches that empower community members.
- Involve diverse stakeholders in decision-making processes.
- Foster a culture of inclusivity, respect, and active listening within community-based initiatives.
- Facilitate spaces for dialogue, reflection, and shared learning among community members and CSOs.

Recommendations

Building Trust



- Uphold high ethical standards, transparency, and accountability in CSO and state programs and processes.
- Ensure efficient and effective resource use to maximize trust and credibility.
- Foster strong relationships and partnerships with community members, government entities, and other stakeholders.
- Engage in continuous dialogue, feedback loops, and responsiveness to community needs.

Recommendations

Role of the NDA



- Collaborate with select, relevant CSOs to leverage resources and expertise for community development
- Advocate for CSOs to play a proactive role in addressing social challenges and promoting peace and stability
- Facilitate coordination and collaboration between CSOs and the NDA to maximize impact
- Make funding opportunities and support from the NDA available for CSO initiatives, with clear criteria and evaluation.
- Engage in and enable broader multi-stakeholder dialogue and consultation with CSOs to shape policy priorities, providing feedback and recommendations to improve policies and programs.



www.pdg.co.za | info@pdg.co.za | +27 21 671 1402

22 Escombe Avenue, Parktown, 2193, Johannesburg, South Africa
Ubunye House, 70 Rosmead Avenue, Kenilworth, 7702, Cape Town, South Africa