Civil Society and Citizen Participation in Governance Processes in
Zimbabwe, 1997-2010

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Abstract

The deteriorating political environment in Zimbabwe, especially from the mid-1990s culminated in the emergence of pro-democracy CSOs that sought to engage the authoritarian to encapsulate democratic principles and enhance citizen participation in governance processes in Zimbabwe, especially from 1997 to 2010. The case studies are the Combined Harare Residents' Association (CHRA), the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA), Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) and the Zimbabwe Human Rights Organization (ZimRights). Interviews and questionnaires conducted on CSO secretariats and members and complemented by documentary analysis presented as qualitative and quantitative data respectively. Data is drawn from a cumulative total of 300 tasks. The analytical framework is drawn from debates around the interconnectedness between democracy, governance, civil society and citizen participation provide. Citizen participation in the Zimbabwe reveals the authoritarian nature of the state as it seeks to stifle free political participation by instilling fear in citizens through enacting repressive legislation, politicizing and militarising most public institutions. To strengthen their position, CSOs establish network spaces by forming coalitions to confront the state with a united voice as exhibited by the establishment of the NCA where most pro-democracy CSOs converge towards the constitution reform process. Through civic and voter education and other outreach programmes, CSOs interact with their members to educate and create a critical citizenry. Although donors fund ill-resourced CSOs but critics accuse donors of harbouring a regime change agenda, especially where diplomatic missions are involved in funding of pro-democracy CSOs. There is a correlation between the growth of CSOs and decreasing voter apathy in the country from the 1990s. Enhanced participating in elections from 2000 indicates the influence of CSOs that shaped the political behaviour of citizens towards electoral and political processes. There is an identification of increased trends towards promoting good local governance within local authorities and through residents associations.

Key words

Zimbabwe

Democracy

Governance

Civil Society

Citizen Participation

Authoritarian

Residents' Associations

Voter Education

Enhance

Enlightenment

Abbreviations

ACPD- Action Canada for Population and Development

AGM-Annual General Meeting

AIPPA-Access to Information and Promotion of Privacy Act

AU-African Union [formerly Organization of African Union]

CCJP- Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace

CEDAW-Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women

CHRA-Combined Harare Residents Association

CIDA-Canadian International Development Agency

DANIDA-Danish International Development Agency

EISA-Electoral Institute of Southern Africa

ESAPs-Structural Adjustment Programme

G.C.E "O" Level-General Certificate in Education Ordinary Level

GGLN-Good Governance Local Network

ICCPR-International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

JOMIC-Joint Implementation and Monitoring Committee

LRF- Legal Resources Foundation

MDC-Movement for Democratic Change

MLGRUD-Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development

NAM-Non-Aligned Movement

NCA-National Constitutional Assembly

NEPAD-New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development

NGOs-Non-Governmental Organizations

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NRACF- National Residents' Associations Consultative Forum

POSA-Public Order and Security Act

PTA-Preferential Trade Area

PVO-Private and Voluntary Organization

SADC-Southern African Development Community [formerly SADDC]

SIDA-Swedish International Development Agency

UCA-Urban Councils Act

UDI-Unilateral Declaration of Independence

UN-United Nations

UNDP-United Nations Development Programme

UNESCAP- The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

USAID-United States Agency for International Development

UZ-University of Zimbabwe

WOZA-Women of Zimbabwe Arise

ZANU PF-Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front

ZAPU-Zimbabwe African People's Union

ZCTU-Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Union

ZEA-Zimbabwe Electoral Act

ZimRights-Zimbabwe Human Rights Organisation

ZINASU-Zimbabwe National Students' Union

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Declaration

I declare that **Civil Society and Citizen Participation In Governance Processes in Zimbabwe, 1997-2010** is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or for examination in any university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Full Name...

Date...

Signature...

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The compilation and subsequent submission of such an intensive research document would not have been the effort of one person. First and foremost I acknowledge the hand of God in the final completion of this study. Additionally, a number of people and institutions contributed to the successful completion of this study. It is the intention of the researcher to acknowledge their contributions.

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Dedication

I dedicate this piece of work to my late father, Josiah Mapuva, my mother Sarah

Mapuva, my Wife Loveness Muyengwa, my children and siblings

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

One of the major longstanding divisions in contemporary theories of democracy concerns the level of participation that is required of citizens. Pluralist or participatory democracy underscores the necessity for a high degree of engagement from the population (O'Neill, 2008:3). Direct participation of citizens is encouraged in as many arenas as possible, ranging from participation in electoral processes to local government budgetary systems, as well as in policy formulation in numerous areas (O'Neill, 2008:3). Held (1996:271) asserts that explicit goals in the theory of democracy include 'fostering a sense of political efficacy, nurturing a concern of taking a sustained interest in the governing processes'. Held (1996:100) discusses John Stuart Mill's philosophical nuances which portray citizen participation in representative democracies as being able to provide the best mechanism for the articulation of interests. Diamond and Morlino (2004:23) have noted that the right to political participation by all adult citizens is essential in democracies as it provides the mechanism through which citizens can influence decision-making. The quality of democracy is greater when citizen participation is extensive in the life of political parties and civil society organisations, in relation to the discussion of public policy issues (Cohen &Fung 2004:27), communicating with and demanding accountability from elected representatives, and in direct engagement with public issues at the local level (Diamond & Morlino, 2004:23-24). In all these processes, civil society has been seen to play a facilitative role in promoting dialogue between the state and citizens. The main focus of the thesis is to establish the extent to which selected civil society organisations have enhanced citizen participation in governance processes in Zimbabwe from 1997 to 2010.

The role of civil society in promoting citizen participation has continued to take centre stage in recent years, as scholars grappled with trying to establish the conditions under which civil society can enhance citizen participation and good governance and can restore, as well as strengthen, democratic institutions (Dorman, 2004:172). It has been noted that in the developing world the importance of interest groups in presenting public interests and ensuring government responsiveness and accountability have put civil society in the forefront (O'Neill, 2008:4). Citizens argue that they have a right to keep the state in check, given the '…growing crisis of legitimacy that has characterised the relationship between citizens and

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public institutions, where citizens speak of mounting disillusionment with government, based on concerns about corruption, lack of responsiveness to the needs of the poor and the absence of a sense of connection with elected representatives and bureaucrats' (Gaventa, 2006:1).

Citizenship and citizen entitlement debates have long existed in the classics. These focus on participation in public debates and the exercise of authority in the community whereby participation becomes a community activity (Nichols, 1992:7). Dalton (2002:5) makes reference to community activity which involves group or concerted efforts to deal with community problems as the essence of democracy. What citizens consequently need is a medium such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), civil society organisations (CSOs) and other civic groupings through which they can be mobilised to participate in community activities for social change (Dalton, 2002:6). NGOs, CBOs and CSOs have been credited with '...stepping in to respond to the needs and demands of the poor and marginalised sections of society' (Robinson, 1997; Wood 1997). NGOs and other non-state actors present '... the primary catalysts of change and have been identified as the pre-eminent, if not sole, organisational forms that can implement the global commitment to "bottom up" development (Kamat, 2004:155). The globalisation of NGOs is reflective of the new policy consensus that NGOs are de facto agents of democracy rather than products of a thriving democratic culture (Edwards, 2000; Holloway, 1998; Nye & Donahue, 2000).This is the premise on which non-state actors will be presented in this study, as agents seeking social change.

The research does not seek to engage in debates around civic organisations' different operational strategies but will concentrate on 'governance' CSOs. These CSOs are a section of civil society seeking to '...hold the state to account and provide a forum on which citizens can engage the state on governance issues' (Matyszak, 2009:145). The efficacy of these organisations in assuming the role of mediating between citizens and the state and the extent to which they have enhanced citizen participation is discussed. Consequently, the cases selected are the Zimbabwe Human Rights Organisation (ZimRights), Combined Harare Residents' Association (CHRA), Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) and the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA). It should be noted that these have either individually or collectively sought to strengthen citizens' propensity to take an active role in influencing policy that contributes to the restoration of democracy. As a result the civic groups have

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found common ground as they complemented each other's efforts in promoting human rights, the restoration of democracy and good governance. These commonalities have tended to pull them together into a loose network of social movement actors seeking social change, as will be highlighted at the end of chapter 4 (see 4.3). In addition, the thesis explores the inter-relatedness of broad concepts and practices connected with the study, namely: *democracy* and *governance* as well as *civil society* and *citizen participation,* and how they pertain to the Zimbabwean context. The interface between these practices and concepts forms the analytical basis of this study.

The dissertation does not claim to be the first to explore endeavours by civil society to either restore democracy or influence the setting up of democratic institutions in Zimbabwe or Africa. A lot has been written on the role of civil society in the democratisation process in numerous African countries such as Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi and South Africa as well as Zimbabwe (Sachikonye, 1997:135). Kukah (2002:187) argues that Africa seeks some form of democracy which civil society and associated institutions can use to create this alternative participatory form of democracy. The challenges of building democratic blocs on the continent by drawing from debates about political and social failure in Africa since independence are manifested by 'the abysmal and sometimes worsening indicators of development, namely life expectancy decreasing; infrastructure in decay; and relentless poverty; all factors that have contributed to the crumbling of democratic institutions in most African countries' (Kukah, 2002:192). In many African states '…pro-democracy civic groups are treated with disdain, and are often referred to as trouble makers and rabble-rousers in the politics of development, they have been able to capitalise on, and utilise available space to create the much needed sanity in the governance systems and contribute to positive social change' (UNDP, 2007:24). In Kenya, Malawi, Zambia, South Africa and a host of other countries that experienced authoritarian rule, pro-democracy civil society organisations have been at the forefront of supporting media and constitutional reforms and civic participation, as well as '…empowering both citizens and political parties with the necessary information in addition to facilitating dialogue with a wide range of stakeholders on designing programmes that reflect national priorities' (Westminster Foundation for Democracy, 2010:4). In countries like Kenya, popular mobilisation has been celebrated as a manifestation of the strength of 'civil society' as CSOs sought to confront the state for a return to democracy (Brown, 2001:735). In Malawi, civil society has intensified its civic

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education programmes as a way of engaging citizens towards citizen enlightenment (Glasgow et al, 1993:83). In the South African context, just as in many countries, the labour movement has provided a rallying point for various civic groups and citizens towards politicising the citizenry into forcing the state to account (Noyoo, 2005:45). In Zimbabwe, civil society organisations have been portrayed negatively and with considerable suspicion, signalling the risk in which the civic groups find themselves as they confront an increasingly hostile state (Sachikonye, 2005:156). The portrayals have ranged from presenting CSOs as being '… in a state of chronic underdevelopment as a result of historical factors related to pre- and post-independence politics' (Moyo,1993:1); 'groups at risk' (Human Rights Watch, 2004); 'stooges of the West attempting to force regime change' (Booysen & Toulou, 2009:642), among other derogatory descriptions. This is the situation in which CSOs in Zimbabwe find themselves and explains the Zimbabwean state's hostile attitude towards pro-democracy CSOs in and outside the country.

Zimbabwe has been presented as a case study of democratic decay, bad governance, gross human rights violations and poor policy implementation. This culminated in the disintegration of democratic institutions that characterised much of the late 1990s and beyond. The same period saw the emergence of pro-democracy civil society groups in response to the deteriorating democratic institutions in the country. Notwithstanding the many setbacks that the democratic forces in Zimbabwe have experienced, the post-colonial civic movement in the country has had a remarkable history (Rupiya, Muponde & Muzondidya (2006) in Raftopolous and Alexander, 2006:5), '...emerging from under the wing of a dominant nationalist party and [beginning]to demand the expansion of democratic spaces and greater accountability' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:1125). Raftopolous & Alexander (2006:5) have credited the civic movement with introducing a more expansive language of human and civil rights into the national political discourse - a language that had been marginalized in the dominant discursive practices of nationalist politics. Civic interventions have been critical of the process of expanding the political fringes of Zimbabwean politics and serving as an important resource for the revival of democratic politics in Zimbabwe (Moyo, 2009:7). Makumbe (1998:48) points out that '...the history of associational life in the colonial period, particularly in rural areas, provided a useful historical resource from which to launch civil society development in the post-colonial period.' Churches, trade unions, community activists and human campaigners have all drawn from a rich resource of past

activities during the colonial period, which provided them with a connection to the broader nationalist struggle and sense of the particularities of their own specific struggles (Raftopolous & Mlambo, 2009:34). However, contrary to nationalist romanticisation of democracy in Zimbabwe, democracy has been in severe decline, especially from the mid-1990s due to a series of policy blunders by government that led to a worsening of socio-economic and political conditions (Matyszak, 2009:133). Bracking (2005:4) attributed Zimbabwe's democratic decay to the economic policies of the 1990s that '...exhibited a form of authoritarianism traceable from the social transformation catalysed by ESAP of 1991-1995, the post-1997 economic crisis and the general economic and moral bankruptcy of the post-colonial nebula of hybrid liberal democracy'. All these factors played a contributory role in plunging Zimbabwe into political, economic and social crises. With this unpopularity the ZANU PF government began to '...wantonly perpetrate violence to maintain power and social control in the face of a population who didn't provide a majority vote for it' (Bracking, 2005:4). These developments opened up space for pro-democracy civil society organisations seeking to restore democratic values either through engaging the state or confronting it (Matyszak, 2009:134). It is on this basis that this thesis seeks to establish the extent to which selected civic groups, through their activities, both individually and collectively, have campaigned for the restoration and strengthening of democracy. This thesis does not seek to analyse the vast literature on social movements, but seeks to draw from social movements and feminist theories to understand how civic organisations mobilise their constituencies more broadly and network for participation. Social movements are a series of contentious performances, displays and campaigns by which ordinary people make collective claims on others (Tilly, 2003:5). For Tilly, social movements are a major vehicle for ordinary people's participation in public politics (Tilly, 2003:3). Social movement theory seeks to explain why social mobilisation occurs, the forms under which it manifests, as well as potential social, cultural and political consequences. Investigations of social movement commonly build upon several central aspects relevant to the understanding of mobilisation. These are networks, structures and other resources which actors employ to mobilise supporters, and the ways in which movements' participants define or frame their movements (Ballard et al, 2006:82). Social movements focus on social and political change and on framing issues to make them resonate with the public, help to mobilise the necessary structures and resources and seek to open up political structures to accommodate the envisioned changes and generate consensus about social problems and possible solutions (Clark, 2004:942). In this effort, the thesis

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explores civic organisations' mobilisation strategies within social movements and how these have been utilised by CBOs in their engagement with an increasingly despotic state in Zimbabwe, especially from the mid-1990s.

Mobilisation theorists argue that the success of social movements rests mainly on the resources that are available to them, the formation of coalitions with already-existing organizations and securing financial support and on mounting effective and organised campaigns of political pressure (Ake, 1993:24). This brings to the fore the issue of donor funding which forms part of resource mobilisation. Donors have '...taken to the idea that NGOs can also contribute to expanding good governance and democratization' (Dorman, 2004). This puts donors in a position which enables them to participate in the operations of CSOs that they fund. Later chapters will make reference to donor funding of CSOs in Zimbabwe and the impact this has on the independence of civic groups.

The thesis focuses on the period from 1997 to 2010, a period when it became increasingly evident that '...civil liberties were under threat, signalling the deterioration of democratic space and intensification of the constitutional reform debate in Zimbabwe, and renewed interest civil society in human rights violations and electoral processes' (Sachikonye, 2004:154). The changing role of civil society which had initially been '...confined to supplementing various social and economic activities carried out by the state (Sachikonye & Raftopolous, 2001:15) responded to increasing dissatisfaction with economic and social hardships of the 1990s' by seeking to confront the state and demand accountability, accountability and responsiveness' (Makumbe, 2009:156). Increased evidence of democratic erosion and gross human rights violation against the backdrop of flawed electoral processes all combined to inform and shape the character of state/civil society in Zimbabwe (Makumbe, 2009:158). In response to the increasing prominence of pro-democracy CSOs, the state in Zimbabwe sought to boost its waning support base through militarisation and the politicisation of various public institutions (Sachikonye, 2009:54). These developments presented an opportunity for civil society which displayed '...increased confidence and activism and the growth of new NGOs with a human rights mandate' (Matyszak, 2009:135).

Moreover, this study seeks to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on civil society mobilisation. The study examines the extent to which pro-democracy CSOs in Zimbabwe

contributed to citizen participation in governance processes from 1997 to 2010. The available body of literature provides a foundation on which this study will build.

1.2 Research Problem

Many scholars have problematised Zimbabwe's democratic decay and gross human rights violations as having emanated from ZANU PF's monopolisation of the liberation struggle credentials (Moyo,1993; Raftopoulos, 2000; Ndlovu-Gatsheni,1999; Chitiyo & Rupiya, 2005). This has resulted in diminishing democratic space as the party strengthened its grip on power and exhibited its intolerance to voices of dissent (Matyszak, 2010; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009; Bracking, 2005; Raftopoulos, 2001), crushing any opposition to its authoritarian rule (Chitiyo & Rupiya; Moyo,1993; Raftopoulos, 2000; Bracking, 2005, Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009). This culminated in political and economic meltdown from the 1990s, further opening up space for civil society to become more assertive and occupy the vacuum created by the breakdown of governance structures (Raftopoulos, 2005; Bracking, 2005; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009). As a result, civil society took up the vacuum so created by providing a buffer between the state and citizens (Keane, 1998a; Moyo, 1993) and by seeking to strengthen democratic institutions, monitor human rights and educate citizens about citizens' rights and responsibilities, thus building a culture of civic engagement and enhancing state responsiveness to political reforms (Kaldor, 2003; Raftopolous, 2000; Sachikonye, 2005, Matyszak, 2010, Masunungure, 2010). The inclusive social democratic path which had briefly been pursued in the early 1980s was abandoned and by 1991; the ruling elite had embraced capitalist individualism (Bracking, 2005:4) which further signalled an increasing rift between the ruling elites and the general citizenry (Makumbe, 2009:156). The ESAP of 1991-96 provided the momentum for the economy to become uncompetitive in key industrial sectors (Chipika et al, 2000; Sachikonye, 1999) leading to increased hardships for the poor and promoting uneven development (Mlambo, 1997). These failed economic policies presented evident '...failures of post-colonial "development democracies" to address the structural, social and political legacies of colonial and apartheid rule' (Cousins, 2000, in Hammar & Raftopoulos, 2003). This '...provided the opportunity for authoritarian nationalism, and the politics of economic restitution, to combine and counter development failure' (Hammar & Raftopoulos, 2003 in Bracking, 2005:6). This exacerbated the slide towards democratic decay in the country.

The democratic decay that followed in Zimbabwe impacted negatively on citizens as it manifested in severe human rights violations, the deterioration of democratic institutions and shrinking participatory spaces (Sachikonye, 2005; Makumbe, 2000; Raftopoulos, 2001). This led to the deterioration of state/civil society relations as civil society challenged the state and at the same time mobilised and engaged citizens to demand responsiveness, accountability, good governance and the reinstatement of democratic institutions. At the same time '... the spaces for peaceful democratic politics became ruthlessly eliminated, and the state appeared set to discourage any prospects for national political dialogue' (Raftopolous & Alexander, 2006:3). Additionally, '... by the late 1980s, the government of Zimbabwe came under increasing pressure from the labour movement, students and dissenting members of the middle class to democratise its functions' (Raftopolous & Phimister, 1997:30). Even though government's complementary relationships with civil society had grown by the late 1980s, '...the state still sought to cover its capacity weakness by introducing greater control over civil society activities' (Moyo, Makumbe & Raftopoulos, 2000:21).

Failure by government "...to give appropriate recognition and space to civil society resulted in the emergence of new civil society groups, working for democratic change alongside the more established groupings' (Chuma, 2003:3). At the same time '...civil society in post-independence Zimbabwe has had to establish itself in an environment in which there was no deeply entrenched tradition of allowing a diverse range of democratic interests and voices to be heard and represented' (Moyo, Makumbe & Raftopolous, 2000:34), due to the romanticisation and monopolisation of the liberation war credentials by ZANU PF as has been cited above (Moyo, 1993:3; Sachikonye, 2005:136; Chikwanha, 2006:100).

Increased pressure from civil society led to government seeking to curtail the rising popularity and growth of pro-democracy CSOs by enacting restrictive legislation. This further alienated citizens from public affairs, leading to the gradual creation of a pariah state in Zimbabwe (Chingono, 2009:25). In response, civil society in the country sought to influence the rejection of the restrictive legislation, because the '...legal and extra-legal restrictions on freedoms severely undermined the ability of civil society to disseminate information and initiate debate on important issues such as the restoration of democracy in Zimbabwe' (Raftopolous & Alexander, 2006:55). Pressure from an increasingly restive civil society to restore democracy against the backdrop of political stagnation and economic meltdown led to inter-party talks which resulted in the establishment of an inclusive political

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arrangement in 2009 and the initiation of the constitution-making process which was a positive development towards a more democratic dispensation (Matyszak, 2010:147; Masunungure, 2010:81). However, events on the ground have indicated that the inclusive arrangement has failed to work, as participants in the arrangement have continued to disagree on a number of vital issues, most notably power-sharing. ZANU PF has continued to incite violence as a retributive exercise against the electorate who failed to vote for it during the March 2008 elections (Matyszak, 2009:146; Masunungure, 2010:82). As a result, politically-motivated violence has continued unabated, as restrictive legislation still remains in place, seeking to curtail civil liberties and civil society activities (Matyszak, 2009:146). Additionally, the post-inclusive government arrangement has proved that '...elections as a democratic practice and a mechanism for ushering in political change have failed as "the winds of change" were systematically defied through flawed electoral practices' (Makumbe (2010) in Masunungure, 2010:9).

As a show of disgruntlement, pro-democracy civil society has, through protest participation and civil disobedience, defied the restrictive legislation which sought to curtail civil liberties. However, this created an environment of suspicion in which the government began to regard such civil society organisations as having a political motive of embarking on oppositional politics and began to treat pro-democracy civil groups as political opponents whose treatment justified more stringent measures befitting political and counter-revolutionary opponents (Makumbe, 2000:54). Fear of retribution led to a divided civil society comprising '...those CSOs that have come out strongly opposed to government action of enacting restrictive legislation and those that uphold the state's legitimacy in the face of authoritarianism' (Masunungure; 2004:179). Owing to these ideological differences about how to confront the state '...most civics have been inspired by the ideals of the revolution, but some were infiltrated by or shaped by government and these ideals have been informed by a definite movement of voluntarism from below' (Makumbe, 2009:3). This has been one weakness in the country as civil society has remained divided on pertinent issues.

In light of the deteriorating political and socio-economic situation, the role and functions of civil society organisations in contesting prevailing undemocratic practices became significant. In this context '...civil society organisations provided a resurgence of political and academic interest from the 1990s, and have been at the centre of debates relating to democracy and development, and directly connected to the participation of civil society

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organisations' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2007:3). This is the rationale of this thesis as it seeks to determine the extent and impact of involvement of selected civil society organisations, namely ZimRights, WOZA, CHRA and NCA, with regard to exploring formal and informal participatory spaces to enhance and promote citizen participation in Zimbabwe, especially from 1997 to 2010. Additionally, the study attempts to establish the effectiveness of the mobilisation strategies employed by the selected CSOs and the impact of civic education on electoral processes, particularly considering the voter apathy that has increasingly characterised elections from the mid-1990s. To be able to achieve this, the thesis is guided by a set of research questions and objectives as stated below.

1.3 Research Questions

To achieve its aims and objectives, the study is informed by the following Research Questions:

(i) What has been the impact of the Zimbabwe's democratic legal framework in facilitating citizen participation in Zimbabwe, especially from the mid-1990s to 2010?

(ii) To what extent, and with what results, has the exploitation of formal and informal participatory spaces by selected civic groups enhanced citizen participation and involvement in governance processes in Zimbabwe, especially since 1997?

(iii) What factors have influenced citizen participation in governance processes in Zimbabwe?

(iv) Are there visible indicators of enhanced citizen participation and increased civic awareness?

1.4 Research Objectives

Primary Objective:

To establish the extent to which selected civil society organisations have exploited formal and informal participatory spaces to enhance citizen participation in governance processes in Zimbabwe, especially from the mid-1990s to 2010.

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Specific objectives:

(i)   To review the key legal framework to establish the extent to which it has facilitated citizen participation in accordance with regional and international protocols and conventions.

(ii) To examine the extent to which the selected civil society organisations, through their operations and activities, have sought to raise citizen awareness and enhance citizen participation, especially since the mid-1990s.

(iii) To identify and analyse factors that influence citizen participation in governance processes in Zimbabwe as a result of civil society activity.

(iv) To establish and present indicators of enhanced citizen participation as a manifestation of increased civic awareness.

(v) To evaluate the achievements made by the selected civic groups towards enhancing citizen participation in governance processes in Zimbabwe, especially from the mid-1990s to 2010.

1.5 Developing a Framework for Analysing CSOs in Zimbabwe: Understanding the Links Between Democracy, Governance and Civil Society

Notions of democracy are anchored in good governance practices, responsiveness and citizen participation. International dimensions of democracy cut across conventional definitions of sovereignty or boundary and provide a procedural minimum involving participation of the largest possible number of people (Orozco, 1995:3). Paul (2005) cited in World Bank (2007:247) pointed out that '...initiatives that encourage citizen participation in public decision-making are more successful in societies that adhere to democratic governance, are open to public debate and criticism of those in authority, and allow independent civil society organisations to take root'. In a democracy, when making an important public decision the majority vote should prevail because the will of the majority outweighs the wants of the minority (Leftwich, 1993:9) and allows '...an equal chance to influence the process of government' (Diamond and Morlino, 2004:93).

Democracy has various interpretations, including representative, liberal and participatory (Nelson &Wright, 2006:31). For the purposes of this dissertation, the participatory version is of particular relevance because of its emphasis on citizen involvement in public affairs and decision-making processes. In the practice of democracy all that are affected by a given

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decision have the right to participate in the making of that decision (Mandaza & Sachikonye, 1991:3). Wa Mutharika (1995:61) notes that 'as long as something is done in the name of the people, it could be defined as democratic, even if it is not'. Even in a democracy, '…the masses can still be oppressed or excluded from the decision-making processes by the same system that they will have installed; and human rights abuses can still take place even under plural democracy' (Wa Mutharika (1995:61).

Democracy is an ongoing process of struggle and contestation, rather than the adoption of a standard recipe of institutional design (Gaventa, 2006:8). The construction and deepening of democracy have been associated with decentralisation and devolution of power to ensure full citizen participation and '…empowering the weakest and poorest in society' (Nelson and Wright, 1995:1). Democratic decentralisation focuses on citizen engagement and the strategies and opportunities to achieve this incorporating civil society (Gaventa, 2006:7). The Election Institute of Southern Africa[1] (EISA) (2007) asserts that '… the notion of democracy must be nurtured from within societies' where 'people are involved in situations which enhance their well-being'. The UNDP Report (2004) envisages the extension of democracy from a "democracy of voters, to a democracy of citizens" implying the involvement of citizens in all governance processes (UNDP, 2004).

In current debates, democracy and governance have often been linked. Governance is a highly contested concept which can be applied to any form of collective action. In this study, governance is taken to refer to how governments and other social organisations interact, how they relate to citizens, and how decisions are taken (Graham, Amos & Plumptre, 2003:2). Governance enables institutions to fulfil their missions, goals and objectives through a prescribed '…manner in which power can be exercised through the efficient utilisation of available resources and management of a country's economic and social development' (Graham, Amos & Plumptre, 2003:6). It is '…the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social development' (World Bank, 1994; UNDP, 1997), with emphasis on the rule of law, accountability, public participation and the observance of human rights. Hyden & Bratton (1992:19) have construed governance as consisting of '…formal and informal rules that regulate the public arena in which state as well

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[1] The Election Institute of Southern Africa [EISA] attempts to promote a culture of transparency in electoral process in the Southern African region through the provision of research findings and electoral observation teams.

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as economic and social actors interact to make decisions'. The composition of governance includes '... purposeful action to guide, steer, and control society' (Graham & Plumptre, 2003:6) and is necessary to help maintain uniformity and rationality in activities that are meant to achieve public good objectives (Barnes & Skelcher, 2007: 9).

Although there is no universally accepted definition of "governance", the common understanding is that the term comprehends how countries are governed and the affairs of a state are administered and regulated and how a nation's political system functions in relation to the management or conduct of public affairs (Mbao & Komboni, 2006:1). Additionally, governance embraces how national resources are managed and relations among the state, citizens and the private sector are regulated (Graham & Plumptre, 2003; Barnes& Skelcher, 2007).

The World Bank (2007:245) has presented governance in the context of the exercise of political power in relation to the management of a country's affairs. The huge debt crisis, mainly in Central America and to some extent Africa, has caused the Bank to take an increased interest in the political and institutional environment before granting credit facilities. Underlying the litany of Africa's developmental problems was a crisis of governance, epitomised by the notion of "failed states" as exemplified by such countries as Somalia, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Zaire (The Democratic Republic of the Congo) (Mbao & Komboni, 1989; World Bank Report on Africa, 1989).

For democracy to work there should be'...appropriate institutional arrangements; a democratic civic culture for the collective observance of democratic principles and regular and systematic consultation with the people' (United Nations, 2004:2).

Accordingly, governance has come to be associated with, and aligned to, democracy (or lack of it), human rights and a civic culture involving citizen participation in issues of governance and decision-making processes. In discussing governance the symbiotic relationship between democracy, governance, civil society and citizen participation becomes evident as these prevail alongside one another. Consequently, this thesis is anchored in these terms.

Styles of governance can be judged as either good or bad based on the degree of trust, responsiveness in the relationship between government and civil society and the level of the government's degree of accountability to the electorate, as well as the nature of the authority

that the government exercises over its society (Hyden and Bratton, 1992:7). Similarly, increased state effectiveness in service delivery and participatory spaces is evidence of good governance (Folscher, 2003, in World Bank, 2007:243). As a result, good governance has been presented as '...collective decision-taking and action that leads to the common good, and in which government is one stakeholder among others' (Knight, Chigudu & Tandon, 2002:131).

Prerequisites for good governance are cited in detail in Chapter 2 under 2.5.1, and highlight principles of participation, consensus-orientation, accountability, transparency, responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, and the incorporation of views of the minorities and the voices of the most vulnerable in society in decision-making (Graham *et al*, 2003:53). Through an examination of the activities of the selected civic groups, the research seeks to establish the extent to which government has satisfied or failed to satisfy participation prerequisites. Furthermore, the thesis seeks to highlight how civil society organisations have contributed or failed to contribute to the attainment of participatory notions through the use of both formal and informal participatory spaces.

Discussions in the next chapter (section 2.5.1) consider in detail the close relationship between good governance and democracy. "Governance relates to the whole spectrum of civil and political institutions, relations and processes, which brings to the fore the central role governance plays in democracies (Kamete, 2009:47). Democracy, whichever way it is defined, is an indicator of governance', which puts governance at the epicentre of democratic institutions (Swilling, 1997, in Kamete, 2009:47). It stands to reason that there can be no "good governance" without democracy, especially given that democracy is a guarantee for good governance (Gutto, 1990:13). In reality 'bad governance' is no governance and signifies the end of government and a threatened or total collapse, as is happening now in many African states (Mandaza, 1996:11). The study also attempts to establish how bad governance has disadvantaged citizens in Zimbabwe since 1997 as pro-democracy CSOs emerged to confront the state over democratic decay that had set in. Edwards (2009:2) has highlighted that '...civil society's role in promoting good governance has excited proponents of democracy, especially where formal citizenship rights should be well-entrenched'. For Mafeje (1995:12) '... "good governance" becomes meaningful or implementable if it is practised within the realms of social democracy where the "popular democratic movement" is given the correct verdict and correct implementation'.

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Given that citizens within localities require local institutions to preside over their affairs, a focus on local governance has become increasingly popular, taking cognisance of increased incidences of poor service delivery within and among urban actors (UNESCAP-Good Governance, 2008). Local governance is best propagated by locally constituted voluntary organizations, which have the capacity to influence and even determine the structure of power and the allocation of resources (Swilling, 1992:4). These are institutions that exert pressure and control as "watch-dogs" on state institutions in the area of governance and development, and jealously guard their autonomy and identity (Swilling, 1992:4). In this study, Combined Harare Residents' Association (CHRA) is used as part of the CBOs that represent citizens at local government level. CBOs such as residents associations can provide a conduit through which residents/citizens can confront the state to demand good and participatory governance and improved service delivery through elected councillors who are mandated to represent the concerns of residents.

Logically, civil society is linked to democracy and good governance, and seeks to promote '…a rule of law and a political community, a peaceful order based on implicit or explicit consent of individuals and cannot be distinguished from the existence of the state' (Pritchett and Kaufmann, 1998 in Kaldor, 2003:7) . Ordinarily, 'civil society refers to a diffuse collective existence outside formally organised structures of the state, such as official parties, the church, and presumably trade unions, NGOs, youth and women's organisations' (Mafeje, 1995:8). In attempting to define civil society, Gramsci (1971) encountered problems in locating it in space and in defining it with some precision, ultimately portraying it as 'those alliances which enjoy the greatest ideological resonance in society at a given time' (Gramsci, 1971:23). In Latin America and Africa as is shown by its involvement in popular struggles, the church has become an important part of civil society and is often at loggerheads with tyrannical regimes in both regions (Ake, 1996:35). The central function of civil society has remained that of establishing a '…buffer between government and society; a broker and a political norm setter as well as an agent of change regulator of the processes of participation in societal affairs and an integrator of groups articulating different political interests…' (Harbeson et al, 1994:288). Ikelegbe (2001:10) has popularized CSOs as associations that are identified with the monitoring and protection of civil rights and liberties, agitating and struggling for democracy and accountability and harbouring social and political concerns.

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Given the various operations and engagements as well as environments that civil society organisations have to contend with, one cannot expect them to be homogenous entities (Ikelegbe, 2001:10). Kador (2003:7) distinguishes four versions of civil society as follows: The *bourgeois society* version is based on the premise that civil society is the arena of ethical life between the state and the family. The *activist version* or the post-Marxist or utopian version, in which the proponents presuppose a state or rule of law, insists not only on restraints on state power but on a redistribution of power. It is a radicalisation of democracy and an extension of participation and autonomy (Kaldor, 2003:8). The *neo-liberal version* views civil society as part of associational life that provides a substitute for many of the functions performed by the state. The *post-modern version* portrays civil society as an arena of pluralism and contestation and a reformulation of new understandings of political culture (Keane, 1999:9), which brings to the fore the existence of a symbiotic relationship between the state and civil society.

Gramsci (1971:25) gives insights into bringing about a revolution in a society in which state/capital formations are protected by the 'trenches' of civil society. The purpose of Gramsci's writings is to develop a revolutionary strategy (a 'war of position') that can be employed precisely in the arena of civil society, with the aim of disabling the coercive apparatus of the state, gaining access to political power and creating the conditions that could give rise to a consensual society wherein no individual or group is reduced to a subaltern status (Buttigieg, 1995:27). In other words, 'civil society can only be the site of universal freedom when it extends to the point of becoming the state, that is, when the need for political society is obviated' (Buttigieg, 1995:30).

Much of the debate around civil society's involvement in the democratisation project has articulated civil society as having tremendous implications for shaping and pluralising power relations (Keane, 1988a:13), broadening the avenues of societal representation of interests and of individual and group influence and participation (Harbeson, et al, 1994:291-5), creating a new political culture of citizenship that stresses rights, obligations, protest and contestation (Grindle, 1996:7) and prompting political liberalisation (Keane, 1998:12). Civil society plays the crucial role of legitimising state power through norm setting of operative rules of politics and the reconstruction of public responsibility (Bratton 1994:37; Azarya, 1992:83-91). Much of the civil society movement comprises voluntary associations which act as 'gene carriers of good society for developing values like tolerance and cooperation, and

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skills required for living a democratic life' (Edwards, 2009:5).This presents civil society as a platform where citizens are able to interact and strive to create peaceful co-existence.

Civil society has the propensity to check and limit the power of the state, which follows naturally from the oppositional characteristic of civil society under authoritarian rule, and which is an important democracy-building function of civil society (Diamond & Plattner, 2003:xxiii). Diamond (1999:65) captures vital components of civil society as its ability to '...

contribute to the consolidation of democracy to the extent that it stimulates political participation, provides additional channels for articulating and representing interests, generates cross-cutting cleavages, recruits and trains new political leaders, and improves the functioning of democratic institutions (as through election and human rights monitoring), widens and enriches the flow of information to citizens, and produces supporting coalitions'.

Based on the vital importance of civil society as cited by various scholars of African politics, the democratisation process in Africa has come to be considered as 'synonymous with the coming to life of civil society' (Mamdani 1991:602-16). Beyond democratisation processes are crucial roles of democratic sustenance, and civil society is expected to protect the democratic values of pluralism, accountability, responsibility and participation in governance processes (Keane 1988b:7).The nature and strength of civil society in Africa's fledging civil societies have helped to determine the prospects for democratic consolidation (Bratton 1989:417).

Additionally, civil society has been known to 'fundamentally reduce the role of politics in society by expanding free markets and individual liberty' (Cato, 2000, in Edward, 2007: 34) and has become the single most viable alternative to the authoritarian state and the tyrannical market by providing the missing link in the success of social democracy (Edward, 2007:56). The cumulative influence of civil society therefore has been that of acting as 'the key to "good governance", poverty-reducing growth, and maintenance of peace and stability' (UN Report, 2007; World Bank, 2004:57).

This brief analysis of key concepts places the issue of citizen participation at the forefront of democracy. It is in this context that the researcher presents the four case studies in an effort to establish the extent to which they have enhanced citizen participation in governance

processes in Zimbabwe especially since 1997 when democratic decay was evident, igniting increased civil society activity aimed at the restoration of democracy in the country.

Citizen participation affords private individuals an opportunity to influence public decisions and has long been a component of the democratic decision-making process (Gaventa, 2006:16). Available literature has put citizen participation at the forefront of democracy, noting that for democracy to flourish, citizens must play an active part in public life (Rajan, 2002, in World Bank, 2007:109), exercise some degree of control over their own lives in coming up with democratic decisions (Kabeer, 2001:5), share their ideas and open their minds to the opinions of others (Knight, Chigudu &Tandon, 2002:131) meaningfully tie programmes to people (Spiegel, 1998:7) and take ownership in the well-being of the country (Meskell, 2009:24). Consequently, it has become acceptable practice that citizen participation provides private individuals with an opportunity to influence public decisions and has long been a component of the democratic decision-making process (Cogan & Sharpe, 1986:283).

In citizen participation '…people's ability to exercise some degree of control over their own lives is evident, especially in coming up with democratic decisions' (Kabeer, 2001:5). Consequently the successful practice of citizen participation within the democracy discourse involves the realisation of citizen rights (Dahl, 1989), cited in Esau, 2006:1). This argument makes citizens partners in the decision-making process, where a reconstruction of new relationships between state and citizens in decision-making is a collaborative process (Gaventa, 2004:25; Box (1998:3) equates citizens' power with that of the state and argues that citizen participation is the power of citizens to govern. Cordial relations between state and citizens can further be used to enhance and '...legitimise programmes, plans, actions and leadership' (Cook, 1995:5). Political leaders should therefore depend on the support of citizens for the success of programmes in their constituencies and without the support of the public; such programmes are likely to fail (Cook, 1995:6).

For citizen participation to be beneficial, Mandaza (1998:102) recommends collaboration between citizens and the state in place of partnership based on mutual undertakings. The beneficial aspect of collectivity in decision-making between the state and citizens is further accentuated by the World Bank (1997:110) which maintains that people are the means and end of development. The World Bank further points out that '…the centrality of participation and decentralisation arises from a realisation that development in Third World states cannot

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be achieved by bureaucratic means alone' (Mandaza 1998:102). Healthy citizen participation is not coercive but voluntary and happens because certain principles of organisation are observed at a level acceptable to the participants (Cohen, 1996:96). Citizens will voluntarily participate in a community activity when they see positive benefits to be gained and an appropriate organisational structure is available to them for expressing their interests (Cohen, 1996:97). People can feel obliged to participate in an operation when some aspect of their way of life is threatened and they feel committed to be supportive of the activity (Knight, Chigudu & Tandon, 2002:132).

Governments have also been accused of corruption when pursuing a narrowly private agenda, rather than acting for the public benefit (Knight, Chigudu &Tandon (2002:138) In popular participation the efforts of the masses are combined with those of central government, since the state does not have the capacity to administer the affairs of the country alone (Mandaza, 1998: 102). Citizens occupy a central role in the administration of the affairs of the state. Consequently '…the centrality of participation and decentralisation arises from a realisation that development in Third World states cannot be achieved by bureaucratic means alone but through a trickle-down process that ensures that benefits so derived would gradually improve the lot of the poor' (Rajan, 2002, in World Bank, 2007:110).

Criticism has been directed at participation, blaming it for undermining institutions of representative government and claiming that public decisions should be left to government officials (Shah, 2002 in World Bank, 2007:59). Political systems that have a record of poor governance may decide to foster participatory forums in order to increase the government's legitimacy (Moynihan, 2003; Olivo, 1998, in World Bank, 2007:59). Warning us not to glorify the role of citizen participation in decision-making, Navarro (1998), in World Bank, (2007:59) argues that '…even where participation is fostered, citizens may focus only on narrow issues that affect them directly and may be unwilling to make trade-offs and determined to exclude some groups'. Andrew (2004), in World Bank (2007:64), maintains that '…officials claim that participation efforts are consistent with the tradition of public consultation, but are actually characterised by a bias toward groups with technical or financial backgrounds and strong connections to government'. The role of citizen participation has been downplayed as a disguise '…with very little, or no, effective means of citizen empowerment' (Narayani, 2002 in World Bank, 2007:95). Turning to Africa, Mamdani (1996:102) notes that '...the African patrimonial state has perpetuated a rule over subjects

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rather than a rule by citizens which makes citizens subjects of the ruling elite'. Arnstein's *Ladder of Participation* has reinforced this argument by coming up with what it calls 'tokenism to citizen control' which implies that citizens are not really in control (for a detailed critique of Arnstein's *Ladder of Participation*, see section 2.3 in Chapter 2).

Tilly distinguishes an ordinary civic group from a social movement (SM) by pointing out that civic groups become social movements if they are able to mount a 'campaign', that is, 'a sustained, organised public effort making claims on target authorities' (Tilly, 2004:257). In local government contexts, Kamete (2009:63) views urban councils as ranking among these 'institutionalised systems of power' whose governance is the subject of contention. As agents for change, social movements provide the networks of social relations necessary for action: the resources, the information and the ideas to mobilise people for movement goals, as well as the norms and values regarding participating in policy-making and implementation (Mamdani, 2000:59).

Social movement theory generally seeks to explain why social mobilisation occurs, the forms in which it manifests, as well as potential social, cultural and political consequences (Tilly, 2004, Mamdani, 1996). Social movements usually focus on how people work together to bring changes to the *status quo*, and may form around major social cleavages such as class, religion, language or ethnicity, or around conservative goals such as opposition to abortion, family planning and immigration (Mamdani, 2000:59). Social movements play a vital role, with their focus on social and political change and their framing of issues to make them resonate with the public (Tilly, 2004:256). They help to mobilise the necessary structures and resources (Mamdani, 1996:103:18), seek to open up political structures to help accommodate the envisioned changes (World Bank, 2007:95) and generate consensus about social problems and possible solutions (Clark, et al.1998:192). Going by this definition, social movements are pressure groups made to influence policy and are grassroots-based organisations populated by people who represent their own interests. Social movements are led by the same members of the group as they are able to share similar experiences and sentiments about existing political, economic and social challenges (Tilly, 2004:254). In this dissertation, WOZA and CHRA are presented as examples of social movements. WOZA is led by women and articulates women's and children's causes, while CHRA is led by residents residing within the jurisdiction of the association. These organisations have engaged with both their members and the state with a view to improving the welfare of their members.

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1.6 Research Design and Tools

This dissertation employs a fusion of qualitative and quantitative data as complementary methods of research. Qualitative and quantitative research methods feed into and draw from each other as they seek to complement each other's efforts (Yin, 2009:24). Employing quantitative and qualitative research designs has become common practice as researchers have recognized that each approach has positive attributes, and that combining different methods can result in gaining the best of both research worlds. The study employs qualitative research because it is much more subjective than quantitative research and uses very different methods of collecting information, thereby allowing the researcher the opportunity to make personal observations (Anderson, 2006:3). Additionally, qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interactive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter (Newman & Benz, 1998:23). It also involves the collection of a variety of empirical materials: case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, interactions and visual texts (Newman & Benz, 1998:23). These are most of the characteristics that are analysed in this thesis. On the other hand, quantitative research options have predetermined options and can be employed where a large number of respondents are involved (Anderson, 2006:4). In addition, quantitative research can be used to make measurements and as such provides objective results that are statistically valid, thereby presenting quantitative research at the forefront of securing a higher degree of valid results (Anderson, 2006:4). For this study, the employment of both methods enables the researcher to qualify and quantify the growth, popularity and achievements of the selected civic groups and how these have empowered citizens to participate. The major strength of the quantitative paradigm is its ability to produce quantifiable, reliable data that can usually be extrapolated to relate to some larger population (Steckler, et al, 2002:6). Through in-depth qualitative and quantitative interpretation of responses from interviews (formal and informal), questionnaires and documentary and content analyses, the researcher seeks to quantify and qualify the influence and growth of selected civil society groups on citizens.

Content analysis is used in this thesis as it enables the researcher to '...objectively and systematically make inferences about contexts, causes, and effects of messages and identify specified characteristics through these messages' (Krippendorff, 2004; Neuendorf, 2002). Krippendorff (2004: xxii) highlighted the significance of research data as '... meaningful matter that is critical in its recognition of the researcher as one working with data whose

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physical manifestations are secondary to what they mean to particular populations of people'. This puts the researcher in control of data and makes him a participant. Researcher involvement in research is vital because '… in quantitative research, the researcher is ideally an objective observer who either participates in or influences what is being studied thereby enabling the researcher to learn the most about a situation by participating and/or being immersed in it' (Creswell, 2009:26). Consequently, employing the interpretive content analysis to interpret data would facilitate the inference of statements from respondents, in this case, responses from selected CSO secretariats, members and academics as well as other relevant participants. The interpretive content analysis may also be used for quantitative data, but for this study, the researcher utilises it for qualitative data analysis, especially given the large volume of qualitative statements from respondents, as well as other literary works. For quantitative data, the researcher employs the deductive approach as it facilitates the interpretation and analysis of statistical and other numerical data drawn from the selected CSOs' membership registers and EISA election reports on Zimbabwe's voting patterns over the years. What makes quantitative analysis of data preferable is the fact that '… it offers simplicity in data summarisation and analysis and because data collection is in numerical terms, results can be easily quantified' (Atieno, 2009:23).

The case study method is the dominant qualitative research method for this study because it brings the researcher closer to real-life situations. The case study method enables the researcher to '...investigate real-life events in their natural settings' (Yin, 2003: xi). In this thesis the case study method enables real-life interaction between the researcher and representatives and members of selected civic groups, as well as facilitating the gaining of in-depth understanding of civic groups and their operations (Flyvbjerg, 2004:426), in addition to affording deeper insight into issues being investigated (Yin, 2003:5). Through the activities and operations of the four case studies, namely: WOZA, NCA, ZimRights and CHRA, the researcher seeks to establish and determine their growth and influence on citizens' understanding of the practice and principles of democracy, governance and citizen participation. However, the case study method has been criticised for catering for '... a small number of cases that offer no grounds for establishing reliability or generality of findings (Miller, 1986:373). It has also been argued that '...the intense exposure to study of the case biases the findings' (Eisenhardt, 1989:353), unless the methodology is being used as an exploratory tool the findings of which give a general direction as to what is being

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investigated (Yin, 2009:23). Despite the cited shortcomings, for this study the case study method was found to be the most appropriate as it enabled the researcher to undertake detailed study of individual CSOs.

1.5.1 Random and Purposive Sampling

Owing to the large number of civil society organizations in Zimbabwe, the researcher employs sampling, notably both random and purposive sampling. Sampling would enable the researcher '...to select a smaller section or subset of the population that accurately represents the patterns of the target population at large' (Seale, et al, 2004:29). Researchers typically study a subset of people/organisations drawn from a larger population and use inferential statistics to make inferences from the sample back to the population (Brewer, & Hunter, 1989:21). The validity of that inference depends on how representative the sample or subset is of the population from which it is drawn (Brewer, & Hunter, 1989:21). For this study the researcher purposively and randomly picks on secretariats of selected civic groups, members of structures of the selected civic groups, academic and political/social commentators as a potential sample. Incorporating such supplementary participants as academics and political/social commentators would help provide diversity and seek to enrich the research findings.

Random sampling is a strategy for selecting study participants in which each and every person has an equal and independent chance of being selected (Creswell, 2003:54). Civil society members selected for participation would be exposed to the same conditions and at the same time, thereby making focus group interviewing the most appropriate mode of interaction. Random sampling will enable the researcher to select and incorporate ordinary members of civic groups into the study and to seek their responses through formal and informal interaction as well as probing further for clarity.

Additionally, simple random sampling is a methodology best suited to making surveys on attitudes of people towards a given concept, interests and values (Babbie, 2005:36). It reduces bias in two ways: units are not self-selected, thus eliminating unanticipated selection effects, and selection is not exclusively subject to the preferences researchers have (Wong, 2008:2). Simple random sampling is employed with members of secretariats during interviews and by administering questionnaires to determine their attitudes on the extent to which their

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respective civic groups have enhanced citizen participation. Although the sample of civic organizations under consideration does not add up to social networks of actors, their cumulative thrust is seeking social change through enhanced citizen participation, as will be dealt in greater detail chapter 4, under section 4.3.

However, Creswell (2009:72) warns that '...random selection may not solve the problem of selection bias but may even be worse than other methods of selection since random selection of observations research often cause very serious biases'. Random sampling is preferable when the population has a large variability in some characteristics such as level of education or socio-economic status, which could have a significant bearing on the results of the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:27). Consequently, the respondents' level of education, socio-economic status and age range is taken as forming a vital determinant of participation.

1.5.2 Snowballing Sampling

Snowballing sampling, itself a variant of purposive sampling, is also employed to get access to participants who are not easily accessible for one reason or another. Snowball sampling, also known as referral sampling, relies heavily on referrals from initial subjects to generate additional subjects through using other social networks (Browne, 2005:56). In snowballing, '...participants or informants with whom contact has already been made use their social networks to refer the researcher to other people who could potentially participate in or contribute to the study' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000:16).

Snowball sampling is often used to find and recruit 'hidden populations' that is, groups not easily accessible to researchers through other sampling strategies" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000:16). Additionally, random and uncoordinated interacting would pose a security threat to the person of the researcher, respondents and informants alike. As a result snowball sampling would be most appropriate because it enables the researcher to gain access to '...groups that are not easily accessible to researchers through other sampling strategies' (Brown, 2005:56). In the context of this thesis, reaching out to civil society leaders and members would be difficult without being referred to them by other known members due to the rampant harassment of civil society activists in the country. With reference to referrals within civil society organisations, Makumbe (2000:18) has noted that '...inter-personal interaction in the country is governed by restrictive legislation that seeks to curtail social networks and interaction between and among citizens'. This is the premise on which snowballing is utilised

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in this thesis as a way of getting to potential participants without causing alarm (Stoddard, et al, 2008:3-4).

1.6 Data Collection tools

Data collection tools are used to conduct assessment and gather data from different sources and may include surveys/interviews to gather information (Creswell, 2009:25). The study employs a number of data collection methods which include interviews (and interview schedules), questionnaires, documentary analysis of organisational documents and key legal framework. Interviews (formal and informal) and questionnaires form the principal data collection instruments and their content is made similar since they seek to draw similar information from respondents. Interviews have the advantages of providing room for probing by the researcher or for clarification by the respondent (Brown, 2005; Yin, 2003). Where respondents exhibit some level of literacy, formal interviews is conducted and/or questionnaires presented. Questionnaires are mainly administered to complement the interviews. Consequently the two instruments are, in most cases, be used interchangeably.

The selected civic groups have different structures that help in the recruiting of members, information dissemination and conducting of outreach programmes as well as management work and policy implementation. The civic groups each have different secretariat structures for implementing organisational objectives and comprise fulltime staff who co-ordinate educational activities, publications, case work, networking and implementing decisions of the organisations. It is from these structures that participants are drawn and referrals pertaining to other members of the organisation will be made.

1.6.1 Interviews

Interviews form an integral part of this study. Creswell (2009:27) points out that '...interviews provide an alternative method of collecting survey data, where rather than asking respondents to fill out surveys, interviewers ask questions orally and record respondents' answers'. Similarly, the use of interviews in this study is primarily designed to tap into respondents' perceptions, experiences and enables the researcher to seek clarification by probing further. In-depth structured and semi-structured interviews are conducted with different respondents ranging from selected civil society organisational management to ordinary members, civic leaders and academics, as has been highlighted above. Semi-structured interviews provide the opportunity to focus on finer details pertinent to the study

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(Babbie, 2004:52). For civil society management, the researcher is more structured interviews because most of the information required from them is formal and restricted in some cases. Patton, (1996:67) observes that an interview becomes a creative process where the researcher designs and negotiates the research; frames research instruments and carries out fieldwork. This enables the production or generation of data through social interaction between the researcher and the informant. Through interaction with civic organisational management and current organisational members, it is likely that the researcher is able to extract confidential organisational information to enhance the research findings.

For respondents in the diaspora or in faraway places the researcher uses electronic transmission applications (*internet*) and some of its applications such as *blogs* to interact with and draw information from such respondents. The use of personal blogs would enable the researcher to tap into the bloggers' personal opinions and would provide qualitative information, thereby enabling the researcher to secure varied responses from those domiciled in different places, thus further enriching the research findings.

A total of 300 participants are interviewed and/or respond to questionnaires. In-depth unstructured and structured interviews are conducted within various organisational structures of the civic organisations, complemented by structured interview/questionnaire schedules containing both qualitative and quantitative questions. For each selected civic organisation, at least one link person is identified to act as a research assistant for the collection of completed questionnaires and other logistics.

Below is the allocation of interviews and/or questionnaires to respondents per organisation:

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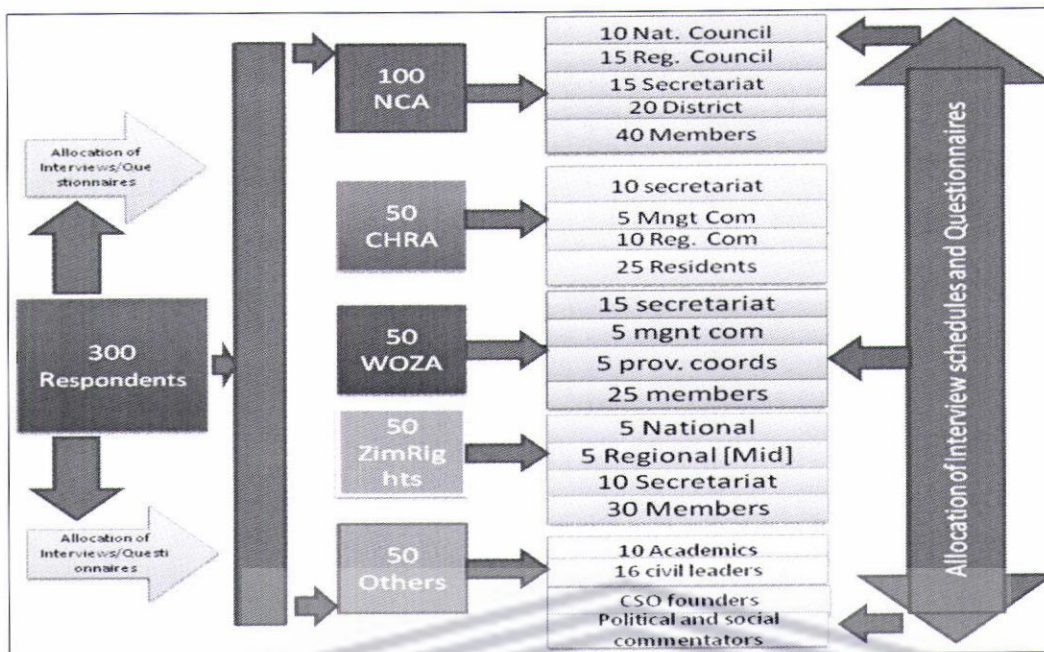
Additionally, the researcher interacts with a supplementary group of respondents, comprising political/social commentators, local government experts and councillors. The researcher notes that the incorporation of such individuals with expertise would help enhance the authenticity of the research findings and further strengthen the study.

Open-ended interviews will be conducted with local committee members from each of the organisations mostly drawn from among grassroots populations, whose literacy levels are in most cases low and whose access to information limited. Open-ended questions permit the respondents to describe what is meaningful and salient without being confined to standardised categories (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:45).

1.6.2 Focus Group Interviews

In seeking to tap into civil society activists' experiences, the researcher uses focus group interviews. The idea behind the focus group method is that group processes can help people to explore and clarify their views in ways that would be less easily accessible in a one-to-one interview (Kitzinger, 2009:304). Focus groups have been found to be useful because people's knowledge and attitudes are not entirely encapsulated in reasoned responses to direct questions and they may tell us as much, if not more, about what people know or experience (Kitzinger, 2009:305). In this sense focus groups reach the parts that other methods cannot reach, revealing dimensions of understanding that often remain untapped by more conventional data collection techniques (Kitzinger, 2009:306). As has been indicated above,

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the researcher forms a vital part of the group interviewing process as the researcher seeks to take part in civic/voter education workshops and/or outreach programmes.

When group dynamics work well the participants work alongside the researcher, taking the research in new and often unexpected directions (Merton et al, 2000:137). Group discussions encourage research participants to explore the issues of importance to them, in their own vocabulary, generating their own questions and pursuing their own priorities (Kitzinger, 2009:304). Such forums present fertile ground for focus group interviews, observations and interaction with relevant respondents (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2002:8). Focus group interviews enable the researcher to interview respondents in a place where they feel safe and free to articulate the objectives of their organisations (Merton et al, 2000:137). This data collection method would be most appropriate in the Zimbabwean context where fear of state security agents among civil society activists is common, leading to citizens being reluctant to interact with strangers. But through co-existing with civil society activists and taking part in discussions, it is likely that the researcher would be able to gain their trust.

Focus groups also enable the researcher to present similar questions to respondents (Krueger, 1998:4). Open-ended, closed, as well as probing or 'follow-up' questions are used in such an environment to enable the researcher to '...go beyond an initial answer to get more meaning, to clarify and to draw out and expand on the interviewees' point' (Creswell,2009:13). Additionally, focus group interviews enable participants to hear and interact with one another and with the researcher, which yields different information than if people were interviewed individually (Stewart, 2000:2). It has been observed that group interviewing can be '...limited to those situations where the assembled group is small enough to permit genuine discussion among all its members' (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2002:10). Glesne & Peshkin (1999:6) suggest that interviewing more than one person at a time sometimes proves very useful; some young people need company to be emboldened to talk, and some topics are better discussed by a small group of people who know each other. However, in focus group interviews, '...the size of the group should not be so large as to be unwieldy or to preclude adequate participation by most members' (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2002), nor should it be '...so small that it fails to provide substantially greater coverage than that of an interview with one individual' (Merton et al, 2000:137).

1.6.3 Questionnaires

Questionnaires are employed as another data collecting method and are presented to organisational management, ordinary organisational members and academics, in addition to being used in face-to-face interviews. Both open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires are used to capture personal participants' experiences and involvement in civic groups. Layder (1995:57) draws contrasts between closed questionnaires and open-ended interviews by pointing out that '…a structured, multiple-choice questionnaire requires a deductive approach because it must be predetermined based on some criteria about the research question'. An open-ended interview, by way of contrast, permits the respondents to describe what is meaningful and salient without being confined to standardised categories (Creswell, 2009:12). Questionnaires are used either in place of or alongside interviews since the two methods seek to get the same kind of data and responses and can complement each other. This depends on the preference of the respondent.

1.6.4 Observation

For the study of all the selected CSOs, the researcher uses observation as a data collection method. Observation has mostly been used in anthropology and ethnology, where researchers seek to observe communities for long periods of time. Similarly in this thesis the researcher seeks to observe selected CSOs' activities from the mid-1990s - 2010 and their influence on citizens over this period. Observation consists of direct observation and participant observation (Yin, 1994:7). Direct observation occurs when a field visit is conducted during a case study, and this technique is useful for providing additional information about the topic being studied (Tellis, 1997:34). Researchers use this technique by taking on the role of a detached onlooker who carries out detailed analyses of social activities.

Participant observation makes the researcher into an active participant in the events being studied (Yin, 1994:13). Participant observation is appropriate in research studies where the groups of people to be studied are in one venue, and for this study is used concurrently with focus group interviews. Robson (2002:299) notes that observation is not a stand-alone method, but is used to complement other methods such as interviews. In this study, the researcher visits workshop venues and observes proceedings and in some cases participates in some workshops and civic education gatherings as highlighted above under Focus Group Interviews.

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While interviews and survey-based research helps explore *what* NGOs are doing, they are less useful in explaining *why* or *how* they become (or don't become) involved in democratisation-related activities (Sam Moyo, 1992 in Dorman, 2004:3). In order to be able to do this, Dorman (2004:3) suggests that researchers need to study NGOs from the inside, using techniques such as participant-observation that enables researchers to create detailed and descriptive case studies. This methodology has the benefit of positioning the organisation closer to the researcher at the same time placing the organisations more clearly against the political backdrop of the country and the institutional history of the organisation under review (Dorman, 2004:4). To be able to 'study from the inside' the researcher engages research assistance from within the selected CSOs to act as link persons, especially those within the structures of the organisations. Such people possess in-depth knowledge about the operations and other inside information that any other person might not have. Such information would enable the researcher to get to know details of the organisations' operations and other privileged information such as donor-funding and the attendant conditions set by donors. In addition, link-persons enable the researcher to establish the role of the donors in the decision-making processes of the organisations.

1.6.5 Documentary Analysis

Documentary analysis is used on a variety of policy and legislative documents and reports, notably organisational policy documents, constitutions and outreach and advocacy programmes. Hamersley (1996:21) notes that '...a fruitful source of available data comes from documents, not intended for public consumption but produced by organisations as a record of their activities'. The capacity of citizens to engage the state depends on the existence of enabling legal framework, including guarantees of basic freedoms, and the existence of functional and free media institutions (Shah, 2000 in World Bank, 2007:247).

The analysis of documents can provide insights into important prevailing social and political issues (Denzin, 2005:119). Organisational documents and individuals can provide a basis for studies of organisations as well as the policy process (Hakim, 1997:37). Content analysis is applied on electoral reports and documents that portray trends and voting patterns in Zimbabwe's electoral processes, especially those provided by the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA), a reputed authority on elections in Southern Africa. The purpose of content analysis on EISA reports is to establish voting patterns that have emerged over the

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years and the influence of civil society through their voter education and outreach programmes. It has been noted that a supportive legal framework is an enabling, even necessary, condition for citizens to be able to participate in and contribute to processes in the public sphere (Folscher 2001 in World Bank, 2007:251).

McGee et al (2003:261) have noted that '...legal frameworks regulate the terms of actors' engagement and the scope they have for influencing behaviour in the arena between central and sub-national governments or between government and civil society'. Key policy documents governing civil society participation that are examined include the Constitution of Zimbabwe (1979), the Private and Voluntary Organizations Act (PVO) (1996), the Access to Information Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA), the Public Order and Security Act (POSA), the Zimbabwe Electoral Act (ZEA) and the Urban Councils Act (UCA). These legislative provisions have been selected because they are 'invited' spaces.

1.8 Proposed Chapter Outline

The dissertation comprises 7 chapters. Chapter 1 states the research problem and presents research questions and objectives, as well as providing the case studies of the study, given that there are numerous civil society organisations in Zimbabwe. This chapter also provides the methodology to be used in the study. Research design combines qualitative and quantitative methods and sampling procedures are provided. Purposive and random samplings will be used in the study to choose the participants and to determine which ones would be required to respond to either interviews or questionnaires. The case study method is employed in this study where four cases are selected. Data collection methods involve conducting interviews with civic organisational management and the administering of questionnaires to the organisational members of the public, civic leaders and academics. Documentary analysis is employed to analyse various documents notably: organisational, policy and legal documents that highlights citizen participation.

Chapter 2 seeks to build on the analytical framework of the thesis, based on the concepts of democracy, governance, civil society and citizen participation and critical debates on the understanding and usage of these analytical terms. Debates around deepening of democracy are analysed and their relevance to this thesis explored'. Current debates on democracy in Africa are also analysed.

Chapter 3, entitled *Citizen Participation in Zimbabwe*, explores events and developments in Zimbabwe that present the environment within which participation occurred or failed to occur. A brief historiography of Zimbabwe is given, followed by a brief history of citizen participation in Zimbabwe, especially from 1997 to 2010. Participatory options for citizens made available by existing key legislation are explored. These are formal [*'invited'*] participatory spaces as provided for by government through legislative provisions, as well as informal [*'created'*] participatory spaces where citizens seek government attention to existing social, political or economic problems. A brief overview of key legislation guiding citizen participation in Zimbabwe is provided to determine the extent to which it has enhanced or hindered citizen participation in governance processes during the period in question.

Chapter 4 presents four case studies of civil society organisations and an analysis of their operations to enhance citizen participation. In all the case studies, the thesis seeks to establish *when* the organisation was established, *why* it was established, *what* it does, *who* funds it and *how* it reaches out to its constituency; that is, the objectives, operations and mobilisation strategies of the selected civic groups. An exploration of various mobilisation strategies employed by each of the CSOs forms the basis of each case study. A detailed account of each CSO and its functions and activities is given, and its structures analysed. Membership of the organisation is analysed to determine if an increase/decrease has occurred during the period in question. The level of interaction between the civic groups and their constituencies through outreach programmes and voter education activities is analysed to determine how the civic groups have influenced citizens' perceptions of democracy and governance. The impact of donor funding is also analysed. Emphasis is on the mobilisation strategies of the various groups and how this has drawn the attention of the state.

Chapter 5 forms the first part of the data presentation and analysis process and uses quantitative data collected from 196 questionnaire responses to draw meaning from respondents. Elements of social structure, notably age, gender, level of education and residential location will be used to determine the level of participation of respondents in CSO and political activities. Quantitative data drawn from membership registers, EISA election reports and other variables will be used to draw conclusions about whether civil society has succeeded in increasing enlightenment among citizens regarding the restoration of democratic institutions.

Using the interpretive content analysis, Chapter 6 analyses the qualitative data obtained from 104 interviews consisting of personal perceptions of respondents. The chapter seeks to provide a descriptive interpretation of events and operations of the selected civic groups in an effort to ascertain the extent to which civil societies' activities and engagement with members would enlighten or change their behaviour in regard to the achievement of democratic ideals in the country.

Chapter 7 draws together the analysis of key themes as they emanate from research questions. The chapter pulls together all debates around against the findings of the study as presented in the two chapters preceding it. Through analysis of qualitative and quantitative data collected and inferences made the researcher draws inferences on the extent to which civil society organisations have influenced citizen participation. Additionally the chapter brings out factors that have been identified as promoting and/or hindering citizen participation, at least in the Zimbabwean context. The conclusion draws from the analytical framework on different debates around factors promoting or restricting democracy, good governance, operations of civil society organisations and the enhancement of citizen participation. The chapter concludes by establishing the extent to which civil society has enhanced citizen participation in governance processes in Zimbabwe, especially from 1997 to 2010.

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter sought to formulate the path which the study followed and established the layout and content that was adopted. Additionally, the chapter introduced the four case studies, methodology, as well as debates around deepening of democracy, promotion of good governance and providing space for civil society organization as well as how these concepts and practices are interconnected. The four cases studies identified are used to establish the extent to which their operations and objectives are a reflection of efforts by civil society to strengthen democracy and enhance citizen participation in governance processes in the country, especially from 1997 to 2010. The arrangement of the chapter comprised presentation of the problem statement, researcher objectives and clarification of key concepts which are: democracy, governance, civil society and citizen participation. The chapter engages in various debates around the cited key concepts. Challenges faced by CSOs, CBOs and NGOs are briefly explored in this chapter. Additionally, the chapter also seeks to tie together the conceptual framework, research problem and research questions to the findings

of the study. The research presents the analytical framework and sought to correspond it to the research results. The next chapter seeks to engage in debates around key concepts towards building an analytical framework for the study.

CHAPTER TWO: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN PROMOTING DEMOCRACY, GOVERNANCE AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

2.1. Introduction

The preceding chapter began the process of building an analytical framework around key concepts and presented data collection methods that are employed in the study. This chapter seeks to explore debates around the role of civil society in promoting democracy, governance and citizen participation. The research seeks to present CSOs, CBOs, NGOs as elements of civil society as they work towards the strengthening of democracy, promotion of good governance and the enhancement of citizen participation. Other sections of the chapter include an exploration of Participation and Participatory Spaces and the Demand-and-Supply side of Governance. The chapter concludes by providing an exploratory examination of the linkages between civil society, democracy, governance, citizen participation and democratic processes, with a view to providing an analytical framework in the Zimbabwean context.

2.2 Civil Society and the Strengthening of Democracy

Civil society can be viewed from an analytic or normative perspective. Analytical or structural definitions stress the importance of *forms*: social organisations and networks, the 'third sector', or more broadly, '...the arena in which citizens come together to advance the interests they hold in common, containing all organisations and associations...' (Edwards, 2009:2). A strong civil society plays a key role in political, economic and social development and leads to a strong society that seeks to strengthen good governance institutions (Ramjee & van Donk, 2011:11). The economic role of civil society '...centres on securing livelihoods as well as providing services where the state and markets are weak' (Edwards, 2009:2). In their social role, civil societies provide a reservoir of co-operative values, caring, cultural life and intellectual innovation. In their governance role '... civil societies play a pivotal role in promoting good governance structures and institutions and excite donor imagination' (Edwards, 2009:3). This brings to the fore the close relationship between civil societies and the donor community, an issue which is going to be deliberated upon in greater detail in

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various chapters in this study. Especially where formal citizenship rights are not well-entrenched, it is civic groups that provide the channels through which citizens can make their voices heard in government decision-making, thus helping to promote transparency and accountability, curb corruption and build a social consensus in favour of political and economic reform (Azarya, 1992:25). This argument falls within the confines of this study as it seeks to explore the extent to which selected civic groups have presented the voice of citizens towards strengthening good governance structures in the country.

Civil society has featured prominently in discussions on democracy and governance in Africa in the last two decades. Keane (1988:16) has noted civil society's propensity to influence policy and its ability to establish democratic governance institutions and that it must be invested with universal values. On a global level, civil society has presented itself as a manifestation of social energies released by an awakening of human consciousness to possibilities for creating societies. Carothers and Ottaway, (2000:13) have presented the components of civil society such as voluntary associations which are directly involved in fostering democracy and promoting democratic consolidation by seeking interaction with the state, whether to advocate interests of the citizens, to oppose non-democratic behaviour of the state, or to hold states accountable to citizens for their states' actions. This argument exhibits a clear association between a strong civil society and strong democratic institutions (Gaventa, 2004:44; Ramjee & van Donk, 2011:12).

Liberal democratic theory essentially assumes a dichotomy between the political sphere which is associated with a struggle for political power, and civil society which constitutes the source of mandate for those in the political sphere to govern (Somolekae, 1998:9; Molutsi, 1995:5). Consequently the debate on the role of civil society in promoting and consolidating democracy and good governance has become an important dimension in the democratisation process that has become a talking point across the globe, mostly in Africa. Multilateral financial institutions - notably the World Bank, IMF and the WTO - have ascribed the establishment and strengthening of democratic institutions in countries seeking credit to a strong civil society (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:122). These institutions maintain that a stable political environment with strong democratic institutions is conducive to economic development. The affinity between civil society and democracy has been collaborative and the tendency to 'idealise civil society actors as democratic forces' (Scholte, 2002:299) has

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presented civil society as having the propensity not only to restore democracy, but also to promote and consolidate it (Diamond, 1995:57) and at the same time help in the monitoring and protection of civil rights and liberties (Ikelegbe, 2001:10). Additionally, Diamond and Platter (2003:7) credit civil society with having the capacity to provide 'additional channels for articulating and representing interests, generating cross-cutting cleavages, improving the functioning of democratic institutions and widening and enriching the flow of information to citizens as well as producing supporting coalitions'.

Current debates on the deepening and consolidation of democracy have a distinct bias towards the introduction of participatory approaches that enable citizens to take up their citizenship rights (Esau, 2006:1). Citizenship comprises rights and duties relating to individuals' membership in a political community and the notion that these rights are a fundamental component of citizenship rather than an alternative (Marston & Mitchell, 2004:93). Civil society has also been identified as playing the role of deepening and strengthening democratic institutions. Donors and multilateral institutions have argued that '…the biases towards elitism or lack of public accountability found in traditional institutional design approaches can be offset by investing in a vibrant civil society' (Gaventa, 2006:14). A robust civil society can serve as an additional check and balance on government behaviour, through mobilising claims, advocating for special interests, playing a watchdog role and generally exercising countervailing power against the state (Gaventa, 2006:14).

Gaventa (2006:3) notes that '…emerging debates within "deepening democracy" focus on developing and sustaining more substantive and empowered citizen participation in the democratic process than is often found in representative democracy alone'. Hirst (1994:29) points out that the relationship between state and society has been replaced by more complex governance arrangements to formulate and implement solutions to public problems.

It has been universally acknowledged that civil society is part and parcel of any political system in a country, despite varying conditions existing in different countries. Some conditions may be restrictive while others are conducive to civil society involvement in political processes. The involvement of civil society in governance processes helps to reinforce trust in governments and stimulate political participation by the citizenry (Klandermans, Roef & Olivier, and 2001:125). Many of the debates around civil society's involvement in the democratisation process have depicted the civil society movement as

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having tremendous implications for shaping and pluralising power relations (Keane, 1998:13), broadening the avenues of societal representation of interests and of individual and group influence and participation (Harbeson, 1994:291-5), creating a new political culture of citizenship that stresses rights, obligations, protest and contestation (Grindle, 1996:7) and prompting political liberalisation (Keane, 1998:12). Civil society has also been viewed as being able to play the crucial role of legitimising state power through norm setting of operative rules of politics and the reconstruction of public responsibility (Bratton 1994:59; Azarya 1992:83-91; Patterson 1998:429). The civil society movement has also been credited with constituting the independent stratum of power that forges collective identities, builds consensus and constructs platforms around moral, social and political values for the purposes of citizen education, sensitisation and mobilisation (Azarya 1992:83-91). Consolidation of democracy and being able to stimulate political participation have become evident as comprising some of the principal functions of civil society through 'checking and limiting the power of the state, which follows naturally from the oppositional characteristic of civil society under authoritarian rule' (Diamond and Plattner, 2003:xxiii). The study would then seek to establish the extent to which these attributes have been realised through the operation and activities of selected civic groups in the Zimbabwean context.

On a more practical note, empirical evidence has shown that civil society has been associated with much of the transformation of Sub-Saharan nations towards democratic, transparent and accountable governance, having been heavily active in the popular struggles for democratisation in South Africa, Congo, Niger, Guinea, Mauritania and Nigeria, and multiparty democracy in Gabon, Cameroun, Kenya, Malawi and Zambia (Makumbe 1998:308-9). Grindle (1996:2), in a study of eight Latin American and African countries, found out that an invigorated civil society heightened public debate, media criticism, political mobilisation and public agitation, as well as contestation for increased participation over policy and governance, resulting in the opening up of space for negotiation, redefinition and reconstitution of state-society and state-economy relations.

It is as a result of these roles that civil society is regarded by various scholars as 'both the terrain of constructing the hegemony of social democracy as well as its vehicle' (Adesina 1992:52-3). Based on the vital importance of civil society as cited by various scholars of African politics (and beyond), the democratisation process in Africa has come to be

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considered as 'synonymous with the coming to life of civil society' (Mamdani 1995:602-16). Beyond democratisation processes are crucial roles of democratic sustenance, and civil society is expected to protect the democratic values of pluralism, accountability, responsibility and participation in governance processes (Keane 1988:7; Imam & Jibrin 1991:5), and the nature and strength of civil society in Africa's fledgling civil societies have helped to determine the prospects for democratic consolidation (Bratton 1992:76).

States that accommodate civil society regard these non-state actors as part of the state system, just as in situations where ruling elites form alliances with civil society actors to strengthen their democratic institution (Mamdani,1999:45), but at the same time take cognisance of the fact that '...civil and political society are separate realms and this helps to defend the claim that it is possible to support democracy without becoming involved in partisan politics or otherwise interfering unduly in the domestic politics of another country' (Carothers & Ottaway, 2000:36).

Afrocentric scholars have attributed the emergence of a strong civil society movement in Africa to the fight against colonialism. Makumbe (1995:11) maintains that in Africa, civil society has long been associated with decolonisation and the subsequent transformation from colonial rule to independence. On a similar note '...the post-war period was characterised by the development of powerful popular movements in most African colonies when large numbers of workers entered the arena of organised political activity" (Mamdani, 1990:48). Prevailing political, economic and social conditions on the African continent have also been attributed to creating a conducive environment for the rise in civic groups on the continent. The economic and political crises of the 1980s and 1990s in Africa and Latin America gave rise to social movements based on common interests and identities and 'local community and non-governmental organisations that sought greater autonomy' to find 'grassroots solutions to economic and social problems and make collective demands on government' (Moyo, Makumbe & Raftopolous, 2000:24). The emergent civil society groups were engaged in struggles against despotic rulers, repressive regimes and state violations of individual and collective rights (Makumbe,1998:305), and their struggle was in pursuit of the democratisation project (Ikelegbe, 2001:3). CSOs, CBOs, and NGOs, as well as social movements have come up seeking to confront political authorities towards creating democratic institutions. In Zimbabwe, with the advent of greater industrialisation and

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urbanisation, township residents' associations emerged with the aim of challenging the white economic and political order (Moyo, Makumbe & Raftopolous, 2000:24). Disgruntlement with labour issues by an increasing urban population during and immediately after the Second World War, coupled with the growing crisis of labour production in urban and rural areas, led to the growth of trade unions whose organisational strength was unprecedented (Moyo, Makumbe & Raftopolous, 2000: 25). In this case, the research does not seek to engage with the labour movement as part of civil society, but instead incorporates governance and human rights NGOs as well as residents' associations as an integral part of this dissertation in attempting to establish the extent to which these have mobilised around good (local and national) governance and enhanced citizen participation.

However scholars have not been in total agreement in debates about the role of civil society in enhancing democratic institutions and structures. There are those who view the civil society movement as an impediment to the institution of strong democratic structures, accusing civil society of '…covering up their perverse side in its interactions with the state, and the probable undermining role it can play in democratisation and national stability' (Ikelegbe, 2001:5). Abutudu (1995:5) discusses a divergent and sometimes centrifugal pull that CSOs can exercise in representing partisan interests that can be threatening to societal cohesion and the state (Abutudu, 1995:5). Similarly, the plural and diverse nature of civic groups with competing loyalties and claims, engaged in variousforms of struggle, may engenderincoherence and conflicts that may be inimical to the democratic project itself (Abutudu, 1995:5). Though Narsoo (1991:26) regards the diversity and number of civil society groups as related to the depth of society's democratic content, such groups may have parochial and inward-looking agendas (Azarya 1992:83-91). Abutudu (1995:5) further notes that particularism becomes a divergent pull, which can disarticulate civil society, restrict the 'arrival at the common ground' for the struggle and opposition to the state and reinforce state hegemony. This notion is supported by Patterson (1998:423-41) who presents civil society as characterised by social hierarchies, power relations, non-inclusive and non-accountable decision-making, disorganisation and non-promotion of democratic values. This therefore renders civil society as disunited, ineffective and inefficient democratic organisations.

Civil society may act as 'broker, buffer, symbol, agent, regulator, integrator, representative and midwife of different values' but these roles may or may not facilitate democracy

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(Harbeson, 1992:294). There is also a danger in the nature of expressions regarding group interests. For example, while protests may be romanticised in the democratic struggle being characterised by collective activism in confrontation with the state, excessive violence in the struggle for particularised objectives may rather paralyse and ultimately undermine the democratic project itself (Abutudu 1995:6). The organisational and ideological weaknesses of civil society have been attributed to problems of crippling poverty, corruption, nepotism, parochialism, opportunism, ethnicism and, in some cases, illiberalism and willingness to be co-opted within state structures, thereby rendering them voiceless (Makumbe 1998:309-11: Diamond 1999:24-5).

Much of African civil society and those from the global South designated within the middle-income category, lack autonomous existence and self-sustaining capacities. As a result they depend on foreign donors and sometimes on the state itself, resulting in foreign donors determining the agenda of interest which in some cases may run counter to those of the civil groups (Makumbe, 1998:310). In cases where civil society receives financial aid from the state, the capability of the civic groups to make independent or confrontational decisions is eroded. Internal structures and operations of some civic groups reflect the absence of democratic values and tenets such as participation, consensus and competition (Ikelegbe, 2001:6). Additionally, some civic groups even lack in-depth knowledge and awareness of the workings of government and the making and consequences of public policy, and therefore lack the intellectual capacity to challenge government (Ikelegbe, 2001:7). Makumbe (1998:316) notes that groups may articulate ethnic, regional, cultural and sectional interests and as a result civil society degenerates into an arena of intense conflict between civil groups of interests organised along these lines. These weaknesses undermine the capacity and potential of civil society and eventually reduce its effectiveness. Despite these self-inflicted and inherent weaknesses of civil society, its crucial role in the democratisation project outweighs these structural and operational weaknesses (Makumbe, 1998:316).

The global South has not been without its own challenges given the prevailing high poverty levels and the sprawling slums characterised by poor service delivery (Gaventa & Tandon, 2010:187; Coelho & von Lieres, 2010:99). These are some of the areas where citizens exert pressure on the state for improved service delivery by making collective claims on the state and their contribution to democracy has been acknowledged.

As a result, contributions of individuals as members of communities have also been hailed as potentially beneficial to collective claim-making. It has been noted that 'individual citizens who actively exercise their rights and entitlements, by voting, making demands on public officials, or engaging in the public life of the community, help transform political institutions into democratic ones' (Houtzager, et al, 2009:6). Society provides citizen-driven associations (CBOs) that '… are the schools of democracy and play a critical role in producing these civic and active citizens' (Houtzager, et al, 2009:6). Consequently, this study seeks to explore the role of CBOs, NGOs and CSOs to establish the extent to which their activities enhance (or not) citizen participation in governance processes in Zimbabwe from the mid-1990s. Accordingly, this study examines one of the fundamental presuppositions of the literature on democracy that argues that associations enhance the exercise of citizenship, and thereby the quality of democracy (Diamond, 1997:24-5; Ramjee & van Donk, 2011:16; Cornwall &Coelho, 2002:14; Gaventa & Tandon, 2010:187).

Emerging democracy literature has come up with modern institutional designs that seek to strengthen citizen engagement with the state (Gaventa, 2006:14; Gaventa, 2004:54; Ramjee & van Donk, 2011:16; Cornwall &Coelho, 2002:14). Four strands of participatory democracy that have been juxtaposed are: *civil society* democracy, *participatory democracy, deliberative democracy* and *empowered participatory democracy* (Gaventa, 2006:14). Activities of civil society that have sought to promote democracy and anti-statist projects include 'challenging abuses', 'strengthening the rule of law', 'monitoring human rights', 'educating citizens about rights and responsibilities', 'building a culture of civic engagement' and 'enhancing state responsiveness to societal interests, needs, and building a constituency for economic as well as political reforms' (Diamond,1997:24-5).

Summing up the role of civil society, Diamond (1999:67) has noted that civil society does not simply limit and monitor the state but strengthens it, by 'enhancing the accountability, responsiveness, inclusiveness, effectiveness and hence legitimacy of the political system'. However a strong civil society does not guarantee a good democracy, as this depends in part on how civil society is organised in relation to the state and whether the state allows citizens to take an active role in politics (Diamond, 1999:68).

2.3 Enhancing Citizen Participation Through Civil Society Action

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Recent investigations into the relationship between civil society and political participation have culminated in arguments that citizens' involvement in non-political organisations underlies their political engagement (Putman, 1995a, 1995b; Verba et al, 1995a). It has also been argued that '…declines in civil society involvement constitute a threat to democracy because the health of our public institutions depends, at least in part, on widespread participation in private voluntary groups' (Putman, 2000:336). This portrays civil society as the key driver behind seeking ways to strengthen democratic institutions through citizen action (Pellizzoni, 2003:56), as public decision requires the majority vote because the will of the majority outweighs the wants of the minority (Leftwich, 1993:9). Active citizens within a strong participatory democracy '…have direct roles in public choices or at least engage more deeply with substantive political issues and ensurethat officials are responsive to their concerns and judgments' (Cohen & Fung 2004:27). Gaventa (2006:150) added to citizen empowerment by noting that citizens contribute to '…deepening democratic engagement through the participation of citizens in the processes of governance'. Participatory dispensation consensus forms a strong state and strong civil society (Klandermans, et al, 2002:163). Participatory democracy has a vision of public deliberation that is consistent with the idea of network governance and that attempts to foster deliberative settings (Pellizzoni, 2003:56). Through participatory democracy, institutions can emerge as points of leverage from which to achieve a more egalitarian redistribution of power, thereby leading to a greater democratisation of the entire political process (Bachrach & Botwinick, 1992:36). Through participatory democracy, citizens can strive to create opportunities for all members of a political group to make meaningful contributions to decision-making, and seek to broaden the range of people who have access to such opportunities (Seligman, 1992:36). Consequently the participation of citizens can present '…the best way to tap into the energy of society through "co-governance", a process which involves inviting social actors to participate in the core activities of the state' (Ackerman, 2004:447).

In various debates on participatory democracy, decisions reached without the involvement of citizens lack legitimacy, even though politicians proceed to legitimise such decisions on their own (Diamond, 1999:255). Allowing citizens leverage in decision-making processes helps to empower citizens in the affairs of the state and/or institutions as highlighted by (Paul, 2005 cited in World Bank, 2007:247) who points out that '…initiatives that encourage citizen participation in public decision-making are more successful in societies that adhere to

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democratic governance and allow independent civil society organisations to take root'. The practice of participatory democracy or 'empowered participatory' democracy is subsequently propagated seeking to '…influence and deepen the ways in which ordinary people can effectively participate in and influence policies which affect their lives' (Fung & Wright 2003:19). Empowered participatory democracy '…relies upon the commitment and capabilities of ordinary people to make sensible decisions through reasoned and empowered deliberations because [it] attempts to tie action to discussion' (Fung & Wright 2001:19). In a strong participatory democracy, decisions are generated from below and filter upwards. Gaventa (2006:19) maintains that 'empowered participatory governance is based on the principles of bottom-up participation, starting with a pragmatic orientation to a sole concrete problem'. Empowered participatory democracy is informed by a focus on devolution and an attempt to harness state power (Gaventa, 2006:20).

As a result, the essence behind much of the pro-democratic civil society is to present a platform on which citizens can participate in governance processes to present public opinion. As a collective entity, civil society becomes '…alliances which enjoy the greatest ideological resonance in society at a given time' (Gramsci, 1971:333) as they seek to be involved in popular struggles and are often at loggerheads with tyrannical regimes (Ake, 1996:35). This presents civil society as having the capacity to mobilise citizens in demanding civil liberties from the state and exhorting the state to be responsive to public needs. This has presented the central function of civil society as that of providing bridges between society and government, and acting as a '…buffer between government and society; as a broker and a political norm setter as well as an agent of change regulator of the processes of participation in societal affairs and as an integrator of groups articulating different political interests…' (Harbeson et al, 1994:288).

Given the various operations and engagements as well as environments that civil society organisations have to contend with, one cannot expect them to be homogenous entities (Ikelegbe, 2001:10). Kaldor (2003:7) distinguishes four versions of civil society: the *bourgeois society* version based on the premise that civil society is the arena of ethical life in between the state and the family, the *activist version* or the post-Marxist or utopian version, whose premise is the radicalisation of democracy and an extension of participation and autonomy, the *neo-liberal version* whose thrust is presenting civil society as part of associational life that provides a substitute for many of the functions performed by the state

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and the *post-modern version* which portrays civil society as an arena of pluralism and contestation and a reformulation to encompass other understandings of political culture (Keane, 1998:9). Summed up, the different strands of civil society hinge on the equitable redistribution of power, pluralism and contestation as well as the reformulation of participation to incorporate all citizens. All these are pointers that speak of the need for a concerted effort to resolve society's challenges.

Several proponents of democracy (Diamond & Morlino 2004, Pickel 2006, O'Donnell 2007) have debated the various activities of civil society organisations as they seek to build democratic structures, with Diamond and Morlino (2004:48) identifying electoral processes as traditionally the prime indicator of democratic participation and the only activity which is performed by the vast majority of citizens. Pointing out that elections are not the only precursor to democratic practice, Barber (1998:7) has noted that there are '...political elites around the globe who now embrace democracy and enjoy democratic legitimacy without subjecting themselves to the notorious inconveniencies of democratic practices of elections'. In some cases, '...the practice of democracy, now largely reduced to multiparty electoral competition, tells rather little about satisfactory citizen participation' (Besson & Marti, 2006:35, cited in Ile & Mapuva, 2010:35), unless if the electoral environment is guided by enabling legislation and a vibrant civil society exist, that such elections could be regarded as credible. These arguments portray the danger in which democratic institutions find themselves as political leaders have sought to manipulate electoral processes on the pretext of yielding to the wishes of the people.

After much debate about the interpretations and content of democracy it has become increasingly necessary to present the minimum features of democracy, of which political contestation and political participation are the most prominent (Besson & Marti, 2006:36). Kaldor (2003:8) adds the dimension of political control as necessary in a democracy through the involvement of a vibrant civil society whose contribution helps not only to strengthen democratic institutions, but also to empower citizens. Giving a voice to citizens helps to empower them. Empowered participatory regimes are characterised by *openness to societal demands, low levels of constraints on civil society* and *relatively few filters on societal demands* (Edwards, 2007:34). Empowered participatory regimes endow citizens with a voice in the formulation of local budgets and in the design and implementation of community

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development projects (Edwards, 2007:34). The key analytical feature that distinguishes empowered participatory regimes from purely representative regimes is a 'bottom up,' direct and deliberative form of decision making (Baiocchi 2005:57). The institutional framework of empowered participatory regimes is based on devolution of powers to 'local action units' (neighborhood councils or other grassroots organisations), concrete mechanisms linking grassroots organisations to 'super-ordinate' government bodies - that is 'co-ordinated decentralisation' - direct participation by grassroots organisations in governance, or state-centered action, and decision making through democratic deliberative means (Fox, 2004:12).

Efforts to 'empower' civil society may engender an 'affirmative' or a 'transformative' dynamic (Almond & Verba, 2000:12). When empowerment has a transformative dynamic, grassroots organisations and networks create 'emergent public spheres' that expand the domain of citizenship by politicising issues: that is, making them the subject of public-minded deliberation (Almond & Verba, 2000:13). When empowered participation has an affirmative dynamic, by contrast, public spaces serve to universalise a set of assumptions about the rights and limitations of citizenship and to limit the domain of citizenship. Affirmatively empowered participation still may evince a certain 'direct and bottom up' quality which seeks to empower citizens to participate at any government level and helps to increase participatory spaces within their reach (Almond & Verba, 2000: 14).

Deliberative democracy rests on the core notions of citizens and their representatives deliberating about public problems and possible solutions under conditions that are conducive to reasoned reflection and refined public judgment and a mutual willingness to understand the values, perspectives and interests of others (Matthews, 1994:3). Unlike much liberal pluralist political theory, deliberative democracy does not assume that '...citizens have a fixed ordering of preferences when they enter the public sphere' (Sirianni & Friedland, 2006:5). Rather, it assumes that the public sphere can generate opportunities for forming, refining and revising preferences through discourse that takes multiple perspectives into account and orients itself towards mutual understanding and common actions (Fishkin, 1995:23). Consequently, deliberative democracy implies expanding the opportunities of citizens to deliberate among themselves. The result has been that deliberative democracy has manifested itself through direct plebiscitary democracy, interest group representation and a professional

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political class, all of which present opportunities for citizens to be actively involved in the deliberations at hand.

The deliberative democracy perspective argues for a situation in which '...citizens address public problems by reasoning together about how best to solve them through providing a shift from bargaining, interest aggression and power to the common reason of equal citizens' (Cohen & Fung, 2004:26-27). In context, deliberative democracy is mainly concerned with '...the nature and quality of deliberation that does occur when citizens do come together for discussion and debates in public spheres" (Gaventa, 2006:15). However deliberative democracy has been criticised for '...favouring consensus at the expense of differences' (Chambers, 2003:2), with some critics pointing out that 'there will be trade-offs between the quality of deliberation and the depth and quantity of participation' (Gaventa, 2006:23).

Existing legal frameworks create either an enabling or a restrictive environment for democratic processes. Citizen participation is an important part of an overall institutional framework of cooperation between the government and civil society organisations, given that laws (statutes) and other general regulations are often the primary instruments of articulation and implementation of public policies (Golubovic, 2010:7). Current forms of democracy are based on majority principles which encompass citizen participation and involve stakeholders and citizens at large in the making, monitoring, reviewing and termination of policies and decisions that affect citizens' lives. Involving citizens is about the creation and sustenance of mechanisms by which individuals, the private sector and civil society can participate in their own governance (Golubovic, 2010:7). Stakeholder participation gives meaning to civil society empowerment, which is vital to making governments and private sectors responsive and, of course, governmental responsiveness in turn fosters trust and legitimacy (UNDP, 2004:5). Stakeholder participation is also crucial for engaging the energies and securing the commitment of citizens for sustained development and for fostering equity in the distribution of the benefits of development (Golubovic, 2010:7).

In the context of Africa's 'divided societies' and in the face of severe gender inequality, inclusive civic participation is absolutely essential for generating social capital and societal cohesion (UNDP, 2004:4), and helps to foster trust and reciprocity between citizens and their governments, the state and the private sector, as well as among the different social and

political groupings. However the institution and value of civic inclusiveness have been manipulated by the ruling elites in the name of citizen participation. While the principle of participation may be a noble one, the skewed application of the concept has tended to make a mockery of the whole participatory process.

The most visible advantage of citizen participation is that '...it gives citizens the opportunity to exercise some degree of control over their own lives' (Kabeer, 2001:5). Participation does not necessarily have to be direct, nor does direct democracy have to be an efficacious and practical way to institutionalise stakeholder participation in complex, large societies. The conducting of credible, regular elections has also been included as a tangible sign of good governance practices. The cause of good governance is best served in modern societies through representative democracy with strong elements of consultation and direct democracy (Gyimah-Boadi, 2004:54).

If democracy is to flourish, citizens must play an active part in public life, sharing their ideas and opening their minds to the opinions of others, and taking ownership of the well-being of the country (Meskell, 2009:24).This glorifies citizen participation as a prominent feature within the democracy discourse and as a vital tenet of democracy. Cogan & Sharpe, (1986:283) have noted that it has become widely accepted that citizen participation provides private individuals with an opportunity to influence public decisions and has long been a component of the democratic decision-making process. As a result, citizen participation as a process can meaningfully tie programmes to people irrespective of the angle from which one looks at it (Spiegel, 1998:7).

Giving citizens the opportunity to participate provides them with freedom of expression, associational freedom and access to information (Dahl, 1989 cited in Esau, 2006:1). This perspective puts citizens' rights at the forefront of participation. Through participation, citizens are given the opportunity to demand accountability from the state by ensuring government's responsiveness to service delivery and other societal needs. Cogan and Sharpe (1986:286) present participation as coming in, handy where public partnership occupies the highest level in a public participation continuum as follows:

Public Participation Continuum

PUBLICITY	PUBLIC EDUCATION	PUBLIC INPUT	PUBLIC INTERACTION	PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP
Building public support	Disseminating information	Collecting information	Two-way communication	Securing advice and consent

Adapted from Hickey& Kipping's *Public Participation Continuum*[2]

The above continuum indicates the need to build grassroots public support to gain public confidence. This can be done through effective communication with the public through information dissemination to enlighten the public on the benefits to be derived from participation in a given programme/project. A feasibility study is cited as necessary to ascertain the needs of the community through which ideas could be shared with the public until consensus is reached and consent secured from community leaders through community mobilisation and involvement in the decision-making process. Cogan and Sharpe (1986:286) maintain that participation undergoes a number of stages and processes for it eventually to benefit the populace. The stages range from publicity and public education to enlighten citizens on programmes at hand, to the collection of input from citizens, and increased interaction between citizens and the establishment and eventually to the formation of state-citizens partnerships. Cogan and Sharpe (1986) envisage that such processes would enable the political establishment to build a strong support base among the citizens.

The preparedness of citizens to participate in public projects can be used as a barometer to measure public opinion and responsiveness in policy formation for informing regulators of exactly where '…volatile public backlash is likely to occur and for winning the sympathies of a few influential citizens… (Irvin and Stansbury, 2004:58). However, citizens do not participate merely for the sake of participating in programmes or processes. At institutional level, Arnstein presents a hierarchical structure portraying participation in three phases-*nonparticipation*, *tokenism* and *citizen power*. Arnstein argues that institutions can either

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[2] G Hickey, C Kipping - Journal of Clinical Nursing, 1998 - Blackwell Synergy

make decisions without involving citizens, can consult citizens as a formality or can empower citizens to take control of all decision-making processes. Through the *'ladder of citizen participation',* Arnstein (1969:34) presents citizen participation in hierarchical order and as existing in degrees of development as follows:

Figure E-1
The Ladder of Citizen Participation

Source: Arnstein, 1969
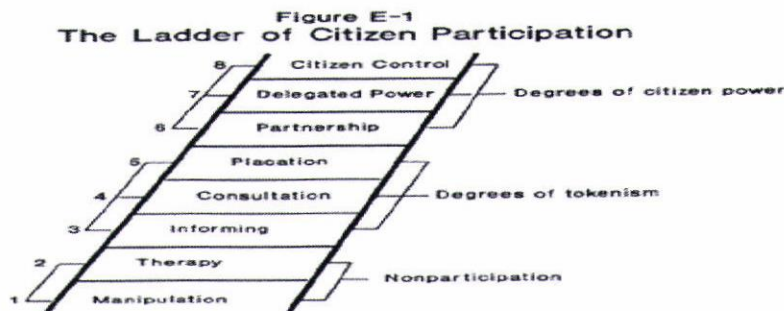
Arnstein (1969:32) portrays participation as existing in three tiers. At the bottom of the ladder is *nonparticipation* where decisions are made from the top and handed down to citizens. On the second tier, the quality of participation is through informing and consulting citizens without giving assurances that their contributions will be considered for decision-making purposes. The third tier consists of a wholesome involvement of citizens in the public decision-making process where citizens become partners in making decisions that can directly influence policy formulation and implementation. Arnstein's *Ladder of Participation* assists the researcher in determining the level of participation that the selected civic groups as well as existing legislation provide.

Critics of participation have expressed dissatisfaction with the nature and level of citizen involvement in decision-making processes in the public realm. Shah (2007:59) argues that participation undermines institutions of representative government, and it should therefore be left to government officials to make public decisions. Political systems that have a record of poor governance may decide to foster participatory forums in order to increase the government's legitimacy (Moynihan, 2003; Olivo, 1998, in World Bank, 2007:59). Warning against glorifying the role of citizen participation, Navarro (1998), cited in Shah (2007:59), argues that '…even where participation is fostered, citizens may focus only on narrow issues that affect them directly and may be unwilling to make trade-offs and determined to exclude some groups'. Andrew (2004) in World Bank (2007:64) has made accusations about '…officials who claim that participation efforts are consistent with the tradition of public

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consultation, but are actually characterised by a bias toward groups with technical or financial backgrounds and strong connections to government'.

The role of citizen participation in governance matters has at times been criticised by some scholars who present it as expressing '…very little, if not, ineffective means of citizen empowerment' (Narayan-Parker, 2006:95), notably so among '...the African patrimonial state which has perpetuated a rule over subjects rather than a rule by citizens' (Mamdani,1996:102). On the whole, determinant factors in the citizen participation continuum have been presented as the availability of participatory spaces (through enabling legislation) and appropriate mobilisation and mobilisation strategies that are available to citizens (Nzongola-Ntalaja and Lee, 1997:22). This is contrary to the above arguments which have tended to present citizen participation as a straightforward process.

2.4 Varieties of Participation in Complex Governance

Participation in governance has been presented as coming in different forms accompanied by multifaceted challenges of contemporary governance demanding a complex account of the ways in which those who are subject to laws and policies should participate in making them (Fung, 2006:66). Mechanisms of participation vary along three important dimensions: *who* participates, *how* participants communicate with one another and make decisions together, and how discussions are linked to policy and public action as well as which dimensions constitute a space in which any particular mechanism of participation can be located (Fung, 2006:66). Questions have been raised about how much and what kind of direct public participation there should be in contemporary democracy. The multiple conditions of modern governance demand a theory and institutions of public participation that are appropriately complex in which there is no canonical form of direct participation in modern democratic governance, where public participation advances multiple purposes and values in contemporary governance and where mechanisms of direct participation are not (as commonly imagined) a strict alternative to political representation or expertise but instead complement them (Fung, 2006:67). Public participation at its best operates in synergy with representation and administration to yield more desirable practices and outcomes of collective decision making and action (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996:43). On *who* participates, Fung (2006:68) notes that some participatory processes are open to all who wish to engage, whereas others invite only elite stakeholders such as interest group representatives.

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The *how* dimension is confined to specifying how participants exchange information and make decisions in which, during public meetings, participants simply receive information from officials who announce and explain policies. A much smaller set of issues is deliberative in the sense that citizens take positions, exchange reasons and sometimes change their minds in the course of discussions (Fung, 2006:66). The *what* dimension describes the link between discussions and policy or public action. These three dimensions: scope of participation, mode of communication and decision and extent of authority constitute spaces in which any particular mechanism of public action can be located (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996: 43). Participatory spaces can either be encapsulated within existing legislation or alternatively citizens can create their own spaces to confront the state, through 'created" and 'invited' spaces respectively (Gaventa, 2006:7).

2.5 Civil Society and the Promotion of Good Governance

Somolekae (1998:9) notes that civil society is an actor without whose participation good governance cannot be achieved, and in which situation the state takes on the role of a mediator in the various struggles of different civil society groups. The UN and the World Bank's presentation of civil society as 'the key to good governance and poverty-reducing growth' portrays over-reliance and trust on civil society contributions to maintain peace, stability and good governance (UN Report, 2000; World Bank, 2004:57). In addition, to facilitate state/citizen interaction, civil society presents a parallel institution to that of the state by providing checks and balances on state functions and operations with a view to strengthening governance processes and having 'fundamentally reduced the role of politics in society by expanding free markets and individual liberty' (Cato, 2000 cited in Edwards, 2004: 34). Edwards (2005:56) presents civil society as the single most viable alternative to the authoritarian state and the tyrannical rule and claims that it constitutes the missing link in the success of social democracy. This presentation of civil society portrays it as presenting an oppositional node to the state, only becoming active whenever the state becomes authoritarian and ceases to represent the wishes of citizens, making civil society the 'new analytic key that will unlock the mysteries of the social order', implying that through the incorporation of civil society in the activities of the state, social order can be restored and sustained (Seligman, 1992:12).

New Millennium Project-Zimbabwe (1999:2) has placed the onus of facilitating citizen participation on civil society organisations, preferring to refer to them as '…those organisations through which citizens participate in and exert influence over public life'. Harbeson (1994:287-288) perceives the central function of civil society as that of establishing bridges between society and government and as a 'buffer between government and society, acting as a broker between government and society, and as an actual political norm setter, as well as an agent of change regulator of the processes of participation in societal norm setting'.

2.5.1 Good Governance

Governance has been declared a 'hot' topic as evidence mounts on the critical role it plays in determining societal well-being (Institute on Governance, 2009:1). This has put the term 'good governance' in an increasingly visible position as it determines '…how governments and social organisations interact, how they relate to citizens and how decisions are taken in an increasingly complex world' (Institute on Governance, 2009:1). Controversy about the application of governance has arisen as a result of subjectivity ascribed to the term by various players as they seek to legitimise it through various machinations, with qualifications such as 'good' and 'bad' governance coming into play (Shane, 2009). Governance is not only about where to go, but also about who should be involved and in what capacity (Institute on Governance, 2009:2). As a result the practice of governance involves citizens and draws from their experiences and participation.

Debates around the practice of good governance and democracy have indicated the existence of a symbiotic relationship as it stands to reason that there can be no 'good governance' without democracy, especially given that democracy is a guarantee for good governance (Gutto, 1990:13; Graham et al, 2003:53; Okafor, 1997:37). In reality 'bad governance' is no governance and signifies the end of government and a threatened or total collapse, as is evident in many African states (Mandaza, 1991:11).

Graham *et al*, (2003:53) have identified eight components of good governance which are that it is: participatory, consensus-oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law; in addition, that it minimises corruption and takes the views of the minorities into account and that the voices of the most

vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society (Graham, 2003:53).
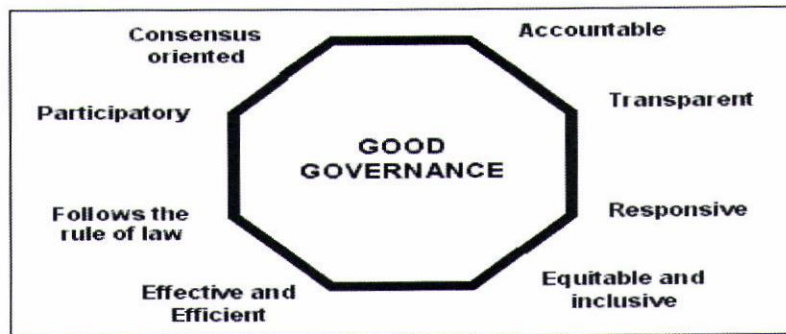
Adapted from UNESCAP-Good Governance

Of these aspects of good governance the dissertation seeks to establish the extent to which participation has been practised by the state and enhanced by civil society through their activities.

Not all scholars have been in total agreement on the application of the practice and principle of good governance. Fawar (2002) cited in Folscher (2007:249) casts doubts on the legitimacy of good governance noting that 'the promotion of good governance based on notions of representivity, transparency, accountability and participation fails to take account of the reality of ethnic and religious divisions in some states'. However more could be done to make the practice of good governance all-inclusive and tenable. Similarly, Mafeje (1998:12) has denigrated 'good governance' as an invitation to authoritarianism and a negation of prospects for social democracy (Mafeje, 1998:12). This accusation has further been upheld by Okafor (1997:37) who has expressed the view that the practice and requirements for 'good governance' have been used to legitimise rogue regimes at the expense of minority social groups and different religious groupings. The World Bank (1992; 1994) has presented the African continent as one riddled with corruption, violence and undemocratic institutions of governance and consequently not prepared for good governance. In much of Africa, 'good governance, has been epitomised by predictable, open, and enlightened policymaking, a bureaucracy imbued with a professional ethos, an executive arm of government accountable for its actions; and a strong civil society participating in public affairs; and all behaving under the rule of law' is difficult to implement because most (if not) all these prerequisites are absent (World Bank, 1992; 1994).

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On the flip side of good governance is 'bad governance' which according to Mandaza, 1991:11) is no governance and signifies the end of government and a threatened or total collapse, as is happening now in many African states. Mafeje (1998:9) deplores the behaviour of industrialised nations and donor agencies that have gone to the extent of propping up authoritarian regimes, and '…discrediting African governments with no legitimacy [since these] should not be given respectability and a longer lease of life, as the leading imperialist countries and donor agencies have been doing so far covertly or overtly'. Mafeje (1998:12) sums up the quagmire facing African scholars by stating that '"good governance" is neither meaningful nor implementable, outside the fundamental issue of social democracy in Africa and elsewhere; where the "popular democratic movement" in Africa has already given the correct verdict but not the correct implementation'

Democratic local governance requires the involvement of all concerned actors in the elaboration, implementation and evaluation of local policies, and encourages a development responsive to the population's rights and demands, notably the most vulnerable groups. Local elected authorities act as a catalyst for local governance and local development due to their democratic legitimacy, their proximity to the citizens and their capacity to mobilise local actors (Makumbe, 1998:13). In the framework of decentralisation policies and according to the subsidiarity principle, it is important to reinforce the autonomy of local government by providing it with the necessary competencies and resources. Interaction among levels of territory (sub-national, national, global) is essential for public policies' cohesion as no major development issue can be treated at one level. Decentralisation and local democratic governance policies are part of the State institutional framework contribute to its reform and strengthen the legitimacy of public action (European Charter, 2005)[3].

Given that citizens require local institutions to govern their affairs, local governance has become increasingly popular, especially given poor service delivery within and among urban actors as presented by the UNESCAP on Good Governance. The UNESCAP points out that good governance is a result of collaborative effort by various stakeholders and public

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[3] "European Charter on development cooperation in support of Local Governance," Available on http://as03.cooltoad.com/go/desktop?o=item:290412737:1.2:CharterEULocal%20Governance.pdf [Accessed on 20 July 2009]

institutions including workers (daily wage earners), the urban poor, the urban elites and urban middle class (residents), government officers (officials), trade unions and NGOs, CBOs and CSOs.

Local authorities have, however, faced a myriad of challenges in trying to articulate their objectives. The challenge facing decision-makers has been to develop models of local governance that can best facilitate the involvement of civil society, as well as determine how much civil society can contribute to the establishment of good governance in a sustainable way (World Bank, 2007:91). Swilling (1992:4) contends that local governance is best propagated by locally constituted voluntary organisations, which have the capacity to influence and even determine the structure of power and the allocation of resources. These are institutions that exert pressure on state institutions in the area of governance and development, and jealously guard their autonomy and identity.

Hoyos and Uys (2008:27) have noted that firstly, fiscal decentralisation requires a complex process that involves political, administrative and fiscal delegation to sub-national governments. Moreover, a major constraint on effective fiscal decentralisation has been the phenomenon of inadequate financial resources available to sub-national governments, which is common in both developed and developing countries (Hoyos &Uys, 2008:27).

For purposes of this dissertation, the Combined Harare Residents' Association is going to be used as one of the residents' associations in Zimbabwe representing civil society seeking to enhance good local governance.

2.5.2 The Demand-and-Supply Side of Democratic Governance

Governance interventions have evolved with a much greater emphasis on the demand side of good governance seeking responsiveness from the state (demand side) while at the same time offering little on what the state can do (supply side) (Graham & Plumptre, 2003:9). Knight, Chigudu &Tandon (2002:164) distinguish between the *demand side of governance* (what citizens do) and the *supply side of governance* (what the state does) which examines the interplay between the state and citizens and 'the need to close the gap between the *demand* and *supply*, so that governance between "consumers" and "creators"' is, as far as possible, seamless (Graham & Plumptre, 2003:9).

It has become common for people to understand the demand and supply side of governance and citizen participation in governance processes. The demand side of democratic or good governance most often refers to the role played by civil society which is considered the realm of association between citizens and the state. Civil society presents an aggregate of social interests, including social integration and social participation in state governance and in most cases limiting the state's authority, generating consent and promoting democratic values (Coston, 1998:484). Through its many functions, civil society can create pressure for policy reform and improved governance by monitoring the state's actions. In other words, the demand side of good governance addresses the will of the state to operate in an accountable, transparent and responsive manner. This study seeks to establish the extent to which the selected civic groups have succeeded in this regard.

Conversely, the supply side of democratic governance argues that because the state is the primary possessor of power and the emphasis of the more narrow perspective of governance, it must also apply its capacity to a supply function that interfaces with the demand side of governance (Held, 2004:175; Coston,1998:485),. The state coordinates the aggregation of diverging interests and the promotion of policy that can be taken to represent the public interest. The state creates processes through which trade-offs are decided (Frischtak, 1994: vii). The supply of governance by the state entails both administrative and bureaucratic capacity applied efficiently to the state's facilitation and production roles as well as the prevention or inhibition of access by private interests to state resources.

To close the gap on the demand side of governance (what citizens do) citizens need to display activism, leadership, association, commitment and engagement with the state. Inversely, to close the gap on the supply side (what the state does) the government needs to value the opinions and experiences of all citizens (Held, 2004:176). It is this interplay that the research explores through the discussion of CSOs in Zimbabwe promoting citizen participation.

2.6 Social Movements as Invented Political Forum

Social movements are located in civil society and are of individuals and/or CSOs and their networks whose thrust is related to specific political or socio-economic issues. Social movements have been and continue to be closely associated with democratic political systems and strive to sustain democratic institutions (Tilly, 2004:3). Tilly (2004:5) further notes that in recent years social movements have become part of a popular and global expression of

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dissent. This is the premise on which the selected civic groups cited for this study have thrived as they seek for the restoration of democracy in Zimbabwe.

The basis of social movements according to Kamete (2009:61) is '…invented political forum, a distinctive form of contentious politics that involves the collective making of claims that, if realised, would conflict with someone else's interests', which itself is a result of shared ideas (McAdam, 1996 in McCarthy & Zald, 2006:19). Collective claim-making develops out of shared meanings and definitions that people bring to a situation they perceive as problematic. On a similar note, Tarrow (1998:198) has noted that '…contentious politics occurs when ordinary people, often in league with more influential citizens, join forces in confrontations with elites, authorities and opponents' to create '…a triad of political opportunities, mobilising structures and framing processes' (Kamete, 2009:61). Kamete (2009:62) deliberates on the links between social movement organisations, contentious politics and governance, where governance involves relationships between the governors and the governed. In the relational practice that is governance, stakeholders with certain advantages can deploy these to maintain and protect their favoured position and even neutralise threats through stifling the needs and demands of the politically disadvantaged groups. Weak, marginalised and ignored, the politically disadvantaged groups become 'challengers' (McAdam, 2006:3), when they make claims upon institutions of governance (Kamete, 2009:62). They become a social movement if they are able to mount a 'campaign', that is, 'a sustained, organised public effort making claims on target authorities' (Tilly, 2003:257). In local terms, Kamete (2009:63) views urban councils as ranking among these 'institutionalised systems of power' whose governance is the subject of contention. All these traits are common characteristics that have been exhibited in the operations of the selected civil society organisations cited in this study.

In the Zimbabwean context, the development of vibrant social movements has been hindered by '…a combination of obstacles of an authoritarian nationalist state constructed through the legitimacy of the liberation struggle in a rapidly shrinking economy that has comprehensively undermined the structural basis for the reproduction of social forces in the country' (Masunungure (2004) in Raftopolous (2006:7). In the late 1990s, '…sections of the civil society community had begun to depart from the strategy of linkages with government and to move into a more confrontational mode in the context of a broader social movement' (Makumbe, 2000:23). This void in social movement activity in the country has necessitated

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the incorporation of WOZA and CHRA, as well as the NCA to entrench their influence within the Zimbabwean political landscape. These groups have grassroots inclinations and seek to engage in social struggles for the betterment of citizens, thus making them social movements. They belong to social groups which are continuously engaged in '…struggles from below to seek redress of various forms that typically have to do with equal citizenship, equitable power relations, and whose emancipatory and empowering attributes have drawn equity -and justice-seeking groups to them' (Osaghae,2006:35).

McAdam, et al (1996:19) concur that when dissatisfaction and grievances are combined with optimism and the conviction that joining forces with similarly aggrieved people can remedy the problematic situation, collective action becomes possible. Collective claim-making is a complex process that takes many forms, with the most sensational forms of claim-making by social movements being accomplished through contentious politics (Kamete, 2009:61). Even with the best organisational resources and the most strongly felt and widely shared grievances, the aggrieved group needs to claim some form of political space to make meaningful and sustained collective action possible (Kamete, 2009:61).

2.6.1 Social Movements in Africa

The history of social movements in Africa revolves around popular, bottom-up and grassroots struggles and resistance by groups under oppressive and unjust regimes as they seek redress and more equitable power configurations (Osaghae, 2006:34). Social movements in Africa have been visible both in their fight against colonialism and, in the post-independence era, against deteriorating governance structures of the post-colonial period. Consequently the deteriorating democratic institutions in many African countries have given rise to social movements whose analogy has been '…neither a party nor a union but a political campaign against authoritarian rule' (Tilly, 1985:735-36). In South Africa '…unlike in many societies where the political honeymoon tended to drag on for decades, new social struggles emerged quickly' (Ballard et al. 2006:13) to challenge the political dispensation towards realising their promise of an inclusive participatory form of governance structures.

Social movements in Africa are bedeviled by a set of tasks and challenges depending on their location on the continent. In war-torn countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia, Liberia and the Ivory Coast, the politics of reconstruction is what

preoccupies the people (Osaghae, 2006:25; Mederias, 2005:52). In North Africa, there is the problem of Islamic Fundamentalism and the violence it creates (Omari, 2000:3). In South Africa which has a large number of social movements, as well as in much of Southern Africa, there are social issues such as those associated with HIV/AIDS, poor service delivery with its attendant protests and the quest for co-operative governance (Ballad et al, 2006:14). In Zimbabwe, social movements have been treated as oppositional and their leaders incarcerated for protesting against authoritarian rule (Kamete, 2009:62). In much of central Africa social movements have been active in socio-political resistance as citizens seek to have a stake in illegal settlement and urban management (Osha, 2010:2). On the other hand, there are social movements within the African continent that thrive on violence by seeking to attack state organs (Ballard, et al, 2006:14). This is prevalent in parts of Africa such as the Niger Delta in Nigeria where social movements agitate for resource control and equitable distribution of resources among local communities (Osaghae, 2006:26).

The initial post-colonial period has seen the emergence of a post-independence state often dominated by a centralised ruling party which views autonomous social movements, previously so important in mobilising anti-colonial discontent, as a threat to or distraction from the central project of national developmentalism, dominated by the post-colonial state. Consequently, the development of local social movements has tended to be stifled by state control. This has resulted in friction between social movements and the state in much of the African continent despite the fact that social movements as components as civil society '...do not seek power to replace the state' (Lamer, 2010) but to represent people in their engagement with the state.

This is the situation with which most of the social movements in the postcolonial period are faced as the state becomes increasingly authoritarian and inaccessible to dissenting voices.

On the influence of social movements (SMs) on NGOs, CSOs CBOs and other non-state actors, Lamer (2010) has noted that in modern society '...non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations, campaigns, strikes and riots, the mob and the crowd - all have elements of social movement praxis and all [should] be considered as relevant in critical analyses of the role of popular social forces'. While the researcher is cognisant of the different characteristics of NGOs, CBOs, CSOs and SMs, all have presented themselves as holding the propensity to influence citizen participation through mobilisation and seeking to

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strengthen democracy. Social movements have been noted to campaign for the '…essence of democratic legitimacy by mobilising individuals who are subject to a collective decision to engage in authentic deliberation' (Medearis, 2004:54). This puts social movements on a platform where they seek to mobilise citizens for collective action aimed at social change.

2.7 Deepening Participatory Democracy

The spaces in which citizens are able to participate are of fundamental importance within the whole democratisation process. In recent times, the notion of 'space' has become dominant within the participatory discourse as it evokes sites in which different actors, knowledge and interests interact, but from which some people and ideas are excluded (Cornwall, 2002b:49). Participatory democracy has emanated from debates on the best way to '…involve citizens more actively in shaping decisions that affect their lives' (Cornwall, 2002b: 51; Gaventa, 2006; Gaventa, 2001), where innovative experiments in governance have opened up spaces for public involvement in deliberation over policies and a greater degree of control over certain kinds of resources (Fung and Wright 2000; Goetz & Gaventa 2001). Discourses of participation have applied spatial metaphors involving *'opening up'* *'widening'* or *'broadening'* opportunities for citizen engagement, with some referring to *'deepening'* democratic practice (Gaventa, 2006:7). Other similar metaphors such as 'arenas' of governance and/or 'political space' have also been used to refer to assumed and/or occupied spaces, which can be *created, opened, invented* or even *reshaped* (Gaventa, 2006:8). Feminist and alternative development discourses view these *spaces* as an opportunity where oppressed people recognise and begin to manipulate and use their agency; 'creating new spaces, occupying existing spaces, or revalorising negatively labeled spaces' (Price-Chalita, 1994:239). Proponents of participatory spaces have however expressed the view that there are marginalised members of society who do not have the means to demand or 'create' their own spaces (Gaventa, 2004:54; Ramjee & van Donk, 2011:14, Cornwall &Coelho, 2006:5). Rather than supporting people to develop and express their own identities, and construct and expand spaces of their own choosing, categories like 'the poor' or ' women' produce subjects for whom a place is sought within the prevailing order by bringing them in, lending them opportunities and inviting them to participate (Cornwall, 2002b:51).

What 'participation' and associated notions like 'empowerment' are taken to mean impinges on processes of space-making for citizen participation, whether the creation of new spaces,

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the widening of existing spaces or the opening up of spaces once closed off to the gaze of the public (Cornwall, 2002b:42). The 'spatial practices' associated with notions, in turn, both constitute and are constituted by particular ways of thinking about society. Spaces in which citizens are invited to participate (*invited spaces*), as well as those they create for themselves (*created spaces*), may come to be infused with existing relations of power, reproducing existing relations of rule (Cornwall &Coelho, 2006:7; Gaventa, 2004:54; Ramjee & van Donk, 2011:14). Invited spaces can be secured or come about through prevailing legislative provisions governing a country, while created spaces would be those innovations through which citizens decide to take the law into their own hands and participate or demand a share of the national cake in the decision-making processes. This can come in the form of demonstrations, protest action and marches, petitions, defiance campaigns, boycotting and/or civil disobedience (Medearis, 2004:57). Citizens need forums through which they can engage in such collective action, and civil society organisations have emerged as the most appropriate avenue through which citizens can engage and/or confront the state as a collective voice (Ramjee & van Donk, 2011). The proliferation of 'civil society organisations' representing and servicing the needs of 'marginalised groups' constituted in themselves new spaces for participation, where excluded individuals could find a collective presence and voice, and organise (as well as mobilise) from the margins to affect mainstream policies and institutions (Barnes, 1999:56; Geffen 2001:51; Ramjee & van Donk, 2011:14).

Levering open spaces once closed off to citizen voices or public scrutiny helped to widen political space for citizens to play a more significant role in the decision-making process (Gaventa, 2004:54; Cornwall & Coelho, 2006:7). This has resulted in new forms of political participation associated with liberal democracy that came to be complemented by a new architecture of democratic practice. Efforts to involve citizens more directly in processes of governance are inspired, and underpinned, by the view that engaging in them makes for better citizens, better decisions and better government (Cornwall, 2002b:49). It is therefore imperative that spaces and opportunities are opened up for citizens to participate in public affairs, as this is more likely to bring about improved development practice (Ramjee & van Donk, 2011:14). The authors further note that 'a judicious dose of participation can ensure quiescence, cut costs to government by devolving the burdens of provision as well as shore up moral and political legitimacy of those who use it and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of planned intervention' (Mansbridge 1999; Bohman & Rehg, 1997).

State and non-state actors have made deliberate attempts to deepen democracy through creating participatory spaces. Several authors explore the normative underpinnings of participation where the creation of '*invented*' spaces and '*created*' participatory spaces through which citizens can participate in public policy formulation and decision-making processes (Cornwall & Coelho, 2006:8; Gaventa, 2004:54; Ramjee & van Donk, 2011:14) have emerged. '*Created*' spaces come about through mobilisation, advocacy and persuasion by civil society of its membership, while '*invited*' spaces arise as a result of legal provisions specifically enacted to enable citizens to participate in public programmes (Cornwall, 2002a:41; Gaventa, 2004:54; Ramjee & van Donk, 2011:14).

In participation, there have always been tensions underlying such issues as *who* is involved, *how* and on whose terms. While it can be acknowledged that participation has the potential and propensity to challenge patterns of dominance, it may also be the means through which existing power relations are entrenched and reproduced (White, 1996:8). The arenas in which people perceive their interests and judge whether they can express them have not been always been neutral, resulting in participation taking place for '*unfree*' reasons (White, 1996:9). It has been noted that there are distinctions between the spaces of invited or induced participation created by government or government bodies which might be more about passive participation and tokenism, and potentially radical spaces at the margins or those spaces that people carve out for themselves (Rahman, 1995:47). Additionally, there are also distinctions between people's own perceptions of participative spaces and mainstream versions that might simply be seen as maintaining dominance through incorporation which puts participation as a subjective component of democracy (Gaventa, 2004:54; Ramjee & van Donk, 2011:14). As an alternative, proponents of citizen participation have advocatedfor emergent spaces of alternative and radical citizenship. In response to the institutionalisation of notions of empowerment and citizenship, proponents of citizen participation point out those alternative spaces of participation should be shaped by groups, organisations and activists to facilitate particular consequences for the nature of empowerment and practice of citizenship (White, 1996:10; Rahman, 1995:44; Ramjee & van Donk, 2011:14).

Invited and created spaces are phenomena which have gained prominence in local governance as residents seek to participate in local authority decision-making processes. Many governments have attempted to create new spaces for participation within their broader vision for socio-economic development by devolving state power to localities through

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legislation that also requires citizen participation in local governance (McEwan, 2003:973). This facilitates the creation of *officialised spaces* (Bourdieu, 2000:19) also known as *spaces by invitation* (Lefebvre (1991) by requiring local government structures to consult with local community structures through meetings and other forums at all stages of decision-making in local development planning (McEwan, 2000:634; Gaventa, 2004:54; Ramjee & van Donk, 2011:14). This is an attempt at institutionalising citizen participation 'in order to ensure that all residents of the country have an equal right to participate' (Department of Political and Local Government, 2001:9). The impossibility of direct participation of the majority of residents in developmental local governance processes is recognised; legislation demands that clear rules and procedures are established specifying who is to participate, on behalf of whom, on which issue, through which organisational mechanism and to what effect ('structured participation', McEwan, 2003:474). In such a case, particular emphasis is placed upon the role of civil society organisations in facilitating effective structured participation and on accommodating diversity in terms of participation styles and cultures, encouraging 'gender equity' and the involvement of 'disadvantaged or marginalised groups' (McEwan, 2003:479).

The post-colonial restructured state thus contains elements of direct democratic participation and elements of deliberative democratic processes. However, it still requires some delegation to elected officials, as well as the narrowing of the gap between those officials and the people they are meant to represent and a more radical reconfiguration of relations and responsibilities (Amin, 2004:45). This arrangement holds the potential '…to open up new possibilities for voice, influence and responsiveness, in addition to accountability' (McEwan, 2003:476). Of most significance is whether citizen participation is envisaged as occurring only within the spaces created by legislation, where citizens are invited to participate through agents and bodies within formal government structures (McEwan, 2003:477). Underlying the creation of these new spaces for citizen participation is the notion of 'good governance', purportedly brought about by decentralisation and devolution thereby adding another dimension of local institutions to the already complex local institutional landscape (Kabeer, 2002:56).

However, critics of formal participatory spaces have dismissed the advantages of participation, arguing that '…the assumption that formal participatory spaces [have been] characterised by rationalist, deliberative processes in which poor communities, amongst

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others, can make meaningful interventions has been recognized as a flawed one' (Edwards & Gaventa, 2004; Gaventa (2005), in Thompson, 2007:97). They further note that the success of public participation depends very much on the actual basis of the participatory process in question. The critics further point out that it is through the need for participation by citizens that civil society organisations interact among themselves (as coalitions) and mobilise their membership within formally invited spaces (Edwards & Gaventa, 2004; Gaventa, 2005 in Thompson, 2007:97). The critics of participation furthermore offer justification as to why and how 'exit' strategies exist when non-participation is seen as a more effective way of wielding political or democratic influence (McEwan, 2000:634; Edwards & Gaventa, 2004:54). An example of an 'exit' strategy would be one in which some political parties would boycott elections, with a view to disgracing those who would eventually contest the elections (Price-Chalita, 1994:245; Hooks 1990:341,343). Critics of participation justify the actions of civil society groups, which, when faced with such a scenario, '…choose to create other participatory spaces, such as social movements and community-based organisations, or even loose groupings' (Price-Chalita, 1994:245; Hooks 1990:341,343;Thompson, 1997:97). Such formally constituted, government-created, public participatory spaces, also known as 'invited' spaces, are said to hold the promise of deliberative democracy in action, in that they involve civil society and government in the decision-making process. However, critics of 'invited' spaces have questioned the significance of invited spaces and how civil society groupings, in particular the socially-marginalised and grassroots populations, become meaningfully involved in government institutional spaces (McEwan, 2000:634; Gaventa, 2004:54; Ramjee & van Donk, 2011:14). The above authors have further questioned the basis on which people enter this participatory sphere, given that they do not have access to some of the most active spaces.

Moreover, critics of the formal or 'invited' participatory spaces accuse politicians of exaggerating the importance of political processes, but at the same time, of over-looking and downplaying the equal importance of many less overtly political, but highly influential channels generally not open to the poor and marginalised, (Houston and Liebenberg, 2001, in Thompson, 2007:91). The critics further note that it is as a result of the inability by elites to institute meaningful change through formal political channels that the disempowered communities end up resorting to protests which usually assume violent overtones (Ramjee & van Donk, 2011:14). Non-participation or protest participation can also be used as a

mobilisation tool by civil society in cases of referenda where citizens feel the whole process is flawed.

Feminist theorists have presented women as marginalised groups and demonstrated how they might occupy existing spaces, create new ones, or revalorise negatively conceived spaces (Price-Chalita, 1994:245). Hooks (1990:341,343) has indicated how marginality itself can be a site for 'radical possibility or space of resistance' by marginalised social groups such as women and minorities. On whether there is a dividing line between invited and created spaces, Lefebvre (1991:21) points out that officialised and alternative spaces are not separate, but what happens when one impinges on the other. Consequently the apparent failure by states to fashion enough spaces for substantive citizenship creates possibilities for the emergence of spaces of a more radical citizenship elsewhere (Lefebvre, 1991:22). It is therefore incumbent upon states to create a conducive participatory environment and be responsive to citizens' demands to avoid radicalism within the citizenry as they seek alternative spaces. Cornwall (2002a:11) notes that such spaces emerge organically out of common interests and concerns by the citizenry, mostly as a result of popular mobilisation such as around identity-based issues, or individuals joining together in common aims, often articulated around citizenship rights. Cornwall (2002a:12) further argues that these are sites of radical possibility: spaces are constituted by the individuals themselves and are often transient, where durability is dependent on people wanting to participate in them. McEwan (2003:477) asserts that in recent times, these struggles have become progressively more organised, with strong local, national, and international networks forming among communities, and labour, women's, youth, environmentalist and other social movements. McEwan (2003:477-78) further notes that these are potentially radical and enabling spaces because the people themselves have chosen to be part of them and are responsible for their existence.

2.8 Exploring Links Between Democracy, Governance, Civil Society and Citizen Participation

Linkages can be established between the various concepts and practices of democracy, but recent events in different countries have revealed the limits of the state's democratisation strategies and efforts (Medearis, 2004:72). It has been noted that in many countries, citizens feel alienated from the state and tend to limit their participation to electoral processes (von

Lieres, 2007, in Thompson, 2007:70). This has presented a challenge to the practices of democracy and its propensity to provide more participatory space for citizens whose trust in government in many countries has diminished. Proponents of democracy are in agreement that as democratic governance has been under threat in many countries, the role of pro-democracy civil society has proved indispensible in countering this development (McEwan, 2000:634; Ramjee & van Donk, 2011:17). When democratic states begin to function undemocratically, it becomes the obligation of pro-democracy civil society to provide a communication link through which citizens can channel their grievances to the state for responsiveness (Bracking, 2005:6). In such a scenario pro-democratic civic groups become more active, visibly working on the ground to demand that such governments restore democratic institutions.

The strong links that exist between civil society and its propensity to promote good governance, strong democratic institutions and enhance citizen participation have equally been under threat, just as democracy has been. Pankhurst (1998:2) presented civil society and citizen participation as '…intermittently connected with democracy in some way, but whether as instrument or symptom, and how it is conceived and assessed, varies considerably'.

The resurgence of civil society has been necessitated by the need for checks and balances on state operations and the need to involve citizens in the administration of the state. Citizen participation has been propagated and enhanced as a result of actors within the developmental and human rights discourses, notably the IMF and the World Bank, which prescribed citizen participation as a human right and a condition for transparent and accountable governance (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:122). Citizen participation has also come into the fray as a spin-off of civil society endeavours to project the demands and requirements of citizens and their involvement in issues of governance. Consequently, the dominance of citizen participation within the dictates of civil society has elevated it to the level of 'rights', which has transformed participation into a right and not a favour or privilege.

Civil society's role in threading together democracy, good governance and citizen participation has become increasingly prominent in recent years as democracy in many states has come under threat. Mobilization of citizens to collectively confront the state becomes necessary (Medearis, 2004:54). At the same time protest action becomes the most likely

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option for citizens under the leadership of civic groups which through their efforts help to nurture an enlightened citizenry. By creating an enlightened citizenry, civil society helps in the capacity-building of active citizens who understand good governance and democratic values. Hadenius & Teorell (2005:95) maintain that '…the good democratic citizen is a political agent who takes part regularly in politics and who is a public meetings-goer and joiner of voluntary organisations'. This assertion presents a democratic citizen as one who is pro-active and is involved in the forgoing activities and practices.

Democratic reforms in many countries have produced new spaces in which civil organisations engage in representation of sectors of the population. Democratic reforms are intended amongst other things, to enhance citizens' direct role in making public decisions and monitoring their execution, and have had the unintended consequence of spawning complex new forms of political representation (Houtzager & Gurza, 2009:15). Participatory governance structures have emerged alongside the classic institutions of representative democracy. They encompass not only direct participation by individuals, but also provide an arena in which collective civil society actors claiming to represent sectors of the population engage with the executive.

However, there have been shortfalls of the democratic tendencies of civil society organisations themselves, where events and developments within the civic group have displayed undemocratic behaviour, especially in the election of office bearers who come into the group for financial benefit (Dorman, 2001:164). This has been prevalent in many CSOs, notably in ZimRights, where according to Dorman (2001:164) most of the members of the organisational structures did not hold any formal employment. Sachikonye has noted that '...in contrast to political parties and trade unions, most civil organisations do not have formal electoral systems...' (Houtzager & Gurza, 2009:15). This has frequently been overlooked by analyses that see civil society as an authentic and natural extension of society itself (Houtzager & Gurza, 2009:15). The historic challenge facing civil organisations is to construct and institutionalise a new democratically legitimated basis for their representative roles.

Many citizens of developing countries recognise the intrinsic value of democracy and show more concern about a government's ability to function (Cornwall, 2002:22). In general, governance issues pertain to the ability of government to develop an efficient and effective

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public management process. Because citizens lose confidence in a government that is unable to deliver basic services, the degree to which a government is able to carry out its functions at any level is often a key determinant of a country's ability to sustain democratic reform.

Democracy building is informed by an ongoing process of struggle and contestation rather than the adoption of a standard recipe of institutional design (Gaventa, 2006:8). Current debates around democracy have tended to associate democracy building strongly with participation, which is 'empowering the weakest and poorest' (Nelson and Wright, 1995:1). The debate regarding the spread, construction and deepening of democracy has been associated with decentralisation and devolution of power to ensure full citizen participation in governance processes. The Election Institute of Southern Africa[4] (EISA) (2007) asserts that '… the notion of democracy must be nurtured from within societies' where 'people are involved in situations which enhance their well-being' (Cornwall, 2003:1339). Gaventa (2006:7) further notes that democratic decentralisation focuses on the questions of citizen participation and citizen engagement, and the strategies and opportunities to achieve these is by way of incorporating civil society. He asserts that full democratic citizenship is attained not only through the exercise of political and civic rights, but also through social rights, which in turn may be gained through participatory processes (Gaventa, 2006:8). Democracy transcends from a 'democracy of voters to a democracy of citizens' where the electoral processes are not the ultimate democratic institutions in a country, but where there is total involvement of citizens in all governance processes (UNDP, 2004:41).

The evident interdependence and interconnectedness between the concepts has exhibited itself as these political processes play a complementary role in the management of governmental affairs. If the state democratises or opens up spaces, citizens will participate and the opposite also holds true. This scenario translates to good governance. Alternatively, if the state is oppressive and uncompromising and closes all spaces for citizens to participate, this tends to adversely affect the opening up of democratic spaces.

Modern democratic governance also entails citizen representation. Proponents of democracy have tended to associate democracy with good governance and economic development.

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[4] The Election Institute of Southern Africa [EISA] attempts to promote a culture of transparency in electoral process in the Southern African region through the provision of research findings and electoral observation teams.

Governance focuses on the administrative and technical aspects of the exercise of public authority; democracy focuses on the political aspects of governance (Gastil, & Levine (2005:25). Empowering civil society has often meant empowering the popular classes and others who may be opposed to painful austerity measures. Moreover, civil society empowerment is the best means to liberate and harness the creative potential of the majority of citizens for national development (Milbrath, 1996:8).

In some cases, democracy and governance are treated as inconsistent in that major increases in social demands tend to overload democracies. Alternatively it has been argued that democratic practices have made it more difficult to introduce economic, social and political reforms that would affect the interests of powerful groups. The United Nations (2004:2) has reinforced that democracy is intertwined with ancillary components of governance such as the observance of human rights and citizen participation.

Participation and the existing legal frameworks promoted can be viewed as important enablers of democratic processes. Consequently, viewed from this perspective, 'good' and 'democratic' governance are to a large extent operationally interchangeable (Coston, 1998:481). It stands to reason that there can be no "good governance" without democracy, especially given that democracy is a guarantee for good governance (Gutto, 1990:13).

Good governance yields a democratic dispensation which in itself comprises the participation of various stakeholders in the country and the existence of an active civil society which operates freely and is able to influence citizens who are also entitled to participatory spaces to influence policy (Graham & Plumptre, 2003:11). Below is a representation of the interface of the practice of democracy with aligned practices of governance, civil society and citizen participation as they all feed into each other.
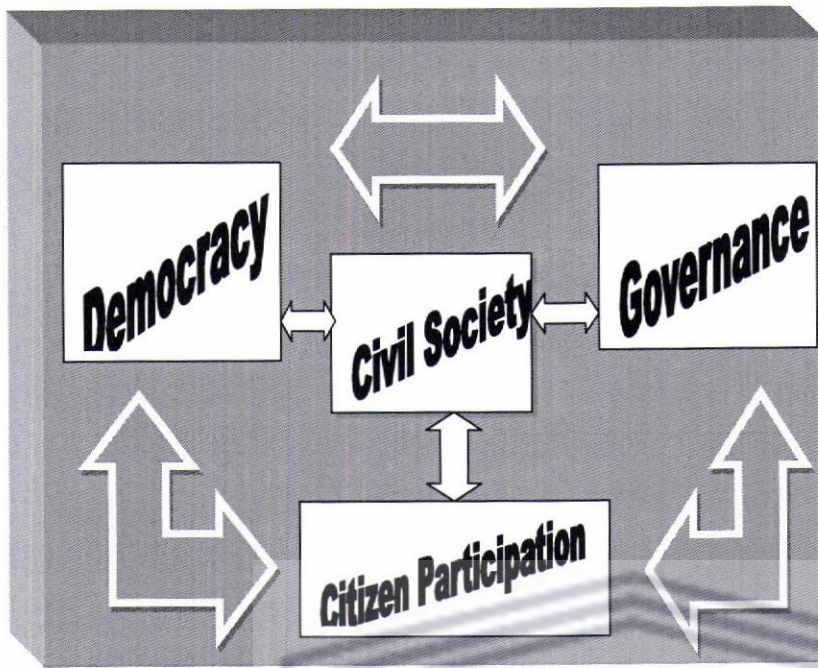
In contrast, the absence of democratic institutions would be characterised by the existence of restrictive legislation that curtailed civil liberties, a disregard for human rights and an oppressed civil society with no or limited citizen participation. In the Zimbabwean context, limited participation has manifested itself through flawed electoral processes and diminished participatory spaces against the backdrop of gross human rights violations. The baseline of the above relationships and conceptual linkages implies that when governments cease to be democratic, good governance structures degenerate into anarchy, free pro-democracy civil society activity is curtailed and correspondingly citizen participation is derailed. In the following chapter, the study examines the NCA, WOZA, ZimRights and CHRA as CSOs that form part of the pro-democracy civil society movement that have tirelessly campaigned for good governance, the restoration of democratic institutions in Zimbabwe and the enhancement of citizen participation in governance and political processes.

2.9 Conclusion

The interconnectedness among various terms associated with democracy dominated the content of this chapter as it sought to establish an analytical framework for the study. Through engaging in debates around democracy, governance, civil society and citizen participation, the study established the existence of a symbiotic relationship between democratic practices of governance, civil society and citizen participation as they co-exist alongside one another. It also emerged that different non-state actors such as CBOs, CSOs

and social movements play a pivotal role in the democratisation process as they seek to transform passive subjects into active citizens through several ways, ranging from demonstrations, to protests and petitioning authorities and/or state institutions. However, in the Zimbabwean scenario, restrictive legislation has curtailed civil liberties thereby frustrating the efforts of pro-democracy groups. This has presented the state as a vital component which cannot be ignored in any democratic discourse and practice of rights, more so for the state in Zimbabwe where the state has not only enacted restrictive legislation but has also politicised and militarised most public institutions. Drawing from the debates explored in this study, these factors have not only contributed to the diminishing of participatory spaces but have also created space for pro-democracy civic groups to become stronger as they fight for the repulsion of restrictive legislation, observance of human rights and the enactment of legislation that creates a conducive environment for citizen participation.

CHAPTER THREE: FORMS OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN ZIMBABWE: AN OVERVIEW

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined an analytical framework, identifying key concepts, namely democracy, governance, civil society and citizen participation and the accompanying debates surrounding these. This chapter presents the practicalities of what these key concepts mean in reality in the Zimbabwean context, especially since 1997 when it became increasingly evident that democracy was under threat due to '....a peculiar system of governance where the primordial instincts of the ruling elite perpetuated themselves in power and brutally suppressed all dissent and opposition' (Ayittey, 2002:5). This culminated in '...a relentless crackdown on Zimbabweans' civil and political liberties to an extent that only a small vestige of that democratic space remains' (Moyse, 2009:43).

The chapter gives the chronological development of political, economic and social events that prevailed in the country and how civil society reacted to the deterioration of democracy in both representational (including electoral) and participatory forms. Given the dire state of democracy since the mid-1990s, CSOs became a focal point, because, as Bratton puts it '...civil society groups offer a training ground for democratic practices of governance' (Bratton, 1990:140). '...Deteriorating political developments since 2000 highlighted the challenge to address the increasing deficit in democratic governance and stability in Zimbabwe' (Sachikonye, 2004:154) and this showed that '... the dominant nationalist ideology that had guided the liberation struggle had become bankrupt' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:100). Alongside these developments came the metamorphosis of pro-democracy civil society in the country, which sought to '...restore popular participation within the political system which had become polarised, politicised and militarised' (Matyszak, 2009:23). At the same time, gross human rights violations, flawed electoral processes and the enactment of restrictive legislative '...were harsh measures that failed to extinguish the pressure of civics on the civilian population' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:123). Disgruntlement among citizens resulted from the fact that '....nationalism had lost its emancipatory appeal to the people and the threat of the state had failed to silence the masses' critique of the existing bankruptcy of government' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:125). The chapter concludes with a discussion of activities of selected pro-democracy CSOs directed towards mobilising citizens to contribute

to the democratisation of the Zimbabwean political landscape. The constitutional reform process led by the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) formed common ground on which the selected CSOs would forge linkages, working relations and informal networks for social change without really forming a social movement coalition (see 4.3 for more details). Even the tenure of the inclusive Government (from February 2009) was dominated by the constitution-making process as various pro-democracy CSOs collectively confronted the state, pressing for a popular protest campaign against the Select Parliamentary Committee.

For the last two decades, in Zimbabwe just as in the rest of Africa, the history of the relationship between citizens and the state has always been problematic, notably due to bad governance and poor policy implementation. In a democratic society, there is a strong, mutually beneficial relationship between government and citizens where '...the government is made by the people whose entitlement to their citizenship is naturally mandatory' (Olukoshi, 1998:7). Although people in Africa hoped that the attainment of political independence would bring the opportunity to participate fully in major decisions about their countries, in most cases their hopes were dashed as the new government did not live up to citizens' expectations (Olukoshi, 1998:8). In Zimbabwe, the euphoria of independence was soon over as '...the post-nationalist framework was beaten back by a radical, vindictive and authoritarian nationalism' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:125). Failure to create an egalitarian state gave rise to the emergence of pro-democracy civil society organisations modelled on the desire to achieve this goal and whose leadership and members demonstrated the desire to participate in the restoration of democracy and the calling of government to account (Matyszak, 2009:147). Pro-democracy civil society groups sought to break down this status quo by '...investing in reaching a consensus which was pluralist, democratic, human rights-oriented and people-driven and people-centred' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:125). Challenges for civil society rapidly '...deepened and became complicated as the new social democratic process soon locked horns with a concerted, defensive, well-calculated and hard-line nationalist backlash championed by ZANU PF party' (Saunders, 2000 in Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:125). This is the premise on which this chapter is based as it seeks to establish state-civil society relations and the associated challenges.

3.2 Historiography of Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe, like most African states, underwent the process of colonisation during the 1890s and achieved formal independence from Britain on 18 April 1980 after a protracted liberation struggle. The liberation struggle comprised two nationalist groups, namely the Shona-dominated Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and its liberation struggle ally, the Ndebele-dominated Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), led by Dr Joshua Nkomo. ZANU claimed to have been the dominant partner in the struggle. It was this liberation war background that ZANU PF was later to manipulate to threaten its opponents and even to politicise public institutions to remain in power (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:100).

ZIMBABWE OVERVIEW MAP
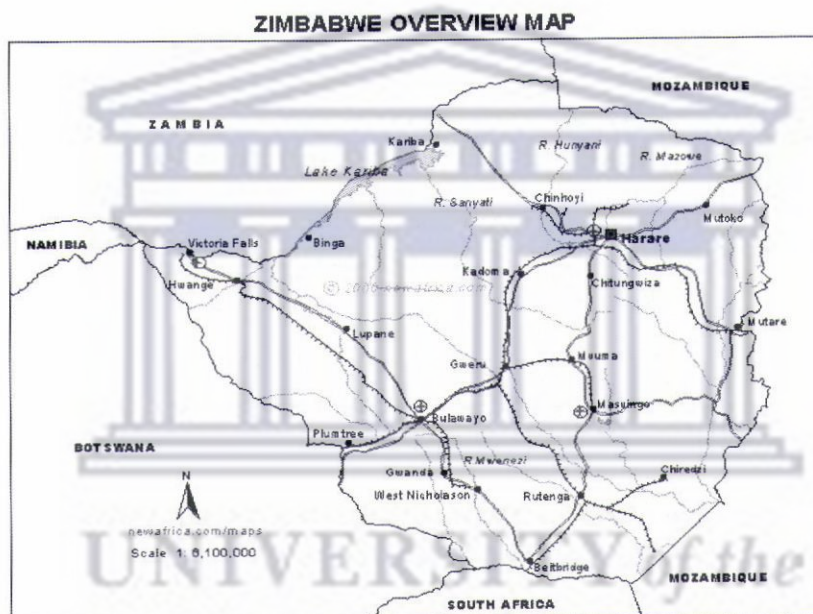
Source:http://www.appliedlanguage.com/maps_of_the_world/map_of_zimbabwe.shtml [Accessed 27 March 2009]

The first elections of 1980 resoundingly won by ZANU PF '...presented a general indicator of the relationship between state power and different groups in society' (Laakso, 1999:9). Once liberated, the country became a member of several regional and international organisations, notably the UN, the AU, COMESA, PTA, NAM, NEPAD and the SADC. The country also became a signatory to a number of international protocols and conventions, notably the Universal Declaration of Human and People's Rights, the African Charter, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the SADC Guidelines on the Conduct of Democratic Elections. The defining objective of the latter was to encourage

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the adoption and implementation of democratic processes and practices by member countries, with an emphasis on '…incorporating attractive principles regarding governance in Africa, particularly the unique peer-review mechanism' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:129).

Zimbabwe also became a member state of the Commonwealth of Nations in 1980, but was expelled in 2002 after conducting a flawed electoral process which was characterised by politically-motivated violence against civil society leaders and supporters of opposition political parties (Zimbabwe Crisis Coalition, 2002). The arbitrary military adventure into the DRC led to '…the IMF and the World Bank resolving to withhold their financial support until Zimbabwe her troops from the DRC' (Matyszak, 2009:134). The IMF had dictated the need to adopt triumphant liberal democratic political reforms, which was rejected by ZANU PF as a threat to the regime's security (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:122). These economic decisions by the IMF and World Bank had political implications as they exacerbated the disintegration of the country's democratic institutions, signalling a linkage between the economy and politics (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:122). This confirms Bracking's (2005:3) assertion that '…it is failed market capitalism more generally that spurs a regression into authoritarianism'.

Various scholars have traced the increasingly repressive nature of ZANU PF after independence and various factors have been attributed to the the tyrannical nature of the regime (Sithole, 2001; Bracking, 2005; Raftopoulos, 2004; Sachikonye, 2004; Ncube, 1991; Makumbe,2010; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009; Matyszak, 2009). Sithole (2001:37) identifies the rejection of the government-sponsored draft constitution at the referendum in 1999 and the opposition's unexpectedly strong showing in the June 2000 parliamentary elections as having marked the beginning of the end of ZANU PF's hegemony in Zimbabwean politics. This prompted a hostile response by government which immediately enacted restrictive laws, some inherited from the colonial regime, as it attempted to guard jealously its already built empire and political hegemony (Sithole, 1991:38). Although the government attempted to introduce democracy through constitutional reforms, these efforts lacked the proper fundamentals to sustain them (Bracking, 2005:5). Simply put, behind the façade of constitutional democracy lay an authoritarian political system characterised by the proscription of democratic space, and serious violations of both basic human rights and the rule of law (Ncube, 1991:156). Democratic institutions kept on crumbling and despite the frequent holding of multi-party elections from 1980 to 2008, the government still lacked tolerance of political diversity and commitment to democratic politics (Makumbe, 2009:119).

Clearly, regarding the Zimbabwean situation, the belief that elections equate to democracy is a fallacy because they have "...failed as a mechanism for ushering in political change and systematically defied the winds of change" (Masunungure, 2009:10).

Undoubtedly, in any setting, it is significant to redress problems caused by race as they are detrimental to both economic and political development as well as democracy (Sachikonye, 2009:154). In Zimbabwe, fundamental among the various democratic shortcomings was the need for co-existence and reconciliation between, the black majority and the white minority, a need which was not met. ZANU PF's craving for political hegemony was later to re-emerge when it abolished the white Rhodesian Front in the 1980s and began the subsequent expropriation of white commercial farms from 1999. The racial acrimony continued with the President of Zimbabwe denouncing Western governments for protesting against the government's clampdown on white farmers (Chingono, 2010:34). Furthermore, this explains why the ZANU PF government has alluded to the fact that they are the pioneers of democracy in Zimbabwe (Gevisser, 2002:4; Makumbe, 2010:135) by claiming exclusive rights to the democracy introduced in Zimbabwe immediately after independence and afterwards (Sachikonye, 2005; Bracking, 2005, Raftopoulos, 2004). However, whilst it is true that the new black government attempted to use democracy as a tool of statecraft to improve the rights of the black majority, it also sought to consolidate its power and rule amongst the ordinary citizens (Sachikonye, 2004:151), even if this meant flouting existing legislation (Makumbe, 2009:141; Makumbe, 2011:12). Below are pieces of legislation that either directly or indirectly guide or motivate governance processes in Zimbabwe and by which democracy levels can be measured.

3.3 International and National Legal Frameworks Guiding Citizen Participation in Governance Processes in Zimbabwe

Citizen participation is not just rhetoric but is a legal requirement prescribed by national constitutions and international conventions and protocols and is guided by legislative provisions (Golubovic, 2010:8). It is informed by the shaping and implementation of public policies and is regarded as a critical ingredient of participatory democracy (Diamond & Morlino, 2004:23-24). It is noteworthy that the underlying role of participatory democracy is not to surrogate representative democracy, which is based on the separation of power, the

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multi-party system and free elections, but rather to supplement it and improve its functioning (Makumbe, 2010:136). As a result, citizen participation serves to provide an opportunity and creates the conditions necessary for citizens to engage in political life on a regular basis. At the same time, participation '...creates a framework for citizens to advocate for their legitimate interests and thus contributes to the development of a vibrant democratic society' (O'Neill, 2008:5). Participation not only makes public authorities more transparent and closer to their constituencies, but also contributes to the quality of adopted public policy and ensures the protection of all stakeholders' legitimate interests (Diamond & Morlino, 2004:26). All of these are legal implications of participation that show that it is a constitutional provision and is binding upon political leadership. Participation is used interchangeably with (or confused with) 'consultation', 'community involvement' and even 'representation', all pointing to the notion of the incorporation of the civilian population or part thereof (World Bank 2007:147). This section serves to respond to the Research Objective which reads:

To review key legal framework to establish the extent to which it has facilitated citizen participation in accordance with regional and international protocols and conventions.

Citizen participation constitutes an important part of an overall institutional framework of cooperation between the government and civil society organisations (Golubovic: 2010:6). This is particularly true with regard to public policies, due to the fact that statutes (laws) and other general regulations are the primary instruments of their articulation and implementation. (Golubovic, 2010:7). Similarly, Zimbabwe is guided by international protocols and conventions both at regional and international levels. As such, legislative provisions that pertain to the international community pertain equally to Zimbabwe. Consequently, Zimbabwe has an obligation under international law to provide a conducive and an enabling environment for its citizens to participate in governance processes, to enjoy various rights and freedoms and to participate in the decision-making processes in different spheres of government (Makumbe, 1998:34). The analysis of international protocols and conventions incorporated those sections that make reference to, and facilitate, citizen participation. This section further provides a number of international protocols to which Zimbabwe is a signatory, by virtue of which she is obliged to observe the terms and provisions of these legal instruments in letter and spirit. The international protocols were analysed against '...Zimbabwe's restrictive laws which are manipulated by state security

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agents to intimidate citizens, a phenomenon closely associated with the one-party state system' (Masunungure, 2009:82).

The Universal Declaration of Human and Peoples' Rights (1948) has been the cornerstone of the human rights regime and has sought to enable citizens to participate in the governance of their countries. Of note are Article 21 of the Declaration and Article 13 of The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981), both of which stipulate that: '*Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.*' Additionally, Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) complements the foregoing legal provisions and provides that '*Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity to take part in the conduct of public affairs, to vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and which shall be held by secret ballot guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors.*' The African Charter on Human and People's Rights further provides for various freedoms and rights and calls upon states to ensure that their citizens enjoy these rights. Freedom of expression, association and assembly are also enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) under Articles 19, 21 and 22 and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights under Articles 9, 10 and 11.

Although Zimbabwe ratified the ICCPR in 1991 and the African Charter in 1986, it has, on the contrary, promulgated restrictive legislation to suppress and violate these rights. When it became a party to the ICCPR, Zimbabwe agreed to 'take the necessary steps . . . to adopt such laws or other measures as may be necessary to give effect to the rights recognised in the Covenant' (ICCPR, 1991). The ICCPR specifically guarantees equality before the law 'without any discrimination . . . on any ground . . . [against] political or other opinion[s]' (ICCPR, 1991). However, the Zimbabwean authorities have on numerous occasions abrogated their duties as a party to the ICCPR when they arbitrarily arrest, beat and intimidate civil society leaders and silence any voices of dissent (Makumbe, 2010:145). There are many other legal provisions that oblige national governments to abide by such legislative provisions in protecting their citizens and creating enabling environments for participation, including access to information. Moyse (2009:12) points out that the media environment in Zimbabwe over the years has been endangered by the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) and Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA)

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which restricted media practitioners, in contravention of international conventions seeking to promote media freedoms and access to information.

On the rights of marginalised citizens, especially women, Article 1 of the Convention on the Political Rights of Women (1952) and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), as well as the SADC Guidelines on the Conduct of Democratic Elections have sought to promote the participation of women in public affairs. Zimbabwe has partially observed these legal provisions where women have been given a quota of parliamentary seats and other senior positions in both the public and private sectors. The Article stipulates that *'Women shall be entitled to vote (and be voted for) in all elections on equal terms with men, without any discrimination'* (SADC Guidelines on Conduct of Democratic Elections, 2004). However, the continued harassment and detention of members of WOZA as they protest for the recognition of their (and children's) rights is in contravention of CEDAW whose Article 7 stipulates that women should be recognized and be given an opportunity to participate in political and public life[5].

The purpose behind the enactment of laws is to guide and determine human behaviour, especially within a polity, and where a set of legislative provisions creates the parameters within which the state should operate and defines the state's relationship with citizens (Golubovic: 2010:6). For this study, reference is made to national legislative provisions, notably the Constitution of Zimbabwe, the Legal Age of Majority, the Sex Disqualification Removal Act (1982), POSA, AIPPA, the Urban Councils Act, the Zimbabwe Electoral Act and the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Act. A brief summary of each of these legislative provisions are provided, in some cases citing sections that call for the promotion or restriction of citizen participation.

Amongst the most highly acclaimed and significant efforts made by the government to promote democracy in the country was the enactment of the Legal Age of Majority (No.15 of 1982) which gave guardianship powers to anyone over 18 years of age (Makanje et al, 2004:5). The Act empowered anybody from the age of 18 '...to make independent decisions without adult consent and [could] be required to register to vote and to freely partake in any national, regional and local programmes' (Makanje, et al, 2004:5). Another important post-

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[5] The CEDAW Principles 'The principles of substantive equality, non-discrimination and State obligation as prescribed by the CEDAW Convention' Available on http://www.iwraw-ap.org/convention/principles.htm

colonial enactment was the Sex Disqualification Removal Act which gave women the right to be appointed to any post in the civil service and more rights to make individual decisions (Kazembe, 1986:388). In addition to employment practices, women also became eligible for political office, in addition to being able to vote in any elections in the country (Makanje *et al*, 2004; Kazembe, 1986; Gaidzanwa, 1992). The enactment of such legislation heightened optimism in citizens who had expected such post-colonial developments to occur (Gaidzanwa, 1992; Kazembe, 1986).

The enactment of more restrictive laws overshadowed the impact of enabling laws cited above as the ZANU PF government sought to control every aspect of citizens' lives, with the Private Voluntary Organisations (PVO) Act (1996) seeking to control all civic organisations' activities by putting in place stringent monitoring mechanisms (Saunders, 2000:74-79). Through this Act, the Minister of Public Service has arbitrary powers to register or deny registration of any civic organisations as he/she deems fit, thereby making it easy for the Minister on behalf of government to ban all foreign funding to civic organisations (Kamete, 2009:58)[6]. This tended to politicise the registration of CSOs, with those perceived to be seeking to campaign against the government risking being denied registration. POSA[7] has been portrayed as one of the most prohibitive pieces of legislation that curtails various rights and freedoms. Similarly, AIPPA[8] sought to control free flow of, and public access to, information.

Free flow of information has been identified by governments as vital for citizen empowerment (Moyo, 1990:3). Additionally, the broadcast media have come to occupy a central position in the collective processes of social, political and cultural life (Scannell, 1989:157 in Saurombe, 2006:6). This has resulted in many governments seeking ways of

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[6] Civil society has accused government of intending to cripple their operation by banning foreign funding, especially given that most civic groups depend on foreign aid.

[7] Section 5 of POSA has very broad provisions that incorporate the common law crime of treason. Section 15 prohibits the publication of 'false statements' considered prejudicial to the State. Part 3 of POSA requires that a police clearance be obtained for any individual or group that intends to hold a public gathering. These sections of POSA contravene people's constitutional rights as provided for by Section 22 of the Constitution that protects the freedoms of movement, association and assembly.

[8] Primarily, AIPPA controls and governs the free flow of information in the country and decides on the operations and general conduct of the media fraternity. Foreigners and Zimbabweans not ordinarily resident in Zimbabwe are barred from registering media houses which limits news coverage that citizens of Zimbabwe can access.

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controlling information dissemination, including controlling newspapers and broadcasting services (Moyo, 2006:4). In Zimbabwe, broadcasting services are the preserve of the state and through the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Services Act (ZBSA)[9] the government controls the licensing of prospective broadcasters or potential investors in the industry. The Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe (BAZ) is a creation of the ZBSA. Under the BAZ, it is an offence to broadcast without a licence, and only citizens ordinarily resident in Zimbabwe, or a body corporate whose controlling interests are held in Zimbabwe, can apply for a licence, thus minimising the role of foreign investment in broadcasting media (Linington, 2009:108). In thriving democracies such as South Africa the constitution provides for a liberal operating environment where citizens are free to determine what information suits them, unlike in Zimbabwe where the state decides what information is good for the people.[10]

Efforts were also made to democratise the structures of governance in urban and rural areas through the devolution of powers, resources and responsibilities to local authorities and other locally administered bodies (Weizter, 1990:134). This was achieved through reforming the Urban Councils Act first promulgated in 1983 and amended numerous times thereafter to suit the political dispensation (Wekwete, 1992:99; Makumbe, 1998:45). Post-independence amendments to the Urban Councils Act (1996), Chapter 214, resulted in the decentralisation and democratisation of the Local Government system by removing racial discrimination pertaining to representation and tenure in urban areas (Jonga & Chirisa, 2009:167), culminating in the incorporation of former local government areas (African townships) into Urban Council areas (Jordan, 1984:9)[11]. Democratisation of the Urban Councils also culminated in the enfranchisement of rent-paying lodgers who previously did not have the vote under the colonial Local Government system (Kamete, 2009:67). This enactment gave residents in urban areas an opportunity to contribute to good local governance.

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[9] The Act provides for extensive involvement by the Government in programme content, in effect providing political control over the management and the content of all broadcasters in Zimbabwe. By its very nature broadcasting monopoly restricts the free flow, quality, quantity and nature of information available to the citizens of the country.

[10] In South Africa, the Independent Complaints Commission is a constitution provision that gives citizens the opportunity to present input or express discomfort on the forms of information broadcast by the national public broadcaster.

[11] However, the democratisation of urban councils has been frustrated by the enormous powers given to the Minister [of Local Government and Urban Development] including the right [and powers] to remove an elected [Urban] Council where it is felt that the elected officials are not in line with people's wishes.

Regular free and fair elections have been noted by many Zimbabwean scholars of political science as a hallmark for restoring democracy in the country (Makumbe, 2000, 2009, 2011; Moyo, 1993; Raftopoulos, 2000; Moyse, 2009; Matyszak, 2009). In Zimbabwe, elections have been a controversial process and have produced equally controversial results as ZANU PF sought to remain in power, basing its position on its liberation war credentials which it perceived entitled it to rule indefinitely. As a result, as would be expected, any legislation concerning elections would yield favourable results for ZANU PF (Moyse, 2009:43; Masunungure, 2009:81; Makumbe, 2009:145). Consequently it came as no surprise that the Zimbabwe Electoral Act (2004)[12] provided guidelines on the conduct of Presidential, Parliamentary, Senatorial and Municipal elections (Chapter 2:13, Act 25/2004) which would be favourable to ZANU PF. It also came as no surprise that the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission was staffed with ZANU PF supporters and sympathisers to administer all electoral processes and referenda in Zimbabwe on behalf of ZANU PF (Linington, 2009:108). The Act empowers the State President to appoint members of the Commission. Hence, the establishment of Command Centres at polling stations where no participating political party agents were allowed sought to achieve the goal of ensuring electoral 'victory' for ZANU PF, contrary to SADC Guidelines on The Conduct of Democratic Elections[13].

This section highlights the impact (both positive and negative) of various pieces of legislation on citizen participation in governance processes in the country. Since most of these legal provisions have not provided adequate leverage for citizens to participate, citizens have ended up creating or inventing their own participatory spaces to help in the restoration of democracy in the country. Anger created by the restrictive legislation has translated into increased civil society activity against the backdrop of deteriorating economic and political

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[12] The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission provided for the creation of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC), in charge of preparing and conducting parliamentary, presidential, council elections and referendums as provided for in the Electoral Act.

[13] This contravenes *Article 6* of The SADC Guidelines stipulations calling upon governments to '...*ensure the transparency and integrity of the entire electoral process by facilitating the deployment of representatives of political parties and individual candidates at polling and counting stations and by accrediting national and/or other observers/monitors*'.

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crises and a vindictive and defensive state whose propensity to enact restrictive laws alienated itself from the people (Bracking, 2005:3). Intended to deal with any opposition to ZANU PF rule, the restrictive legislation resulted in the further disintegration of democratic institutions in the country and increased civil society activity (Sachikonye, 2005:153; Makumbe, 2009:142).

3.4 The Disintegration of Zimbabwe's Democratic Institutions

Several factors contributed to the disintegration of democratic institutions in the country during different times. As a result, several scholars have attributed democratic decay in the country to three factors: gross human rights violations during the massacre of civilians by the military in the 1980s (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:25; Matyszak, 2009:133), the unilateral awarding of unbudgeted gratuities to war veterans in 1997 which triggered a hyperinflationary environment that was to haunt the country for years until 2008 when it adopted a multi-currency monetary system (Matyszak, 2009:134) and the unilateral decision to enter into the disastrous military adventure in the DRC which further crippled the economy (Masunungure, 2009:134). Other factors that have exacerbated the situation include the: 'expropriation of white commercial farms in 1999 that culminated in total disruption of the agro-economy of the country by which ZANU PF had sought to raise itself from the looming political cemetery through a populist articulation of the land question' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:127), the politically-motivated violence that followed the defeat of ZANU PF at the national constitutional referendum in 1999, the near defeat of ZANU PF at the polls in 2000 and 2002, and defeat in 2008 (Masunungure, 2009:5) as well as successive electoral disputes over the years with the most notable being the 2008 Harmonised Election in which ZANU PF was defeated, leading to the establishment of a Unity Government (Matyszak, 2009:138). In all these developments the civilian population showed their increased loss of confidence in ZANU PF which has stalled participation through the above factors.

These weaknesses exhibited the manipulation of the '...dominant nationalist ideology which continued to entrench a nostalgic thinking about the government and particularly war veterans who are devoid of future plans and a way forward for the country' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2003c:24). In later years, people began to question ZANU PF's form of governance as democracy became increasingly under threat due to successive flawed electoral processes

(Matyszak, 2009:147), bad policy implementation and rising poverty levels in the country as a result of unilateral decisions by government, notably in the adoption of ESAP (Sachikonye, 2004:145).

Ideological differences occurred at which ZANU PF's dependence on, and abuse of, its liberation war credentials were taken to mean that it held the indefinite mandate to rule (Makumbe, 2009:134). On the other hand, other political players, notably the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), presented a pro-civil society ideology in which they argued '...we are moving away from the nationalist paradigm to politics grounded in civil society and social movements because they focus more on empowerment and participation of people' (Southern Africa Report, 2011).

Several authors have dealt with each of the above cited factors separately. Bracking (2005:3) has traced and attributed Zimbabwe's political crises to '...social transformation catalysed by the ESAP of 1991-1995, the economic crisis after 1997 and the more general economic and moral bankruptcy of the post-colonial nebula of hybrid liberal democracy'. Bracking (2005:3) further presents flawed economic policies as having adversely impacted on democracy by pointing out that '...elements of authoritarian practices can be traced to failed economic structural adjustment mechanisms'. This argument ties political events to economic developments.

The constitutional referendum of 2000 defined the nature of today's media landscape, as civil society, in collaboration with the independent press and particularly *The Daily News*, overcame a tidal wave of propaganda in the state-controlled media campaigning for acceptance of the draft constitution (Moyse, 2009:43). Consequently, all laws that were enacted thereafter sought to vindicate the blow that citizens had dealt the government by rejecting the constitutional draft (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2003c:25). The commonality emanating from these developments was the creation of an increasingly restive population and civil society as the state showed a complete disregard for human and property rights (Masunungure, 2009:49). The response of the government to these criticisms and blunders, as well as the emergence of a restive population that embarked on protest, '...informed the subsequent policies of civil society, opposition activist groups and supporters, and are important for an understanding of their modus operandi thereafter' (Matyszak, 2009:134). Citizens became agitated by the state's use of the military to clamp down on dissenting

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voices of civil society activists and opposition party members (Raftopoulos & Savage, 2009:24).

Alongside these developments was the emergence of pro-democracy groups that sought to re-define their role against the backdrop of gross human rights violations, the pauperisation of the citizenry and disregard of basic civil liberties (Sachikonye, 2005:151). Consequently, pro-democracy civic organisations began to converge around issues of governance, citizen participation and human rights. At the same time, various civic groups were struggling to (re)define their roles, their relationships with one another and, more importantly, with the state (Raftopoulos & Savage, 2009:26). This scenario facilitated the formation of coalition and working relationships among and between CSOs. The upsurge in the number of pro-democracy CSOs was evident of donor interest in the restoration of democratic institutions in the country. Donors played a vital part in keeping civil society operations going.

3.5 Mapping of Civil Society in Zimbabwe

The civil society sector is one of the biggest and most encompassing social entities, drawing from all sections of society (Makumbe, 1998; Moyo, 1993). By 2000, it was estimated that over 850 CSOs were operational in Zimbabwe (ZHDR, 2000), of which about two-thirds consisted of community-based NGOs representing locally based, self-help groups specialising in a particular activity (Zimbabwe Institute, 2008:24). A smaller section of the civil society sector consists of intermediary NGOs which assist in the operations of smaller groups, and mediate among such groups, donor agencies and the state. Their areas of specialisation include providing relief services, sanitation, water provision and back-up support for cooperatives in various sectors (Moyo, 1993; ZHDR, 2000). Another category of CSOs comprises service NGOs that '…provide support for project formulation and implementation, consultancy and research in training and information' (ZHDR, 2000). A minority within the civil society sector are trusts and unions, a category to which interest groups such as farmers, businesses, trade unions and women's organisations belong (Zimbabwe Institute, 2008). The other smaller segment comprises regional and international NGOs which '…despite their smaller numbers play a vital role in providing financial and logistical support as they span various civil society sectors' (Zimbabwe Institute, 2008:25) and '…concentrate their work in the governance and human rights sub-sectors' (ZDHR,

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2000). It is also within this broad area that gender/women's organisations are categorised. It has been noted that although the civics operating in the governance, human rights and gender sub-sectors are comparatively few, they have exerted the greatest pressure on the state to change its authoritarian ways (Zimbabwe Institute, 2008:25; Makumbe, 2010; Sackikonye, 2011). Their fewer numbers are compensated for by their high profile and visibility, courage and tenacity and regional and international linkages (ZHDR, 2000; Bracking & Sachikonye, 2006; Zimbabwe Institute, 2008:25). The emphasis of this study is on governance, human rights, civic education, women's organisations and residents' associations, all of which seek to empower citizens to participate. The selected CSOs all belong to the governance and human rights sectors which makes them targets of the state as they challenge the state's hegemony by seeking social change (Alexander, 2006:3).

3.6 Typology of Civil Society Activity in Post-Independence Zimbabwe

The content and structure of civil society in Zimbabwe has been defined by political developments in the country. From the mid-1990s '... the contest between CSOs and the state became sharper, and before the counter-hegemonic thrust of some of the CSOs became clearer, the state became increasingly authoritarian' (Sachikonye, 2011:2). As a result, civil society began to present a '...a major social force to resist an assault on life and democracy by institutions of different states, especially those whose democratic institutions came under threat' (Sachikonye, 2011:3).The same period was marked by the growth of civic social forums that provided political opportunity structures- a new framework where individuals could participate and engage in global debates (Bracking, 2005:4). Social forums became institutionalised within civil society and gained in prominence and public visibility as they mobilised popular resistance, challenging the institutions and policies of the state (Raftopoulos & Alexander, 2006:24).

As democracy continued to deteriorate, '...citizens became increasingly restive, forcing civil society to campaign for the restoration of democratic institutions in the country' (Matyszak, 2009:136). The state responded to civil society's campaign for democracy by institutionalising violence against voices of dissent. Civil society transformed in response to political, economic and social developments at different times, signifying change in state-civil society relations. Consequently civil society underwent four transitional phases as follows: 1980-1987, 1988-1996, 1997-2000 and the post 2000 period. Raftopoulos (2000:56)

attributed the change in state-civil society relations to the behaviour of the state which became increasingly retributive. From the 1990s, cracks between civil society and the state began to emerge mostly on policy and legislative issues and the direction which democracy was taking. The cumulative result of all these diverse developments was '…increased confidence and activism amongst the few extant civil and human rights NGOs, such as ZimRights, and the growth of new NGOs with a human rights mandate'" (Matyszak, 2009:134). Below is a brief typology of civil society development in Zimbabwe from the attainment of political independence in 1980 to the present day.

It should be noted that for each phase, violence or violence-related incidences increased in frequency, intensity and sophistication, in most cases spilling into the electoral processes, especially from 1999. For this study, violence relates to any action, mostly by government, perpetrated on citizens and activists using state resources to subdue or curtail citizens' rights, in most cases involving coercion of one sort or another. It is in this context that each phase manifests increased violence not only on opponents of ZANU PF[14].

3.6.1 Phase 1:1980-1987

Kagoro (2003) in Win (2004:20) has portrayed the growth and development of civil society in Zimbabwe since 1979 as being divided into distinct phases. The liberation struggle shaped the status and character of most civil society institutions in Zimbabwe, depending on what role such institutions played during the liberation struggle. Most civil-society organisations deliberately framed their demands through a non-combative, non-political discourse (Win, 2004:19). Trade unions, the backbone of most civil society organisations, '…were never part of the liberation struggle hence their weak ties with the state' (Chikwanha, 2006:99). As such, these weak ties meant that the unions, students and church associations had limited track records of active resistance against colonial and settler rule in the country (Nordlund, 1996:193). Consequently, it came as no surprise that at the attainment of political independence in 1980 '…there was no force to challenge and keep the new government on its toes after 1980' (Chikwanha, 2006:99).This explains the limited civil society activity during

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[14] The case of a senior electoral official who disappeared from the polling station only for his decomposed body to be found weeks later in the bush- Refer to 'Body of whistle-blowing ZEC official found' in *The Zimbabwe Times*, 18 October, 2008, Available at http://www.thezimbabwetimes.com, OR
http://newsgroups.derkeiler.com/Archive/Soc/soc.culture.zimbabwe/2008-10/msg00024.html

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the early years of independence, save for church-related groups like the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) that were driven by their consciences to uphold human rights. The CCJP was one of the most active CSOs that investigated and documented gross human rights violations during the civil unrest of the 1980s in Matabeleland and the Midlands (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:1124).

In some cases, some sections of civil society became extensions or mouth-pieces of the state (Moyo, 1993: vii), with the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Union (ZCTU), the major labour movement in the country, having established strong synergies with the state regarding the welfare of workers. The usually vibrant student movement, Zimbabwe National Students' Union (ZINASU), would be seen demonstrating in the streets, in support of the government's stance on the release of Nelson Mandela and the attainment of political independence for South Africa and Palestine (Moyo, 1993:4). However the first signs of political intolerance between the two war-time allies, PF ZAPU and ZANU PF emerged in the early 1980s, during which time unprecedented, gross human rights violations were experienced in Matabeleland and parts of the Midlands' provinces, as the state sought to weed out 'dissident elements' (Matyszak, 2009:136). This is the most notable event that dominated the 1980s which were characterszed by a tense political situation during which citizens were not free to express their views on anything political. The elections of 1985 and 1995 were conducted in an environment of fear as *Operation Gukurahundi*[15] had taught citizens how dangerous it was to oppose ZANU PF in its pursuit of political supremacy (Makumbe, 1998; Raftopoulos, 2000; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2004). After much loss of life and gross human rights violations, the Unity Accord of 1987 put an end to the political strife but at the same time merged the two warring factions, making the country a *de facto* one-party state (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:1125). With no opposition to its rule, ZANU PF sought to consolidate its hold on power through institutionalising violence and employing brute force to silence voices of dissent.

3.6.2 Phase 2:1988-1996

Kagoro (2003) argues that in this phase, '...CSOs increasingly focused on human rights, the law, and environmentally sustainable development, which was in response to the excesses of the now entrenched ruling party, which had severely crushed dissent, especially in the southern region of the country, in the mid-1980s and which was undoubtedly ready to do the

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[15] Refer to section on *Operations*

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same to any form of opposition'. Following hard on the heels of the CCJP in demanding respect for civil liberties was the then obscure Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ), which according to Matyszak, (2009:134) '...decided to utilise the democratic space which had opened for civil society' when the organisation '...successfully challenged the government's ban through the courts, relying on constitutional provisions relating to freedom of speech and assembly"' (Matyszak, 2009:134). Calls for constitutional reforms and the establishment of a constitutional lobby civic group became louder leading to the establishment of constitutional lobby groups, notably the NCA. Among those who supported the constitutional reforms were included civic players from established CSOs, the labour and student movements, as well as the intelligentsia and church-related organisations. Unlike the previous phase, this phase was characterised by the emergence of an increasingly restive population that viewed constitutional reforms as a vital ingredient for political reforms in the country (Moyo, 1993:5). Human rights civic groups such as ZimRights, NCA, ZINASU, ZCTU and a host of other civic groups began to present human rights programmes to their constituencies and the general public. For fear of retribution and still gripped with uncertainty, many people avoided public contact with pro-democracy civic groups for fear of being victimised by state security agents. This was most notable in rural areas where '...the rural poor were intimidated into supporting a government whose costs to them now far outweighed the limited benefits' (Shale, 2006:118).

Sachikonye (2001:157) has noted that 'while a commitment to social welfarism was retained for much longer ESAP prompted an economic fire sale of outdated production capacity and the construction of an austerity based competitiveness for some new ventures'. As a result, the consequences of the ESAP of 1991-96 provided the momentum for the economy to become uncompetitive in key industrial sectors (Chipika et al. 2000), while causing increased hardship for the poor and promoting uneven development (Mlambo, 1997:29). The rapid generation of finance capital and an associated finance class benefited ruling elites who depended on party patronage for their sustenance in key respects, most centrally around the allocations of foreign exchange and business licences (Bracking, 1999:23). Inclusive social democratic development, briefly pursued in the early 1980s, was rejected (Astrow, 1984), and by 1991 the ruling elite had embraced capitalist individualism (Mlambo, 1997:ix-x), a development that led to corruption as political leaders rapidly accumulated wealth, increasing social and economic inequality and widening class stratification (Bracking, 1999:24). Consequently, divisions began to emerge between beneficiaries of state support through

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indigenisation and empowerment policy, and pre-existing and independent capitalists (Bracking, 2005:4). Poverty levels among citizens increased at a time when corruption intensified. Faced with a deteriorating standard of living and high unemployment figures, restiveness and civil society activity increased among ordinary citizens.

Many civil groups in the 1980s and 1990s had still wanted to avoid a direct confrontation with the state '...through a complex mixture of strategic positioning and careful choice of political vocabulary' (Rich, 1998:46). At the same time the number of non-confrontational groups began to diminish as democratic decay, corruption, high poverty levels and rampant human rights violations became determining indicators for the restoration of democracy (Makumbe, 2009:142). However, many civic organisations were unable to coordinate and present a broad enough united front to deal with the state on major issues (Masunungure, 2009:145). Another challenge that stood on the way of forging linkages and forming coalitions among civil society groups was the incorporation of political patronage, the association with which some civic organisations viewed their work and operations (Dorman, 2001:36), where some organisations tended to present their work as 'resonating with the discourse of the black nationalist movement' (Sachikonye, 2004:149). This association with the nationalist movement and the ruling party crippled any initiatives and innovations that the civic organisations might have had (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:1145). At the time, numerous civic groups 'worked so closely with the ruling party as to be effectively regarded as wings of the latter, thereby effectively subordinating themselves to the ruling party and seeking political patronage and to pursue their objectives as an integral part of the ruling party' (Moyo, Makumbe & Raftopoulos, 2000:33). With some civic groups operating as appendages of the state, the chances of the formation of a social network seeking social change became remote. Additionally, most of the civic bodies formed in the late 1980s and early 1990s tended to have very limited agendas and were defined by the survival needs of the groups (Saunders, 1996 in Raftopoulos, 2000:35).

The period between 1989 and 1991 also saw a resurgence of civil society activity as more pro-democratic and human rights CSOs began to form (Moyo, 1993:6). The most notable CSOs and CBOs formed during this period included the Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZimRights), Women and Law in Southern Africa (WILSA), the Musasa Project on Violence Against Women, and Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDA,

2000, Win, 2007). Almost at the same time, the labour and student movements began to emerge from under the shadow of ZANU PF's control to take a more confrontational approach to labour issues and workers' and students' rights which the ZANU PF government had continued to trample upon (Matyszak, 2009:98). With time, other vibrant CSOs and CBOs, such as the NCA and WOZA as well as CHRA, began to emerge and to develop new strategies to confront ZANU PF's oppressive practices that had resulted in diminishing democratic space (Sachikonye, 2004:145). These and other pro-democratic forces began to develop philosophical nuances to enhance citizen participation and to put forward the 'rights' agenda and develop a linkage between 'rights' and 'participation' (Matyszak, 2009:135).

Civil society organisations began to gain sympathy and recognition from members of the public, who were mostly victims of either the civil unrest or were concerned citizens who felt that the deterioration and erosion of political space was in itself a human rights violation. This portrayed civil society as a '...champion in the struggle for democracy and human rights, and presented the most formidable challenge to ZANU PF hegemony' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:122). With the coming on board of academics and enlightened citizens, as well as the emergence of international human rights NGOs prepared to sponsor human rights programmes, human rights civic groups began to gain in prominence (Makumbe, 1998:34). Alongside these developments came feminists who sought to propagate the voice of women, leading to the emergence of women's organisations, WOZA being the most notable, which eventually became home to both women and men (Win, 2007: 2; Lamer, 2007:5).

From the mid-1990s, as cases of political victimisation increased, political activity became increasingly restricted (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:1145). Voter apathy characterised most of the electoral processes of the 1990s as political choices became increasingly limited (Makumbe, 2010:134), given that the political landscape was dominated by ZANU PF which ruthlessly crushed opposition political activity (Raftopoulos, 2000:34). The tense situation that arose from these political restrictions resulted in high voter apathy as people sought to express their anger about the lack of political alternatives (Bracking, 2005:4). Civil society interventions became increasingly evident as the citizens affiliated themselves to several pro-democracy CSOs in the country (Masunungure, 2009:156), and more pro-democracy civic groups were formed (Makumbe, 2000:34). Civic education to enlighten citizens on the need to participate in elections became imperative if political change was to be effected (Sachikonye, 2004:174). Some of the civic groups that came into being during the period include ZimRights, the NCA

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and a host of other smaller groups (Sachikonye, 2004:178). Residents mostly in urban areas also became increasingly restive as local authorities became bogged down in economic challenges that were a result of ESAP (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:1152; Jonga & Chirisa, 2009:172). Consequently residents began to mobilise themselves for a confrontation with local authorities which resulted in the re-visiting of the concept of residents' associations, which concept had existed during the colonial period to fight against colonial policies.

3.6.3 Phase 3:1997-2000

Political developments which had started to emerge in the 1990s continued into the 2000s with greater intensity. CSOs which had operated and existed as separate entities began to converge into coalitions or forged working relationships aimed at redressing the question of democratisation in the country (Sachikonye, 2004:172). This behaviour was exhibited during the food riots of 1998 when several CSOs participated in the demonstrations. The food riots of early 1998 were the culmination of the removal of subsidies from staple foodstuffs in accordance with IMF policies together with soaring food prices. (Matyszak, 2009:134). Additionally, forging of linkages was also exhibited when most pro-democracy CSOs mobilised to reject the government constitution in the referendum in 1999. In response to the riots and the rejection of the constitution, police and military personnel went about beating, arresting rioters and intimidating civil society activists. The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGOs Forum, an amalgamation of 17 NGOs, came together '...to co-ordinate assistance of detainees, victims of political violence and persons complaining of rights violations' (Matyszak, 2009, 135). With the passage of time the forum transcended this objective to that of empowering citizens on human rights issues. Other CSO coalitions and alliances began to form and pursued similar objectives of empowering and enlightening citizens through workshops, seminars and outreach programmes (Bracking, 2005:5). One such collective meeting of CSOs was the seminal meeting in 1999, in which sections of civil society comprising

> '... urban workers, NGO, social movement, women's, youth, student, church, and media activists unified in search of programmatic action, through National Working People's Agenda for Change convention, during which the seminal meeting issued a progressive platform, which inspired its leading participants to form a new party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC)' (Bond & Saunders, 2005:46)

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Such collective action by diverse sections of civil society signalled a more pro-active chapter in the history of CSOs, NGOs, CBOs and social movements as they realised the need for concerted effort in confronting the state (ICG Africa Report, 2004:i).

The political and economic crises of the 1990s spilled over into the 2000s, with the country continuing to slip into political and economic turmoil. On the economic front, the disastrous results of the first phase of the ESAP during the 1990s had become evident, culminating in high poverty levels among both rural and urban populations (Bracking, 2005:12). On the political front, democratic decay had become a reality as the ZANU PF government indicated that it would not tolerate any political players other than itself (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:1146). As a result, in an attempt to engage the government on the need for a pluralistic approach to governance, pro-democracy civil society organisations emerged, seeking '...to redress the political and economic questions that emerged in the late 1990s, albeit in much reduced circumstances and more pessimistic mood' (Larmer, 2007:5).

From 1995-1999, Zimbabwe's social movements and civic groups were at the forefront of mass struggles, arising in significant part from the economic liberalisation under the ESAP (Larmer, 2007:4). Bond & Moore (2005:5) contend that '...grassroots efforts for change reached a new stage in February 1999 with the Working People's Convention, birthing the MDC and producing a progressive manifesto'. However '...as the political-economic crisis in Zimbabwe deepened in the late 1990s and early 2000s, so too did ZANU PF's attack on the integrity of the state, and on the constituencies demanding the state's rehabilitation for the pursuit of redistributive social programmes' (Saunders, 2009:3). The state's response to increased civil society popularity was to impose further legal and practical restrictions on the rights of leading critical civic organisations and their social constituencies (Saunders, 2009:3). Consequently, the period after 1990 became characterised by an upsurge of citizens' interest in civics, with new CSOs forming and existing ones re-defining their agendas and re-aligning their objectives to comply with those of other pro-democracy CSOs (Bond & Moore, 2005:5).

Coalitions began to form around issues of governance and constitutional reform. Stakeholder conferences and debates became a rallying point at which citizens could give their opinions on the political dispensation prevailing at the time (Bracking and Sachikonye, 2006). The National Constitutional Assembly came about primarily as calls for constitutional reform

debate from civil society and stakeholders increased in intensity (NCA Report, 2008). Demonstrations, strikes and general civil disobedience activities began to feature prominently and more frequently. Through civil disobedience, protests and demonstrations, citizens began to demand the strengthening of democratic institutions.

The militarisation of the political process began to emerge with the military playing an active role in Zimbabwean politics, (Chitiyo & Rupiya, 2005:361), '...with armed forces commanders, realising the possibility of an MDC victory in the elections, throwing their weight behind President Mugabe and refusing to support anyone who had no revolution credentials' (Shale, 2006). Bond & Moore (2005:7) described the environment under which the electoral process was conducted, especially from 2000, as '...characterised by high levels of violence and blatant thievery' (Bond & Moore, 2005:6).

Bond & Moore (2005:7) sum up the scenario created by ZANU PF as it sought to counter civil society and opposition political parties' impact on the electorate through:

> *'intimidation of opposition voters, practically no access for the opposition to the state-controlled media, the closure of the country's only independent daily newspaper, the shutting out of foreign observers and correspondents, the redrawing of constituency boundaries to eliminate several safe MDC seats and make others marginal, a hopelessly out-dated voters roll which opened the way for nearly two million 'ghost' votes to be cast'.*

Destructive policy programmes such as the farm take-overs in 1999 and the enactment of restrictive legislation such as POSA and AIPPA did very little to discourage the majority of the population from submitting to civil society's civic education and other activities seeking to prepare citizens to confront the state on different matters pertaining to governance and democracy (Chitiyo & Rupiya, 2005:361).

3.6.4 Phase 4: Post 2000 period

The developments of the late 1990s influenced events in the post 2000 period as '...post-2000 assessments of the State-CSO relations showed polarisation particularly in the governance and human rights sectors' (Zimbabwe Institute, 2008:23). This is largely explicable because conditions of authoritarianism had been tightened at a time when increased citizen disgruntlement and intensified civil society activity had begun to characterise and motivate a tense state-CSO relationship (Zimbabwe Institute: 2008:23). The constitutional reform debate

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that had been initiated by the NCA amid a lot of criticism and then later hijacked by government in 1999, led to a flawed draft constitution that was rejected at the referendum of 1999 (Dorman, 2003:845). The rejection of the government constitutional draft was a significant development because it '…legitimated the existence of organisations and ideas outside the hegemony of the ruling party/state, during which the voting public affirmed the claims made by the NCA to speak and act outside the remit of the state' (Moyse, 2009:47).This rejection also set the stage for the violent and coercive politics of 2000 and beyond, during which time the ZANU PF government, the MDC and civil society sought to flex their muscles in the political arena (Dorman, 2003:845). During this period ZANU PF exhibited its waning popularity as the partnership between the MDC and civil society intensified its call for the restoration of democratic institutions, the de-militarisation of public institutions and the conduct of free and fair elections in the country (Matyszak, 2009:28; Zimbabwe Institute, 2008). Additionally, the period presented a challenge for ZANU PF against the backdrop of an increasingly vibrant civil society, particularly the ZCTU and some new human rights groups like ZimRights, which rose to the occasion to fill the political vacuum left by ZANU PF's continued unpopularity (Moyo, Makumbe &Raftopoulos, 2000:34). This threat to ZANU PF's political hegemony pushed the former ruling party into a corner and once cornered it resorted to survival tactics of intimidation, harassment and the arbitrary arrest of civil society activists and members of other political parties, as well as dependence on the military to conduct flawed elections (Chingono, 2010:10). Once cornered, ZANU PF's '…struggle for survival became a military operation, and Zimbabwe was turned into an "operational zone" in which military coercion became the currency of politics (Chitiyo & Rupiya, 2005:359). In response to this increased perpetration of violence on their members and on activists, in addition to other gross human rights violations, pro-democracy CSOs resorted to the documentation of human rights violations as a vital way of disseminating information to the international community (Bracking, 2009:4). As civil society groups showed increasing interest in free and fair elections and the avoidance of flawed electoral processes, '…a conglomeration of 38 NGOs established the Zimbabwe Election Support Network seeking to play a crucial and central role in the conduct and promotion of democratic elections' (ZESN, 2009). Having realised the importance of the media in information dissemination, the Media Monitoring Project of Zimbabwe (MMPZ) was established at the same time to monitor all electronic and print media in Zimbabwe. All

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these formations presented a well-organised pro-democracy civil society front which represented most of the social spectrum and interests.

The constitutional reform process continued to gain momentum and helped to pull various pro-democracy civic groups into a loose social coalition (Matyszak, 2009: ix). In evoking the provisions of POSA and AIPPA, ZANU PF ensured that it campaigned without hindrance, while the opposition parties were denied the opportunity to use public venues for their rallies (Masterson & Moloi, 2005). Other legislation, notably AIPPA, Interception of Communications Act and the Electoral Act, has been cited above and 'showed the desperation of ZANU PF not only to cling to power but to crush voices of dissent within civil society' (EISA, 2008 Report).

The establishment of strong coalitions became evidence of the strength of the new look pro-democracy movement seeking to have a new, democratic and "people-driven" constitution which would be the basis of good governance' (Moyse, 2009:47; NORAD, 2010). (See Appendices B,C, D and F). As a result, '...by June 1998, the NCA had prepared itself to enter the politics of reform in a sustained way, and possibly as an alternative to the weak collection of opposition parties' (Raftopoulos & Savage, 2004:241). Despite disagreements among various civic groups, especially on the modalities to be adopted in the constitution-making process, all agreed that a new constitution was mandatory and would therefore be given first priority (Raftopoulos, 2000:35). As a result, much of the tenure of the inclusive Government was dominated by disagreements between the state and pro-democratic civil society organisations. Various sectors of civil society concurred that it was undemocratic for the constitution-making process to be led by the state, notably the NCA, which not only disagreed with the Select Parliamentary Committee's leadership of the constitution reform process, but also proceeded to embark on a parallel constitution-making process (Makumbe, 2011:3). The NCA further threatened to campaign against the adoption of the government-led constitutional draft document at the national referendum.

3.7 The Era of Discontent: New Organisations, New Strategies, New Discourses

If the events and developments of the 1990s are anything to go by, '...the period from 2000 marked a turning point in the language, politics and ways of organising and mobilising citizens across the pro-democracy civil society divide' (Makanje et al, 2004:5). With the

merging of various civic groups and the politicisation of the student and labour movements towards defining the democratic space, came the realisation that forging coalitions was a way of reinvigorating the constitutional reform debate in the country (Bracking, 2005:4). Consequently, coalitions such as the Women Coalition of Zimbabwe, Save Zimbabwe Campaign, Zimbabwe Crisis Coalition, the Broad Alliance, the Christian Alliance, the Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition and the National Constitutional Assembly brought together various pro-democracy CSOs in the country. These coalitions were established '...on the popular consensus that many nationalist movements had served their purpose and have broken down under the weight of new demands for pluralist democracy' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2003c:21). This argument threatened ZANU PF's manipulation of its liberation war credentials on which it had based all its important national decisions.

The era was also characterised by an upsurge of pro-democracy civil society groups as they sought to challenge the state on gross human rights violations that had emerged in much of the 1980s. Transforming from being non-confrontational to confrontational took a long time for civil society and when it did, the state sought to violently crush the voices of dissent (Moyo et al, 2000:4). Additionally, civil society had not wanted to incur the wrath of ZANU PF with its history of violence as exhibited in the violence that was perpetrated on the civilian population in many parts of Matabeleland and the Midlands provinces in the 1980s (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2003:1136). The memories of such events were still fresh for much of civil society. Laakso (2003:5) summarises the paradigm shift from one-party to multi-party politics in Zimbabwe in the 1990s as having been driven largely by the new generation of Zimbabweans whose opinions stemmed more from the experience of twenty years of ZANU PF rule rather than from the liberation war, together with discontent with the policies of the ruling party and preceded by the gradual evolution of economic crises. Discontent was further exhibited through mass mobilisation for constitutional reform that brought various professional, civic and interest groups together.

However, a number of challenges stood in the way of forming coalitions. Such challenges included a lack of cohesion and the existence of internal rivalries among ambitious personalities who headed some civic groups, especially those concerned with human rights, a vital component of civil society movements (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:1147). These personalities have pursued their own 'power' agendas and often maligned one another to

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potential donors as they compete for the same funds (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:1148). Such civic organisations have often failed to mobilise mass support as these personalities comprise elite, small groups of activists with no real grassroots organisational structures and support (Alexander & Raftopoulos, 2007:47).

Another reason for the failure to formulate coordinating structures within the civic movement was a 'lack of internal cohesion and unity, displayed by many of the non-party political actors which reflected on the enormous politically repressive pressure that the civic groups had been subjected to by the state' (Masunungure, 2004, in Alexander, 2007:52). However, that many of these organisations are still intact in the face of this onslaught perhaps indicates the inherent limitations of the authoritarian state's ability to totally suppress civil society (Masunungure, 2004:7).

Additionally, challenges that beset most CSOs have been '...their "predominantly urban-centric orientation" where most civil society organisations have failed to extend their operations to rural areas which comprise 65% of the population' (Moyo et al, 2000:38). Despite the absence of civil society activity in rural areas, that which existed in urban areas was located in large urban centres, denying 80% of potential activists in smaller urban areas the chance to participate in the activities of the organisations (Moyo et al, 2000:38). This arrangement portrayed the civil society movement as a sparsely-populated formation whose operational base was not substantive enough to warrant nationwide support. Regions such as Matabeleland which had been at the centre of civil unrest in the early 1990s were yearning for an opportunity to engage government for the atrocities inflicted during the civil unrest (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:1124). However, the fact that most civil society organisations tended to be based in Harare denied this region the much-needed opportunity to be part of the civil society movement (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:1124). Those that emerged, such as WOZA and Bulawayo Agenda, were viewed as regional and confined to either feminist inclinations or tribal recognition. It became clear that the formation of coalitions and alliances was one way that was used to overcome these tribal or gender-centred thrusts of pro-democracy civil society movement in the country (Makumbe, 2000:34).

3.8 The Institutionalisation of Violence in Zimbabwean Politics

Political developments in Zimbabwe cannot be fully accounted for without mention of politically-motivated violence, which later became institutionalised. Sachikonye (2004:173)

concurs that analyses of post-independence political developments should not underestimate the role which violence and other forms of coercion played in colonial regime strategies to block independence, and in nationalist politics themselves. Detention, torture and killings were perpetrated by the colonial regime, but nationalists also utilised violence and intimidation in mobilising and competing for supporters (Ellert 1989; Sithole 1999). The liberation struggle itself, which commenced in the mid-1960s, claimed more than 30 000 lives, while many more were injured, traumatised and displaced. Violence thus became ingrained in the Zimbabwean political culture, which would have long-term consequences for the shaping of post-independence politics (Sachikonye, 2004:173). Just as state violence as a method of repression had been characteristic of the minority regime before 1980, so it would also be employed in the suppression of political dissent in Matabeleland province under 'Operation Gukurahundi' in the early 1980s, with subsequent elections in the 1990s being tainted by coercion and violence at levels variably increasing in intensity (Sachikonye, 2004:173). Several analysts have expressed the view that ZANU PF's '...commandist nature of mobilisation and politicisation under clandestine circumstances has given rise to the politics of intimidation and fear' (Kriger, 2003; Nkomo, 1984; Sithole, 1989; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2003). The continuity of a political culture of repression relies on coercion and violence rather than peaceful resolution of differences and contestation (Makumbe, 20111:3). It can be argued that violence in post-independence Zimbabwe was the consequence of a strong state, itself in many ways a direct Rhodesian inheritance, and a particular interpretation of nationalism (Alexander, McGregor & Ranger 2000).

It comes as no surprise therefore that ZANU PF employed violence as a way of dealing with any political threat to its hegemony. Building on the 'successes' of 'Operation Gukurahundi' in the 1980s, '...numerous other operations followed as ZANU PF came under immense pressure from pro-democracy civil society to restore democratic institutions which were beginning to crumble' (Matyszak, 2009,136). Operation Murambatsvina which displaced over 700 000 people (UN-Habitat-2005)[16] was '...a reversal of the tolerance shown in the 1990s towards informal dwellings' (Bracking, 2005:346) and presented a shift in urban housing policy to forcible removal, as has been reminiscent of political trends across the globe (Kamete, 2009:62). Makumbe (2009:1) attributes ZANU PF's intensified perpetration

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[16] UN-HABITAT (2005) 'Report of the Fact-Finding Mission to Zimbabwe to assess the Scope and Impact of Operation Murambatsvina by the UN Special Envoy on Human Settlements Issues in Zimbabwe' by Mrs Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka

of violence from 2000 to '...shock at the public rejection of a government-sponsored draft constitution in a national plebiscite in February 2000'. With parliamentary elections scheduled for June 2000, and the emergence of a highly popular opposition political party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), ZANU PF quickly realised that it was headed for a humiliating defeat at the polls and a consequent loss of political power (Masunungure, 2009:143). However, Matyszak (2009:146) is of the view that the 2008 elections were the most violent in the post-colonial history of the country, characterised by a '...widespread and systematic campaign of violence; intimidation and arson, murder, attempted murder, rape, severe assault and malicious injury to property'. Despite debates about which period experienced the most violence, the bottom line is that violence has become institutionalised and has been perpetrated with varying degrees of intensity.

Other vindictive 'operations' were to follow in quick succession. *Operation Bring Down Satellite Dishes*[17] was executed to curtail the free flow of information and prevent any influence on the electorate. *Operation Red Finger*[18] was a retributive exercise against those who were perceived to have voted for the MDC in the March 2008 round of elections in which ZANU PF was defeated. The operation was also meant to prepare people for the next round of elections so that they would vote for ZANU PF (Makumbe, 2011:4). In *Operation Chimumumu*[19] (Operation Shut them Up) '...ZANU(PF) loyalists direct[ed] that only a select few speak at the meetings and often read from prepared scripts which reflect the party view' (Matyszak, 2009:178). In Operation *Red Finger*, state security agents went about abducting prominent opposition members and human rights activists as a way of silencing them. *Operation Mavhoterapapi* (Operation Where Did You Put Your X)[20] was '...a brutal retributive military crackdown on the opposition and the civilian population for not having

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[17] In '*Operation Bring Down Satellite Dishes*' people were required to remove their satellite dishes from their roof tops to prevent them from viewing foreign TV stations such as eTV, SABC, Botswana Television and DSTV as alternatives to the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, which was a mouthpiece of the ZANU PF.
[18] The operation was intended to identify those who had voted against ZANU PF and to re-educate them to vote for ZANU PF in the second round of elections. State security agents went out instilling fear among the electorate and forcing them to succumb to ZANU PF and eventually to vote for it.

[19] Chimumumu is a Shona term for 'a dump person'. Through this Operation abductions of political and human rights activists were executed during the night in an effort to keep them away from the mainstream politics or proceeding with their activities.

[20] It was a large scale government campaign of retributive proportions which was widely condemned by opposition political parties in Zimbabwe, religious groups, NGOs and the wider international community as a way of government punishing citizens for having exercised their right to vote for a political party of their choice.

voted for ZANU PF' (Matyszak, 2009:13). Under *Operation Handigone Kuvhota*[21] (Operation I can't Vote), those perceived to be supporters of opposition political parties were forced to pretend that they were either blind or illiterate and would then be assisted by 'election agents', mostly ZANU PF agents who would then vote on behalf of these people. *Operation Vhara Muromo* (Operation Close Your Mouth)[22] was an endeavour by ZANU PF supporters to prevent citizens from participating in the constitution-making process in 2010 with threats to those citizens who participated (*The Zimbabwean,* 8 June, 2010)[23].

All these were evident manifestations of the systematic militarisation and politicisation of all major and strategic state institutions for the purposes of defending the ZANU PF regime (Matyszak, 2009:135), and traded good governance for political advantage (Jonga & Chirisa, 2009:173). Additionally, ZANU-PF had also realised that '…only drastic measures could rescue it from certain defeat at the polls' (Makumbe, 2009:1), which in turn culminated in '…the mutation of the post-colonial democratic state in Zimbabwe' (Bracking, 2005:7). This culture of violence had a debilitating effect on citizens' organisations' preparedness to participate in political (notably electoral) processes. Even '…domestic monitoring groups called off their plans to observe the vote because of the extreme violence their volunteers [had] been subjected to during the past months of terror' (Phillip, 2008:3), thereby creating fertile ground for electoral rigging.

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[21] In *Operation Handigoni Kuvhota,* people were force marched in 'cells' to the polling stations where they were to say that they were either blind or could not write and would require assistance to vote. They were then made to openly state to a polling agent who their candidate of choice was. Prior to casting their votes, people would be taken to a local ZANU-PF base (a torture camp) the previous night, where their names were taken down and they were forced to chant ZANU-PF slogans. They were also told to return to the base camp after voting where they were warned that if any votes had been cast for the MDC the entire family would be severely beaten. This practice was reportedly prevalent in rural areas where opposition parties' polling agents were chased away by ZANU PF supporters.

[22] During this operation ZANU PF supporters and state security agents intimidated people into not participating in the constitution-making process. In all cases, those who would be allowed to respond to the outreach consultative meetings would be reading from a ZANU PF-approved manuscript which contained 'correct' responses.

[23] 'ZANU (PF) launches operation chimumumu', *The Zimbabwean*, 8 June 2010, <http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=31661:zanu-pf-launches-operation chimumumu&catid=72:thursday-issue>,

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3.9 The Changing Role of Civil Society in the Context of the Inclusive Government

The inception of the inclusive Government in Zimbabwe cast a ray of hope of peace and stability and a changed role for civil society. Cornwall (2002:1) notes that the role of civil society is bound to change when '...open spaces once closed off to citizen voice or public scrutiny prompts the creation of new interfaces and institutions as citizens position themselves on newly emergent political and policy arenas'. However, in the Zimbabwean context, the role of civil society experienced a transformation, especially from the late 1990s when the role of civil society transformed to '...measuring the extent of freedoms of assembly, association, expression and freedom from arbitrary and wrongful arrest and examining the nature, extent and effect of undemocratic legislation' (Matyszak, 2009:135). In the new dispensation, CSOs '...found themselves inheriting a social, political and economic crisis with no end in sight and to which they had to respond' (Tarisayi, 2009:11). Human rights violations continued unabated as '...people still suffer state-sponsored intimidation, arbitrary arrest, torture, and even killings, civil society activists and human rights defenders and the independent media are often targeted for attack or other mistreatment' (Amnesty International, 2009). Civil society has as usual only gone as far as '...strongly condemning the escalation of politically motivated violence perpetrated by suspected ZANU PF supporters and the onslaught on civil society activists by state security agents (Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition, 2011). Civil society coalitions, notably the NCA, continued with their campaign for '... a new people-driven constitution which holds the key to a new democratic dispensation and would empower citizens' (Ndapwadza & Muchena, 2009:35). Needless to say '...battles regarding drafting a new constitution have not been limited only to political parties in the inclusive government, but spiralled down to civil society and unions' (Kisiangani, 2009:2) which '...have advocated for minimum benchmarks in the constitutional reform process, including a conducive political environment, a people-driven process, upholding democratic values and a free and fair referendum' (Zimbabwe Alliance, 2010).

Contrary to perceptions that the long history of cordial relationships between civil society and the MDC leadership would translate into improved conditions for civil society, this did not materialise. This is because ZANU PF still enjoyed political hegemony which gave it the leverage to continue treating civil society as a political opponent. Additionally, the continued existence of the same restrictive legislation that had previously been employed to curtail the

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operations of civil society meant that for civil society, nothing had significantly changed to warrant changed circumstances (*Financial Gazette*, 12 June 2010)[24].

Despite attempts at establishing democratic institutions, such as the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission, the Zimbabwe Media Commission (ZMC), the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission and the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (Pfumorodze, 2010:188), there is no evidence of changed circumstances for civil society. Civil society has noted the violent environment to which people were exposed during the constitutional outreach programmes with many having been threatened, harassed, attacked and even killed for expressing their views about the contents of the new constitution (ZZZICOMP-ZPP/ZESN/ZLHR Independent Constitution Monitoring Project).[25]

This situation of continued state-sanctioned violence is reminiscent of ZANU PF's sole rule when violence became part of everyday life (Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition, 2011). At the same time the role of the media has continued to be that of '...logging of media reports relating to violence' (ZIG Watch, 2011:6).

3.10 Conclusion

Citizen participation in post-colonial Zimbabwe has encountered numerous challenges. The politicisation of public institutions and processes, the economic meltdown and the enactment of restrictive legislation have contributed to the broader bleak picture of democratic decay. Political intolerance that had resulted in civil unrest in parts of the country in the early years of independence continued, with civil society being the target of state retribution. Attempts by the state to deal with voices of dissent, notably from sections of civil society, degenerated into chaos. This was exacerbated by the ruling elites' desire to cling to power in the face of a rising pro-democracy civil society movement. In response to the civil society threat to the ruling elites' political hegemony, the state institutionalised violence. The political and economic crises that ensued as a result of political intolerance by the ruling elites culminated '...in citizens dumping the then ruling party en masse and opting for change, a move that was labeled as reactionary by the former liberation movement' (Kamete, 2009:48). The watershed elections of 2008 led to the establishment of an inclusive Government in Zimbabwe as a

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[24] 'GNU gets stuck with stinky POSA', Financial Gazette, 12 June 2010, <http://www. financialgazette.co.zw/national-report/4463-gnu-gets-stuck-with-stinky-posa.html>.
[25] The civil society monitors incorporated the highly respected Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP), Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) and Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR) that have joined forces to create ZZZICOMP - ZPP/ZESN/ZLHR Independent Constitution Monitoring Project.

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transitional arrangement during which a new people-driven constitution would be drafted to replace the Lancaster House Constitution of 1979. Hence the constitution- making process dominated the tenure of the new political dispensation. The creation of the Human Rights Commission and the Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee and the disbanding of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission, as well as pending amendments to restrictive media laws present some of the achievements which civil society has successfully campaigned for in the last two decades. However the effectiveness of these institutions is yet to be established because political bickering among partners about the inclusive governmental arrangement has stalled their operation. The military has also continued to be a threat to the inclusive formation by virtue of its threatening pronouncements of a possible coup if any political party other than ZANU PF wins elections. It is within this milieu that CSOs have had to operate, and as the following chapter shows they have done so with limited success in spite of their concerted efforts.

CHAPTER FOUR: BACKGROUND TO CASE STUDIES

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter explored forms of citizen participation that prevailed from the 1980s and how the political environment deteriorated on the backdrop of an increasingly restive population. The chapter also presents a typological development of prodemocracy CSOs on the face of an increasingly authoritarian state. This chapter elaborates on the activities of selected pro-democracy civic groups that have sought to enhance citizen participation. The selected civil society organisations for this thesis are the Zimbabwe Human Rights Organization (ZimRights), the Combined Harare Residents' Association (CHRA), Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) and the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) whose collective thrust is to spearhead the constitution reform process in Zimbabwe. In seeking to achieve their objectives, the selected CSOs either worked individually or forged social networks, coalitions and working relations for social change (see 4.3 below for a detailed exposition of how these CSOs worked as social networks of actors).

The African continent in the 1960s and 1970s was characterised by the prevalence of authoritarian regimes, a situation which culminated in increased demands for democratisation. As trends towards democratisation intensified, especially from the 1980s, sub-Saharan Africa experienced a quickening of democratic pressures and more than three dozen African states long characterised by authoritarian rule underwent political liberalisation (Harbeson, et al., 1997:92). The imposition of economic and political conditionalities by the Bretton Woods institutions - requiring drastic economic reforms, transparency in governance and financial transactions - forced many African leaders to re-evaluate their old ways and make concessions to local and external demands for democratisation (Ihonvbere, 2000:3). The post-colonial state became engrossed in turf wars between pro-democracy civil society organisations and the state as pro-democracy CSOs confronted the state over crumbling democratic institutions in the country. Restoration of democracy demands that '…new discourses, new alignment and realignment of social forces, the emergence of new institutions and leaders, and the (re)construction of alternative political platforms be instituted' (Ihonvbere, 2000:1). Although international pressures frequently influenced

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political transitions in Africa, the main catalysts have been Africans themselves (Lewis, 1995:172). Different civil society networks '...constituting a reinvigorated and politically aware civil society supported by an array of international donor agencies and NGOs, began to spearhead the new movement which sought ways of seeking to strengthen democratic institutions in different African countries' (Ihonvbere, 2000:4). Professional associations, labour unions, student movements, churches and human rights activists were behind the sub-Saharan region's democratic movements (Sachikonye, 2005:24), while a host of local organisations, social networks and market channels served to undermine the legitimacy and power of authoritarian incumbents (Harbeson et al, 1997:94).

In the political arena there was no credible opposition to chart an alternative political dispensation, leaving civil society to assume the role of providing an alternative voice to express citizens' concerns about shrinking democratic space (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2003:122). Additionally, the unequal distribution of the cost and pains of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) which forced the victims of the programme to openly ask new questions, challenge existing policies, overtly protest against the government and demand accountability and an end to widespread corruption (Ihonvbere, 2000:4). The situation was further compounded by the post-cold war reinvigoration of civil society-based movements, the (re)construction of alternative political platforms, the abandonment of old ideological bases of politics and the increasing unpopularity of military rule (Makumbe, 2000:4) which opened the floodgates for the establishment of pro-democracy CBOs seeking political participation eventually becoming the language of civil society (Makumbe, 2010:138).

As discussed in the previous chapter, in Zimbabwe, it became increasingly '...clear that two decades after independence, fatigue had gripped citizens as a result of ZANU PF's malgovernance and economic mismanagement' (Bond & Manyanya, 2002:124). Nationalism had lost its emancipatory appeal for the people (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:125). Loss of support for the liberation movement created a political vacuum which civil society came to fill (Moyo, Makumbe & Raftopoulos, 2000:24). This is the premise on which pro-democracy CSOs that emerged in Zimbabwe in the 1990s found themselves based as they sought to confront the state about the opening up of political space.

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As indicated above, the selected CSOs worked as a network of actors and presented '…a distinctive form of contentious politics that involved the collective making of claims' (Kamete, 2009:61). Collective claim-making develops out of shared meanings and definitions that people bring to a situation they perceive as problematic. McAdam et al (1996:19) note that when dissatisfaction and grievances are combined with optimism and conviction, joining forces with similarly aggrieved people can remedy the problematic situation and collective action becomes possible. Tarrow (1998:198) points out that '…contentious politics occurs when ordinary people, often in league with more influential citizens, join forces in confrontations with elites, authorities and opponents'. Relying largely as it does on 'extra institutional means of influence', contention ignores protocol, as the claim makers choose to disregard the 'right channel' (Gamson & Meyer, 2006:276). Kamete (2009:62) attributes the unorthodox manner associated with contentious politics '…to collective challenges often marked by interrupting, obstructing or rendering uncertain the activities of others'. This is the premise on which the broader pro-democracy civil society movement in the country prevailed as it sought to provide a collective voice against authoritarian rule in the country.

4.2 CASE STUDIES: ZimRights, CHRA, WOZA and NCA

The selected CSOs played a complementary role in seeking to inculcate a human rights culture, to mobilise residents to contribute to good local governance (CHRA and WOZA), as well as to campaign for social change through leading the constitutional reform process in the country (Matyszak, 2009; Sachikonye, 2011). The selected civic groups are among CSOs that '…constitute broad social alliances of people who are connected through their shared interest in curtailing or promoting social change' (Makumbe, 2010; Sachikonye, 2004). The four CSOs are part of the broader civil society movement that seeks to campaign for social and political change. Additionally, they are membership-driven which enables them to influence their members and the general public to contribute to social change.

Most civic groups employ a participatory approach to mobilisation which enables them to draw members from the citizenry through lobbying and advocacy around vital issues that attract the interest of citizens. As is common within the civil society movement, most CSOs depend on foreign donors, which brings to the fore the influence of donors on civil society activities and CSOs' ability to make independent decisions. Their major source of funding is donors who channel funds for outreach and community programmes in niche areas such as

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human rights among grassroots people, mostly in rural areas. Some of the international donors that have provided funding include faith-related organisations such as the American Catholic Relief Services (CRS), diplomatic missions or organisations aligned to these, such as CIDA, SIDA and DANIDA, as well as private international NGOs such as the Ford Foundation, HIVOS and the Swedish NGO Foundation for Human Rights, among others. Some of the funding is devoted to fund voter education which many CSOs regard as a vital way of empowering the electorate, taking cognisance of the fact that an informed citizen is an empowered one. Seeking to prevent citizen empowerment through this way, from 2002 the government in Zimbabwe abolished all voter education exercises by NGOs and civil societies, making voter education the preserve of government (Sachikonye, 2005; Makumbe, 2010; Moyo, 1993). Additionally, the provision of donor- funding by NGOs with an inclination towards foreign diplomatic missions based in Zimbabwe has also been perceived as being aimed at regime change (Bratton & Cho, 2006; Makumbe, 2011). (See Appendix E).

4.2.1 Case Study One: Fostering Citizen Participation through Civic Education and Inculcating a Human Rights Culture: the Case of ZimRights

ZimRights, formed in 1993, sought to inculcate '…increased confidence and activism amongst citizens, in collaboration with the few extant civil and human rights NGOs with a growing human rights mandate' (Matyszak, 2009:134). ZimRights had also been encouraged by the global acceptance of the human rights discourse in governance to fill the gap that had existed in the 1980s when Zimbabwe was a de facto one-party state and most CSOs avoided being confrontational with the state (Sachikonye, 2004:144).

As discussed, the civil unrest that dominated most of the 1980s revealed that ZANU PF had the propensity to perpetrate gross human rights violations with impunity. The lack of proper institutional mechanisms to investigate these violations revealed the gap that existed in ways of addressing human rights. Instead of opening up political spaces to resolve the cause of the civil unrest in Matabeleland, ZANU PF tightened its grip on power and demonstrated its intolerance of any opposition. This intolerance led to '…the rights and democracy crisis of the 1990s which saw a drop in citizen trust of both ZANU PF and national election outcomes' (Bhebe & Ranger, 2003:19). People fearful of openly opposing ZANU PF demonstrated their hatred of its politics by simply not participating in elections in large numbers (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2003:122), and through aligning themselves to various pro-democracy CSOs that

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had started to mushroom from the early 1990s (Makumbe, 1998:24). With no viable opposition, it was not until civil society organisations, such as ZimRights and ZCTU, rose to the occasion to fill the political vacuum that had resulted from political purging by ZANU PF during the 1980s and 1990s (Moyo, Makumbe & Raftopoulos, 2000:27; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009). Similar-minded human rights groups, notably the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) and the Legal Resources Foundation (LRF), helped to reinforce the human rights agenda alongside ZimRights. ZimRights' preoccupation was to make human rights protection as broad-based as possible through the involvement of ordinary people (Zimbabwe Institute, 2008; Dormain, 2001). The CCJP had based its approach to human rights protection on the social teaching of the church. The Legal Resources Foundation, on the other hand, had focused its energies on working and giving legal advice and assistance to those who could not afford recourse to legal channels of seeking redress (ZHDR, 2000; Sachikonye, 2005; Bracking, 2005). This left ZimRights in a precarious position as a human rights defender, using a flexible and broad-based approach to human rights protection in Zimbabwe (Matyszak, 2009:134). The formation of ZimRights came as a collective initiative in response to a general need for human rights protection in the country, especially after the gross human rights violations in Matabeleland in the 1980s went unchallenged (ZimRights Report, 1999). ZimRights sought to explore prevailing governance structures, political violence, the militarisation of the state, the land question and poverty from a human rights perspective (Ncube, 2001:2). The civic group viewed all these areas from a legal point of view in which all of them were encompassed within the human rights domain regarded as human entitlements (Zimbabwe Institute, 2008; Dorman, 2001).

Tracing the evolution of ZimRights Dorman(2001:145) has pointed out that the democratic state system, then relatively new to Zimbabweans, needed a pro-democratic civic movement to educate citizens on how the system was supposed to work, and how they could make positive, informed and meaningful contributions to the democratic process in the country. ZimRights and other pro-democratic forces undertook a civic awareness programme between 1996 and 2000 which involved conducting civic education campaigns throughout the country (Zimbabwe Institute, 2008:22). The programme was designed to impart knowledge about the functions of central and local government institutions and the citizens' role in ensuring that these bodies behaved democratically. On a similar note, Matyszak (2009:134) asserts that the

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formation of ZimRights in 1993 was informed by deteriorating democracy practices and the accompanying gross human rights violations which had started as far back as the 1980s.

Seeking to explain why it took so long for civil society to denounce human rights violations by the state during the civil unrest in Matabeleland in the 1980s, Chikwanha (2006:99) argues that the tense political environment of the time was not ripe for any criticism of government, still fresh from conducting the liberation struggle. It was not a surprise that there was no force to challenge the new government, given the weak ties that existed between existing CSOs and the new state as these were never part of the liberation struggle (Chikwanha, 2006:99). It was only in the 1990s that '…a group of prominent professionals and activists founded ZimRights, which became the country's only significant NGO dedicated explicitly to human rights' (ZimRights Report, 1999). ZimRights became a nationally-based human rights group designed to address some questions that remained insufficiently targeted by existing human rights organisations (Oloka-Onyango, 2001:2).The primary activities of the organisation were centred around areas of human rights education, documentation and advocacy, although the parameters of operation were not strictly defined (Zimbabwe Institute, 2008:23). As such, it was perhaps inevitable that the organisation was susceptible to scrutiny as it increasingly became both visible and controversial within Zimbabwean politics (Dorman, 2004:123).

Having banned all opposition politics and activities '…ZANU PF directed politically-motivated violence against members of opposition political parties and leaders of CSOs that dared confront the state on human rights and corruption in high places (Bracking & Sachikonye, 2006:5). Broadcasting became the preserve of the state with no alternative radio and television stations being allowed, which violated citizens' right to access to information (Moyo, 1993:2). This and other violations became the basis for the subsequent formation of ZimRights as it sought to investigate and document human rights violations beyond the Matabeleland Massacre (*The Independent*, 4 June 1999)[26]. Although donor funding was available and the ZimRights leadership supported the idea, infighting and turf-disputes bogged down the project (Dorman, 2004:7). The results of the investigation were eventually

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[26] Reginald Matshaba-Hove, 'Attack on ZimRights reveals wider covert strategy' *Independent* 4 June 1999; 'Don't point accusing finger'-ZimRights *Herald* 9 September 1992, p3; 'We are not political, says ZimRights' *Weekend Gazette*, 5 June 1995 p5; Cris Chanaka 'Mugabe labels Zimbabwe human rights activists gangsters' *Reuters*, 13 December 1995; David Jamali 'How to sustain a human rights organisation in the face of challenges and sabotage: case of ZimRights' unpublished paper, Coady International Institute, 2000; ZimRights Releases Report on '80s Atrocities' *Financial Gazette*, 11 November, 1999; 'ZimRights launches book on civil strife' *Herald* 5 November 1999.

published in October 1999, although by then debate on the Matabeleland conflict had become less sensitive (*Financial Gazette,* 11 November 1999)[27].

ZimRights provided membership services and co-coordinated donor-funded programmes for the promotion of human rights projects (ZHDR, 2000). Notable projects included the Education, Information and Legal Departments which organised civic education workshops in peri-urban and rural areas, issued press releases and published membership newsletters and workshop programmes (ZimRights Report, 2008).

Since its inception, ZimRights has adopted a multidimensional approach to the promotion of human rights in Zimbabwe, embarking on a number of advocacy projects, information dissemination and research on human rights issues (Dorman, 2001:147). It has been involved in issues of democracy and good governance where it campaigns for a well-managed political democracy (ZimRights Report, 2008). ZimRights defied the state by continuing to conduct voter education and regularly distributing newsletters among rural grassroots people who have limited access to information (ZimRights *Newsletter,* 2008) and liaised with other NGOs on the process of pressing the state to open up dialogue, paving the way for more acceptable legislation on NGOs (NGO Briefing Paper, undated).

ZimRights explores the subject of human rights in its broadest sense by not treating human rights as the preserve of lawyers and academics, but asserting that every citizen has a role to play (ZimRights *Newsletter,* 2008). In its programmes, the organisation tackles the subject of human dignity through teaching citizens about rights and responsibilities in a democracy, as well as fundamental rights and freedoms. It also addresses socio-economic rights through its Economic and Social Rights Outreach Programme (ESROP). Some of the rights which fall under this category include property rights, housing rights and land rights, among others. On matters of housing rights, ZimRights has often worked with CHRA on empowering residents regarding these rights. ZimRights confronted government when these rights were breached under the Land Reform Programme which was done without due regard for land and property rights and also about Operation Murambatsvina[28], which breached citizens' housing rights (Bracking, 2005; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009).

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[27] ZimRights Releases Report on '80s Atrocities' *Financial Gazette,* 11 November, 1999, 'ZimRights launches book on civil strife' *The Herald,* 5 November 1999.

[28] Refer to section under '*Operations*' for a critique of 'Operation Murambatsvina'

ZimRights employed its structures to reach out to its membership, even in remote parts of the country. ZimRights has also placed emphasis on the notion that '…democratic government must be responsible to citizens' demands and interests, and elections provide important mechanism for responsiveness and vertical accountability' (O'Neill, 2008:10). ZimRights started off its outreach and engagement programmes when it launched the Church/NGO Civic Education Programme in the mid-1990s as a response to the continuing absence of participation by civic society in economic, political and developmental issues in the country (Dorman, 2001:146). For ZimRights, being a broad-based, membership-driven organisation has enabled it to engage in the promotion, protection and defence of human rights through human rights awareness, lobby and advocacy campaigns, and also in civic education, information dissemination, workshops, meetings and seminars (ZHDR, 2000; ZimRights Report, 2008). In rural areas some regional council members are involved in attending to complaints relating to land tenure; for instance, attempts to remove squatters, disputes over land ownership or water usage rights (Dorman, 2003:7). With intensified political violence, ZimRights has found itself providing support (food, financial, temporary shelter) to communities displaced by political violence (NGO Briefing Paper, undated).

Additionally, ZimRights has worked with squatter communities facing eviction by offering them free legal assistance which helped in stopping and reversing mass evictions during the period 1996-1998 (ZimRights Report, 2008). Through ZimRights' work, citizens have managed to claim some of the rights and freedoms enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Rights and the Constitution of Zimbabwe, such as participating in electoral processes, though at great risk of persecution by ZANU PF. ZimRights has also been able to expose and publicise that ZANU PF youth militias have, over the years, terrorised people and forced them to attend political party meetings and to vote for ZANU PF during elections (ZimRights Report, 2008). However, despite the volatile nature of politics in Zimbabwe, ZimRights has made efforts to confront ZANU PF in a bid to make it desist from violence, especially perpetrated on members of opposition political parties, though with limited success.

ZimRights is also involved in human rights capacity building through conducting training in basic human rights law to human rights activists and members of the public (ZimRights Bulletin, 2005). It has been involved in advocacy for pro-human rights law reform at national level and in providing human rights legal services to members, including referral (Zimbabwe

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Institute, 2008:23). It continues to monitor the law-making process and the enforcement of law in the law courts. It has a research unit, which is currently researching women's access to land under the Land Reform Programme (ZimRight Report, 2008). Additionally, ZimRights has developed a human rights resource library where human rights material is available to researchers, university students, ZimRights members and anyone interested in such information (ZimRights, 1999). The organisation also gathers documentation from its field officers on human rights issues which they are handling at community level for publication in its newsletter, *The ZimRights Bulletin* (ZimRights Bulletin, 2005).

Makumbe (1998:32) attributes the emergence of human rights CSOs as having been triggered by the shortcomings of the Lancaster House Constitution, which was supposed to have been the epitome of representative democracy. The deficiencies identified in the Lancaster House Constitution formed the basis for other CSOs to start the debate on constitutional reforms and formation of networks around constitutional democracy and appropriate civil society coalitions, notably the NCA which has had the constitution reform agenda as its basis (Sachikonye, 2004:151; Makumbe, 2009:142). As its contribution to the constitution-making process, ZimRights embarked on a human rights campaign educating citizens about different aspects of the constitution- making process (Dorman, 2001:160). Through its constitution awareness public consultation meetings, ZimRights has been able to persuade the youth to participate in the process. Workshops conducted by ZimRights include 'torture workshops' in which surviving victims of the army brutality during the civil unrest '…give villagers information about torture and its effect since so many Zimbabweans have suffered from this cruel abuse of human rights' (SW Radio Africa)[29].

ZimRights has forged social networks with other human rights groups such as Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights which offers free legal representation for more serious cases and monitors human rights in the country (ZimRights Report, 2000). These two human rights organisations have often brought cases of political violence before the International Court of Justice at The Hague on behalf of people who lost friends and relatives as well as property to politically-motivated violent acts (SW Radio, 2010). ZimRights has to some extent succeeded in persuading government to incorporate human rights in the school curriculum (ZimRights

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[29] Tichaona Sibanda 'Police arrest two ZimRights employees in Tsholotsho', 24 May 2011. Available on http://www.swradioafrica.com.

Bulletin, 2006). The organisation has also taken to compelling the state to abide by international human rights benchmarks as provided in international law.

ZimRights has not confined its human rights promotional activities to the geographical location of Zimbabwe, but has reached out across to neighbouring countries and even those within the SADC region, taking advantage of congregating heads of states during their periodic summits (Radio VOP, 2010). In August 2010, ZimRights took the human rights violations message across the country's borders by holding exhibitions to SADC member states and civil society organisations from across the globe (Radio VOP, 2010)[30].

4.2.1.2 Initiatives for Citizen Empowerment

ZimRights has sought to empower citizens through several initiatives. As has been referred to above, the work of ZimRights is mostly promotional, with activities in the association's civic programme geared towards raising citizens' awareness on human rights at various levels (ZimRights Report, 2008; ZimRights Information Department, 2005; Zimbabwe Institute, 2008; ZimRights Bulletin, 2006). Some of the activities and initiatives that the civic group has embarked on include community theatre targeted at schools and marginalised communities. This seeks to inculcate human rights values in youths and grassroots communities, using public meetings to discuss community and national issues prevalent in both rural and urban areas (ZHDR, 2000). Additionally, to disseminate information on human rights, the organisation has set about producing pamphlets and publications such as newsletters on human rights topics, through research teams as part of the its contribution to the documentation of human rights development and awareness campaigns (Bartle, 2007; Zimbabwe Report, 2008; Zimbabwe Institute, 2008). ZimRights has, over the years, embarked on additional initiatives to empower citizens by raising awareness of the vital

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[30] On the sidelines of the SADC Heads of States meeting in Namibia, ZimRights showcased human rights violations by hosting an exhibition of pictures chronicling the violence that took place during the June 2008 elections which was banned in Harare in May 2010. ZimRights decided to stage the exhibition here after failing to showcase it in Harare due to police threats.The exhibition left many delegates shell shocked as the exhibitions showed chilling pictures of how eyes were gouged out, and buttocks and feet burnt, among other horrific acts. Some even argued that the pictures were not from Zimbabwe but somewhere in Africa in places such as DRC or Sudan which are synonymous with war and strife. So powerful was the exhibition that it dominated discussions at the meetings being held here (extracted verbatim from a newspaper article entitled *"Tears Flow As Zim Violence is Showcased"* Available on http://news.radiovop.com/[accessed 17 August 2010]

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importance of participation in development programmes and of being part of the solution to societal problems bedevilling communities (Zimbabwe Institute, 2008)[31].

ZimRights takes cognisance of the fact that despite the neglect of rural communities in preference to those in urban areas, rural people comprise a very important constituency which any politician would scramble for (Sachikonye, 2004; ZDHR, 2000). It is in this regard that the participation of the rural and grassroots people is vital in any process, be it electoral or constitution-making (Nicholl, 2008). It is also for this reason that ZimRights has realised the importance of the rural and grassroots people and has placed   emphasis on incorporating them in all processes (Dorman, 2001; Zimbabwe Institute, 2008).

In addition to conducting mobilisation programmes and activities, ZimRights also conducts training of election monitors following a comprehensive programme that is aimed at empowering citizens by means of affording them the in-depth knowledge of what constitutes a free, fair and transparent electoral process (Dorman, 2008). Some of the key components incorporated in the training workshops encompass regulatory, ethical and legal aspects of conducting authentic elections in line with internationally accepted standards (ZimRights Report, 2007).

4.2.2 Case Study Two: Demanding Citizen Participation through Activism: The Case of WOZA and CHRA

WOZA and CHRA have been cited as being among some of the pro-active and pro-democracy civic groups that have piled pressure on the state to restore democracy through numerous protests (ICG Africa Report, 2004:5). Mobilisation of their members has been eased by the existence of dejected and despondent citizens already disillusioned by rampant human rights violations, corruption and high poverty levels, the culmination of years of corruption and bad governance by the ZANU PF government (ICG Africa Report, 2004:6; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:116). As mentioned elsewhere in the study, the enactment of restrictive legislation curtailing independent political choices has further pushed citizens to the point of desperation, leaving pro-democracy civil society organisations the most obvious

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[31] The civic group has produced training manuals such as M*obilising and Organising the Community: Action for Citizen Empowerment* and *The Human Rights Bulletin* aimed at strengthening communities' basic organisational skills

http://etd.uwc.ac.za/

forum to which citizens would turn (Makumbe, 2010; Matyszak, 2009:25). These are issues on the basis of which WOZA, CHRA and a host of the pro-democracy CSOs found themselves tussling with the state to influence the recognition of citizens' rights (Zimbabwe Institute, 2008:23), the creation of a spirit of tolerance among different political players and citizens (Kamete, 2009:62) and the search for transitional justice for political victims (Ndlovu, 2009:115).

4.2.2.1 CHRA and the Inculcation of Participatory Virtue in Local Governance

In contemporary Africa '…local governance reform has sought to strengthen local governance by decentralising powers, resources and responsibilities to local authorities and other locally-administered bodies' (Chikulo, 2010:145). Consequently '…local governments should be viewed as training ground for democracy given their provision for political debate and argumentation over issues' (Jonga & Chirisa, 2009:171). CHRA has joined other pro-democracy CSOs in campaigning for the restoration of democracy through pressing for local government reform. CHRA's contribution to the democratisation of local governance structures is informed by the association's desire to create opportunities for rate payers to participate in local governance to improve service delivery. This puts residents' associations in a position where they '…initiate reforms to capacitate local governance structures as well as increase the capacity and improve institutional effectiveness at local level' (Chikulo, 2010:145).

Following independence and the triumph of ZANU PF, '…urbanites that had been given the national vote through the promulgation of universal adult suffrage were not immediately granted the local vote' (Kamete, 2009:47). Understandably, '…the former liberation movement sought first to address pressing national issues common to newly independent politics, before turning its attention to local issues such as municipal elections' (Matyszak, 2009:136). Kamete (2009:48) notes that urbanites were excluded from the local government electoral process because they had not taken an active part during the liberation struggle. Disgruntled by this exclusion, and by the '…fatigue associated with the ruling ZANU PF's mal-governance and economic mismanagement, citizens' patience reached breaking point' (Bond & Manyanya, 2002), and they began to campaign for local government reform that would enable them to contribute to good local governance (Kamete, 2009:61). This is the

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premise on which residents' associations were established, with those already in existence being resuscitated to enhance associational life and give voice to residents (Davies, 2007:36).

Participation is frequently regarded as the cornerstone of sustainable development, and of the rights-based approach to development (Everatt, et al 2010:238). Equally, public participation in local government and development currently occurs in a variety of forms that range from the opportunity to vote in local government elections to participating in ward or municipal public meetings, organising petitions, staging public protests and community-based monitoring (Everatt, et al, 2010:237). This is the basis on which the Combined Harare Residents Association (CHRA) and other similar institutions across the country have operated. Citizens have also taken the opportunity to demand participatory space in the administration of municipal affairs such as budgetary processes.

The status of CHRA is such that it touches on all residents ranging from '…self-employed, unemployed, tenants and lodgers, and all and sundry, which explains its reach into high-density areas' (Kamete, 2009:57). These are areas characterised by over-crowding, low-income households (formal and informal), a high population of lodgers, where poverty is high and there are frequently poor sanitary conditions, all of which creates a high prevalence of protests by residents (Kamete, 2009; Davies, 2007). CHRA has subsequently capitalised on these factors by directing its focus on the rights of tenants and lodgers and seeking to confront local authorities to enhance governance structures within the City of Harare (CHRA, 2008). Through civic education, CHRA has sought to create informed urbanites, noting that '…citizenship norms are a shared set of expectations about citizens' role in politics'" (Dalton, 2008:78). As such, '…civic education shapes citizen behaviour in part by establishing the norms and expectations of citizenship' (Dalton, 2008:78). At national level, CHRA has continued to '…tussle with a state that is repressive and intolerant of anything construed as protest' (Kamete, 2009:59) and all those residents who are perceived to be supporters of political parties other than ZANU PF (Davies, 2007:36).

4.2.2.2 CHRA's Initiatives to Enhance Citizen Participation in Local Governance in Harare

In engaging with residents, CHRA has sought '…to develop participatory approaches to local governance and demand for accountability' (Davis, 2005:10) alongside its vision *'To be an effective watchdog and vehicle for good governance in Harare and a model for advocacy'*

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(CHRA, 2007c). This has put CHRA on a platform where residents can utilise it as a conduit through which they can present their demands to the local authority. CHRA has come up with three projects - the Grassroots Advocacy Project, the Capacity Building Project and the Information Blitz Project (Kamete, 2009:83; Davies, 2009:11). The Grassroots Advocacy Initiative Project enables CHRA to disseminate and gather information pertaining to the welfare of ratepayers and their subsequent participation in local governance, and seeks to coordinate advocacy initiatives and to gather and disseminate information (CHRA, 2009). Through its Advocacy Centre, CHRA has been able to establish structures to consult with residents on pertinent issues of service delivery and participatory democracy (CHRA, 2007c; Kamete, 2009:83;) and to communicate with residents through other structures such as the General Council and the Standing Committees (Davis, 2009:10). The General Council is the supreme decision-making body of the Association and meets with ward chairpersons, ward committees and the Management Committee (Davis, 2009:10). Information packaging and distribution form a vital campaign component and conscientisation tool, where the Association is engaged in the production of '*The Mbare Resident*' a bi-weekly newsletter that highlights the state of service delivery in Mbare, CHRA initiatives and local residents' action plans and '*The Mbare Weekly*', which focuses on current development of local governance and municipal issues such as municipal budgeting (Kamete, 2009:85).

The Capacity Building Project focuses on raising the level of civic participation in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of policies (CHRA, 2007) undertaking local governance research and analysis of local governance legislation and best practices in local governance, locally and regionally (CHRA, 2007; Kamete, 2009:81). It is also involved with lobbying and advocacy for democratic local government, pro-people centred policies and the creation of a critical mass that acts as the vanguard for democracy and transparent governance (CHRA, 2007; Davis, 2009:10). Lobbying and advocacy have formed part of CHRA's core business with stakeholders and central government (Davis, 2009:10).

The Association facilitates communication with its constituency by running media campaigns on topical local governance issues and through the development of audio, visual and print aids as part of the broader media strategy (Davis, 2009:13). The project also facilitates public meetings on consultative and key positions of the Association. Monthly workshops with media personnel and the production of visual and audio material are part of the communication activities to strengthen relations with the media industry.

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Through its Information Blitz Project, CHRA is able to convene civic education workshops at grassroots level (CHRA, 2007; Davies, 2009:13). It is also involved in disseminating various information packages for grassroots advocacy initiatives, as well as developing a critical mass that will be the defence for democracy and transparent governance (Kamete, 2009:87; CHRA, undated). It updates the public and acts as a public response to the (service delivery) crisis in the capital and in the demand for quality municipal service and elections. Through drop-in centres, CHRA receives and acts upon complaints from residents and reports on the state of service delivery. It also provides advice to residents on issues concerning city billing, municipal and local governance issues in general (CHRA, 2007). In addition to popular campaigns, CHRA has established healthy networks and alliances with various sectors of the civil society movement in order to promote a platform for receiving feedback, tapping new ideas and promoting the Association's ideas and strategies within the broader civic society movement (Kamete, 2009:87). To strengthen its capacity CHRA has come up with sectoral groups as a way of diversifying its operations and working in collaboration and holding networking meetings with established civic groups in these areas. The sectoral groups are: Political Support and Election Supervision, Civic Motivation and Planning Sector, Environmental Health, Ward Initiatives and Potential Partners, as well as Citizens Advice and Legal Aid (Davies, 2009:8) (see 4.5.5 below on CHRA's collaboration with the Bulawayo Progressive Residents' Association).

In response to changing political, economic and social demands in favour of participatory democracy, CHRA has collaborated with other residents' associations, notably the Bulawayo Progressive Residents' Association. Through collaborations, residents' associations have intensified their mandate from that of being mere residents' associations to associations which seek to empower citizens through imparting leadership skills to residents and facilitating meetings between civic leaders and residents (CHRA, 2010; BPRA, 2011). These collaborations also come in the wake of increasing demand for meetings between residents and civic leaders, notably local MPs and councillors (CHRA, 2010; BPRA, 2011). The spirit of collaboration among residents' associations has enabled them to establish social actors' networks and forge working relationships to empower citizens to be able to tackle challenges to their democratic rights to participation (Kamete, 2009:82).

The engagement with residents has helped CHRA and other residents' associations in their capacity- building activities through embarking on leadership programmes that seek '...to empower residents' leadership on issues of local governance and collective decision- making through effective participation on matters of public interest (CHRA, 2010). Through the Residents' Leadership Programme, BPRA and CHRA have sought to '...equip residents with the necessary advocacy tools through training workshops to residents' leaders randomly picked from various wards in the city' (BPRA, 2011; CHRA, 2010). CHRA has justified the provision of such training by pointing out that:

through the trainings, the association is fulfilling its mandate of encouraging members of the public to input into formulation of local policies and call for transparency and accountability among public officers, raising awareness among residents so that they monitor service providers and clamour for diligent service provision from an informed point of view (BPRA, 2011)

Additionally, CHRA has regularised platforms where residents meet their civic leaders (Davies, 2005:9). Of note have been Constituency meetings where MPs are tasked with explaining to residents how Constituency Development Funds provided by government are utilised in their respective areas. Most importantly, such meetings give residents an opportunity to question their MPs to ascertain how projects were identified and what kinds of interventions were initiated using the funds (BPRA, 2011). In addition, meetings with civic leaders are tasked with explaining how residents can be involved in identifying projects into which these funds can be ploughed and to what extent such funds are used for the public good (BPRA, 2011). BPRA and CHRA have noted that the idea of allowing residents to participate in the identification of developmental projects and the formulation of intervention methods to spearhead development has put residents at the forefront of forging initiatives for developmental projects within their localities (BPRA, 2011; Kamete, 2009:88). Available literature has also shown that '...people are more likely to be committed to a development project or programme if they are involved in its planning and preparation; they identify with it and own it' (Prakash, 2002; Oyono, 2004; Hyden, Olowu & Ogendo, 2000). BPRA and CHRA leadership have noted that such interaction has increased trust between residents and civic leaders and '...improved service delivery, sustainable development and democratic developmental local governance pinned on residents' participation and awareness of critical socio-political issues affecting the lives of Zimbabweans' (BPRA, 2011).

4.2.2.3 CHRA's Confrontation with the State: Fighting for the Citizens' Good

The association has exhibited its propensity to represent residents of Harare on local and national issues such as contesting the legitimacy of Commission which was mandated to run the affairs of Harare. The association has also sought to present residents' views on local government budgetary processes, which according to Kamete (2009:83) includes demands for a rates boycott and the contestation of the arbitrary transfer of responsibility for water and sanitation and other reticulation services to the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA). It has sought to engage the state on these issues in collaboration with the National Residents' Associations Consultative Forum (NRACF) to reinforce, inculcate and promote local governance and mobilise residents to adopt local governance reform.

The establishment of ZINWA in 2005 to provide water and other sanitary services to the country faced criticism from CHRA right from the beginning. CHRA fought against this arbitrary privatisation of water and sewer reticulation services from the City of Harare and other municipal authorities throughout the country (Kamete, 2009:60; CHRA, 2006e; 2006f). In establishing the parastatal, the government was more interested in revenue generation than the provision of adequate services to residents throughout the country (Jonga & Chirisa, 2009:173; CHRA, 2006e).

From the outset, ZINWA encountered numerous challenges including a shortage of operating space resulting in their using council offices (CHRA, 2006e; 2006f). Additionally, the tenure of ZINWA was characterised by regular water shortages, water cuts and the dispensing of dirty water which lead to a cholera outbreak in 2008 (Kamete, 2009:61). The new institution did not have the capacity or the expertise to execute the mammoth task of providing water reticulation and sanitary services (Jonga & Chirisa, 2009:173; CHRA, 2006e; 2006f), resulting in settling for cheap labour and personnel that had no knowledge of the intricacies of water reticulation and sanitary services (CHRA, 2006e; 2006f; CHRA, 2009; Kamete, 2009:61). All these deficiencies led to chaos as residents would go for many days and, in some cases, weeks, without water for drinking and other uses. Upon the realisation that ZINWA had failed the nation in the provision of water services, especially after the cholera outbreak in 2008, it was disbanded and the services that it had attempted to provide were returned to local authorities many of which had executed water provision services to residents for decades (Jonga & Chirisa, 2009:175).

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The lessons from ZINWA did not sink deep enough for ZANU PF to draw anything meaningful from the water debacle that ensued thereafter. The government continued to interfere in local governance affairs through the Minister of Local Government who was criticised by CHRA and residents within the confines of Harare (CHRA, 2006b; CHRA, 2006c). This resulted in the dismissal of a full set of councilors and their replacement by the Makwavarara Commission which was mandated to run the affairs of the city from 2006. Regular dismissal of elected councillors by the Minister and replacement of these by hand-picked personnel has been rampant and repeated in other cities and has infuriated residents and CHRA as it was felt that such arbitrary appointments were undemocratic (Kamete, 2009:62; Jonga & Chirisa, 2009:174).

Jonga and Chirisa (2009:173) view the dismissal of elected councilors by the Minister of Local Government as '…trading good governance for political advantage as central government seeks to thwart any remaining elements of freedom, good governance, commitment and initiatives'. CHRA has questioned the legitimacy of the hand-picked local municipal authority and has mobilised residents to refuse to recognise the legitimacy of the Commission (Jonga & Chirisa, 2009:174), and to disregard all policies and regulations emanating from such, owing to their illegitimacy, and in addition to boycott payments of rates to the local authority (Kamete, 2009:61; Jonga & Chirisa, 2009:175). They have furthermore urged for residents' engagement in civil disobedience such as blockading roads and presenting petitions to Civic Centre (CHRA, 2006b; CHRA, 2006c; CHRA, 2008). CHRA has also taken legal action against the Minister to have the Commission disbanded (Standard, 4 September, 2005; Jonga & Chirisa, 2009:175).

4.2.2.4 CHRA on Participatory Budgetary Processes in Local Government

Participatory budgeting has presented one of the most outstanding challenges to most residents' associations across the country. In Harare and Bulawayo, CHRA and BPRA respectively have been able to alleviate the situation through their Capacity Building Project which seeks to impart knowledge and skills to councilors and residents alike, especially on budgetary processes and policy formulation (BPRA, 2011). This has seen the respective residents' associations demanding meaningful residents' participation in local authorities' budgetary processes (Kamete, 2009:42). Given that most residents are from low-income groups with moderate literacy levels, it is such citizens who are often not aware of their rights to participate as they lack an understanding and awareness of policy-making and budgetary

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processes (Jonga & Chirisa, 2009:176; BPRA, 2011). Citizens with very low levels of education tend to participate less, because they lack access to information and do not understand municipal procedures (World Bank, 2007:217). Local authorities have also been accused of paying lip-service to citizen participation in budgetary processes, '…holding budget consultation meetings with residents, consultations which do not allow residents to push for urgent priorities to be considered in the budget' (Mlilo, 2011)[32]. Consequently, the budget-making process has more often involved mainly the elite, especially given that the language used in discussing policy and budgets is often technical and introduces unfamiliar concepts which are beyond the comprehension of some councillors and the representatives of residents keen to follow the budgetary process or contribute (Davies, 2009:57). Therefore by empowering civic leaders and residents, CHRA seeks to move from the top-bottom to bottom-up approach in dealing with local governance decision-making processes. Technical political and economic challenges experienced by many councillors include finding themselves having to be accountable to the electorate in the formulation of local authority annual budgets (World Bank, 2007:217). Residents' associations such as CHRA and BPRA have undertaken initiatives to generate capacity by boosting the capability of councillors in tackling local governance challenges (refer to 4.5.5 below).

4.2.2.5 CHRA and the Consolidation, Resuscitation and Promotion of Local Governance Institutions

Collaboration and establishing social networks within civil society have proved to be vital in collective claim making (Kamete, 2009:87; Tarrow, 1998:135; Tilly, 2004:97). Similarly, CHRA's operations, initiatives and efforts have been reinforced by working alongside the National Residents' Association Forum (NRACF) and more recently with the Zimbabwe United Residents' Association (ZURA). In collaboration with these two umbrella bodies, CHRA sought to capacitate and strengthen local governance institutions in other towns and cities (Davies, 2005:9). CHRA and the NRACF have conducted a series of ward-based meetings in different towns and districts across the country meant to mobilise residents to demand the adoption of local governance reforms identified and drafted by residents'

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[32] Mfundo Mlilo cited in Wongai Zhangazha (2011) 'Zimbabwe: Mujuru Death Exposes Essential Services Decay' in *Zimbabwe Independent,* 25 August 2011, Available at http://allafrica.com/stories/201108260891.html

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associations under the auspices of the NRACF (Kamete, 2009:62). Topical issues that have dominated discussions at these ward-based meetings include proposed local government reforms, and the state of service delivery with respect to electricity supply, water supply and sewer reticulation (BPRA, 2011).

CHRA has also supported the consolidation of existing residents' associations, the resuscitation and rejuvenation of those in limbo and the formation of similar local institutions in different towns and cities across the country. This is based on the fact that CHRA has been a model for resident-initiated participatory reforms in local governance, which has partly necessitated the resuscitation of defunct civic institutions, especially those that had existed during the colonial era as a bulwark against colonialism (Wekwete, 1992; Jonga & Chirisa, 2009; Kamete, 2009). Encouraged by the support of NRACF and ZURA, CHRA has networked in large cities with residents' associations such as the United Bulawayo Progressive Residents' Association, and the Bulawayo United Residents' Association (BURA), the largest resident association in Bulawayo (BPRA, 2011). CHRA has also been pivotal in capacitating Chitungwiza Residents' and Ratepayers' Association (CHIRRA), Masvingo United Residents' and Ratepayers' Association (MURRA) and others to campaign for enhanced resident participation in good local governance (CHRA, 2009; Davies, 2005).

Through networking with NRACF, many new residents' associations have been either re-established in urban areas or defunct ones resuscitated (BPRA, 2011). In addition to the resuscitation of defunct residents' associations, CHRA has been consulted in the creation and setting up of structures in cities and towns where these have not existed, in such smaller towns as Shurugwi, Zvishavane, Karoi and Matobo which have not had viable residents' associations (Jonga & Chirisa, 2009:173; Ile & Mapuva, 2010:76). Consequently through encouragement and capacitating from CHRA and NRACF, many of these associations, which had all along operated on a virtual basis, are establishing offices and centres where residents can interact with the associations.

4.2.2.10 CHRA and the National Context

The political and economic crises that characterised Zimbabwe over the last two decades have seen CHRA operating in a repressive and unstable political environment. It has been argued that the many and varied socio-political and economic tribulations that have be-

devilled the country since 2000 are a result of a crisis of governance (Chikuhwa, 2004:6). This has drawn CHRA and a host of other pro-democratic organisations into the crisis as they attempted to hold the state to account. Kamete (2009:62) has asserted that the causative misdeeds are central government's economic mismanagement, endemic corruption and suicidal economic policies. All these faults have culminated in a hostile environment not conducive to participation (Kamete, 2006:38). But of concern to CHRA has been the impact of the hostile environment on citizens' livelihoods which has resulted in increased poverty levels (Chikuhwa, 2004; Jonga & Chirisa, 2009; Kamete, 2009).

CHRA has also worked closely with the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions in criticising government for demanding and pegging prices of commodities in foreign currency at a time when workers were being paid in local currency (Sokwanele, 2010; Davies, 2005). CHRA further noted that the continued delay in the implementation of the political party pact within the Inclusive Government has dealt a heavy blow to the residents' hopes of improved service delivery (CHRA, 2009). CHRA clarified to residents and citizens that the transitional government was simply clearing the path to economic recovery, restoring the rule of law and setting the stage for an electoral democracy among other things (CHRA, 2010) despite accusations that '...the inclusive government continues to falter and with an increasingly tense political environment is even reversing some of the gains post its formation' (Sokwanele Newsletter, 2011). During the constitutional outreach programmes, CHRA has been involved in mobilising its members to participate in the constitution-making process outreach programmes alongside other CSOs (NCA, 2010).

4.2.3 Case Study Three: Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA)

In developing and developed countries, women have come up with social movements campaigning for the integration and participation of women in developmental projects and decision-making processes. This is after the realisation that '...women have been left out of development and the intention is to integrate them' (Mbilinyi, 1991b, in Meena, 1992:47). As such, women should be given the right to participate in the labour market and to articulate their political opinions free of coercion (Mbilinyi, (1991b) in Meena, (1992:47). This avenue has opened up the floodgates for feminist social movements seeking involvement and

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participation in decision-making on issues that affect their everyday lives and in campaigning for justice (Ndlovu, 2009:113).

WOZA has remained one of the most resolute social organisations seeking social change and presenting a blend of political and social activism (Makanje, et al, 2004:2). It is one of several CBOs that formed around the MDC to express their disgruntlement at the rate at which democratic institutions in the country were deteriorating and human rights violations were being perpetrated (Sokwanele, 2008). Women have only been organised within political parties, helping to set agendas for policy formation and ultimately having the aim of assisting their party to gain or to retain power (Ndlovu, 2009:114).While it can be acknowledged that there have been many NGOs, church organisations, HIV/AIDS organisations, skills training and cultural activities in which women were active, However, on a national scale, there has never been a mass organisation of women acting in a non-violent manner as a pressure group to lobby and advocate on issues concerning women (Ndlovu, 2009:113). The escalation of conflict in Zimbabwe can also be blamed on a lack of capacity by civil society organisations to effectively promote peace through non-violent means or resistance, a common feature of WOZA's modus operandi (Ngoma, 2009). This is the premise on which WOZA was formed in 2003 seeking '...to address the long-term need to give Zimbabwean women a voice and to present a feminist approach to human rights by demanding the integration of women in political, economic and social issues' (Ndlovu, 2009:114). The association provides a platform for women to pressurise for policies and programmes, not to gain power, and is particularly based on the assumption that the vast majority of women have common issues, with solutions not based on political affiliation (WOZA, 2008). WOZA was among the first organisations to respond to the country's political and economic crises and '... to force the government and the international community to take account of the effect of the crisis on women, their families, and their children' (Makanje et al, 2004:34; Ndlovu, 2009:112) through civic activism in the form of protest and petitioning the state (WOZA, 2006).

The organisation has held numerous small meetings and planning sessions, '...to empower women to speak out about the things that concern them' (Makanje et al, 2004:3) and to develop the capacities of women to participate in public life with confidence and to understand their problems in a wider context (Ndlovu, 2009:111). Additionally, WOZA's mode of organisation has persistently been '...democratic and participatory, and at the same time rejecting the type of organisation found in Zimbabwean political parties where

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individuals are constantly competing for positions' (Ndlovu, 2009:115). The organisation has also opted for the grassroots, bottom-up approach where numerous structures ranging from neighbourhood committees to national structures have been formalised (Sokawnele, 2008). For WOZA, leadership is rotational '...so that many have the opportunity to develop leadership skills' (Ndlovu, 2009:114). Meeting in small groups, WOZA members have been inspired to think about what can be done in Zimbabwe to begin serious public debate while preparing for the future (Ndlovu, 2009:114). WOZA has transcended the confinement of its strategies and approaches to gender questions. The changes the women's movement has undergone are indicative of the wider changes in the NGO sector in general (Makumbe, 2008:15). Additionally, the women's organisation has presented a unique way in which it has dealt with issues of justice, power and rights (Ndlovu, 2009:114). The case of WOZA illustrates '...an understanding and engagement with power dynamics and the extension of empowerment as a critical case study of work on rights and participation' (Ndlovu, 2009:114).

WOZA has been consistent in its campaign regarding the observance of women and children's rights in the face of deteriorating democratic institutions in the country (Ndlovu, 2009:113). It has remained visible through its regular protest activities, demonstrations and petitions to parliament. Additionally, it has embarked on a number of awareness campaigns to enlighten its members and the general public on the need to demand accountability and responsiveness from the state (Sokwanele, 2010). This section seeks to establish the extent to which WOZA has contributed to the enhancement of a civic awareness and the creation of an enlightened citizenry.

Research has shown that there are rare cases where women have direct interaction with the state in the quest for their rights, a development which has been translated as the oppression of women (Meena, 1992; Makanje et al, 2004; Ndlovu, 2009). Much of this oppression of women emanates from the '...repressive colonial policies against women that have been further reinforced by the mainstream critiques of the post-colonial state' (Meena, 1992:19; Ndlovu, 2009). It is from this background that feminist civic groups such as WOZA have taken their fight for women and children's rights to the state. Additionally, the feminist movement takes clear aim at patriarchal institutions in civil society and works for cultural and normative change as much as for political and economic power (Cohen, 1997: 148). However

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despite the patriarchal social and political structures of much of Zimbabwean society, WOZA has defied this belief as the organisation, led by women, has confronted the state to demand rights (Ndlovu, 2009:114).

Post-colonial feminist organisations have sought to 'unite women in common action to remove all political, legal, economic and social disabilities' (Gaidzanwa, 1992 in Meena, 1992:103). This has led to the emergence of more pro-active feminist organisations that campaigned for '…the removal of all hindrances to freedom of movement, association and active participation in democratic organisations as well as the right to participate in the work of trade unions' (Meena, 1992:103). This is the premise on which WOZA has been popularised among women seeking to engage the state for participatory policy-making processes and pro-poor policies.

Emerging from the mobilisation around religious groupings in townships and rural communities in the 1970s, religious groups and social clubs had begun to mushroom (Makanje, 2004:3), providing a platform for women to interact and articulate their economic, social and even political problems away from the sight of the law which prohibited such deliberations (Ndlovu, 2009:116). Organisations such as the Association of Women's Clubs (AWC) and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) which grew out of these early clubs today command some of the largest, best-organised and most visible memberships (Makanje, 2004; Ndlovu, 2009). It became common knowledge that in every rural area, one would find such organisations teaching their members survival skills. Thus women's struggles could not have been centred on these areas. Equally the struggle for self-rule and political power was viewed as man's terrain. This trend continued until the early years of independence in Zimbabwe when the formation of Women's Action Group (WAG) in 1983 marked a turning point in the language of politics and ways of organising by women (Meena, 1992; Makanje et al, 2004). From the late 1970s up to the early 1980s, women's movements focused on matters of welfare (Ndlovu, 2009:115), but from the 1990s their thrust shifted to governance and human rights (Sachikonye, 2005; Makumbe, 2008; Ndlovu, 2009). This marked a change that had started to occur during the armed struggle when women joined the liberation struggles as combatants in their own right (Ndlovu, 2009:114).

At independence, women's participation in the liberation struggle was acknowledged and rewarded through the passing of various enabling pieces of legislation, notably the Legal Age

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of Majority which made women majors under the law for the first time (Makanje et al, 2004:11), the Sex Disqualification Act which allowed women to hold public office, as well as other legislation which gave women equal remuneration for the same type of work (SAfAIDS, 2011:2). These pieces of legislation were passed by government, partly as a result of pressure from women leaders within ZANU PF and partly out of government's own choice (Makanje et al, 2004:11). These changes were driven by the need to mobilise women to participate in post- independence development and reconstruction (Ndlovu, 2009:115). The police crackdown on women found loitering on the streets during night time that occurred in 1983 was roundly condemned by feminists who proceeded to form the Women's Action Group (WAG) in the same year (WAG Quarterly Report, 2010). This was in direct response to the violation of women's rights by the government. The unique nature of WAG was that for the first time a women's organisation used the language of rights - women's rights and human rights (SAfAIDS, 2011:2). The formation was also a re-conceptualisation of women and women's responsibilities, and a departure from the language of women's movements before it (Makanje et al, 2004:10). WAG also presented a paradigm shift from the precedents set by previous similar movements as it openly criticised government for violating citizens' rights, government policy and actions, thereby setting the stage for direct confrontation with the state and making a departure from supporting government and non-political engagement (Makanje et al, 2004:10; WAG Quarterly Report, 2010:2). WAG also set another precedent of protest by writing letters of protest to the Prime Minister and Ministers among senior political leaders and compiling dossiers of cases of abuse on women which were presented to the state (WAG Quarterly Report, 2010:3).

WAG on their part, reminded government about the participation of women in the liberation struggle and sought to consolidate the gains of independence by ensuring that women's rights of movement and self-determination should be recognised and that women should be mobilised to 'participate' in post-independence nation building (WAG Quarterly Report, 2010:3). Without the right to utilise public spaces, WAG argued that women could not equally enjoy the fruits of independence, further revealing the limitations of patriarchal nationalist ideology (WAG Quarterly Report, 2010:3). This protest action set the stage for the establishment of a more pronounced feminist agenda and opened up the floodgates for the formation of other pro-democratic feminist organisations, with Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) having been the most notable after WAG (WAG Quarterly Report, 2010:4).

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The formation and political alignment of WOZA came about against the backdrop of significant international changes and developments elsewhere. ESAP had exacerbated the plight of many poor communities, and particularly of women, thereby exposing the multi-faceted fractures in social relations in Zimbabwe (Kagoro, 2003, in Win, 2007:21). The introduction of ESAP '...coincided with a number of defining events at national and regional levels, notably the end of apartheid and the fall of dictatorships in Zambia and Malawi' (Win, 2007:21). These events created conditions conducive to political liberalisation in Zimbabwe, leading to a rapid increase in advocacy on questions around poverty, participation and governance (Kagoro, 2004:7). These developments further aroused questions of the basis of power in Zimbabwe, leading to a protracted debate about democratisation (Kagoro, 2004:8). These developments were met with corresponding developments within the women's movement where more feminist groups were set up, notably Musasa Project, Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network (ZWRCN) and later WOZA.

This is the premise on which WOZA was founded; as a manifestation of the desire by women to participate and in response to the fast diminishing participatory space and the degeneration of democratic institutions within the country (Makanje et al, 2004:1). Additionally, the global wave seeking to incorporate women in all facets of life influenced Zimbabwean women to campaign for participation in public spaces (WAG Quarterly Report, 2010; Makanje et al, 2004; SAfAIDS, 2011). WOZA sought to '...impart knowledge and skills enabling women to make informed decisions and increase participation in governance, and facilitate the networking of women towards elevating the standing of women in society' (WOZA Preamble, 2003). This justifies their relevance in a number of areas, ranging from human rights to governance and activism, and their involvement in the constitutional reform debate (SW Radio Africa News, 2010).

WOZA thrives on its mission statement which seeks to '...empower Zimbabwean women with knowledge and skills designed to stimulate courageous activities within the community' (Kubatana, 2010). Their vision is '...to enable Zimbabwean women to make independent decisions and actively participate in their community's development' (Sokwanele, 2010). In its operations, WOZA has been involved in areas or sectors that incorporate civil activism, democracy and good governance, education/training, human rights, religion and women and their welfare (Kubatana, 2010). WOZA activists justify their involvement in these areas by

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virtue of their being mothers and housewives who in most cases bear the brunt of the suffering of their families. Women are also the ones who should put pressure on the authorities to ensure that their children get adequate food, that workers (their husbands) get adequate remuneration and that basic commodities are available and affordable to the public (WOZA Preamble, 2003). WOZA activities have transcended feminist boundaries and incorporated the right of children to free education and the provision of decent working conditions for workers. . The association has summoned parliamentarians to address political, economic and social problems be-devilling the country (WOZA Preamble, 2003).

WOZA members continue to show great resilience and bravery in adversity, despite continuous detention by government (WOZA, 2011)[33]. Initially a purely feminist organization, WOZA has transformed into a non-sexist organisation with male members within its ranks. Their demands have assumed a national character, seeking redress of national phenomena such as the provision of adequate services such as free education and health and making the prices of basic commodities affordable for everyone in the country and, above all, the restoration of democracy in the country. Women's involvement in politics has been a positive development towards the politicisation of women in Zimbabwe, especially given that '…the struggles of women in Zimbabwe have been linked to those of political parties, trade unions and community organisations to which they belong' (Meena,1992:107). This has shown that women should be taken as members of society who should enjoy independent political and institutional rights. As a further development, WOZA has regularly summoned parliamentarians and other people in authority in various sectors to address outstanding issues. Gaidzanwa, (1992) in Meena (1992:124) justifies women's participation in protests by noting that '…the politics of the individual and private spaces and their linkage to the public spaces help to mobilise women into the area of redefining society by initiating moves to confront the state'. Taking their cue from this argument, women have become confrontational '…as they challenged the state to protect their rights' (Win,

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[33] WOZA, (2011) '300 march to parly handover petitions', 25 August, 2011, Available at http://wozazimbabwe.org/?p=970; Danford Zimuto (2011) 'Arrests of WOZA women'*The Zimbawean*, 12th September 2011; 'Twenty women arrested as WOZA marches in BYO' in *The Zimbabwean*, 12 September 2011

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2007:21). In addition to confronting the state, WOZA activists have confronted different localities and entities such as schools. For example, WOZA activists have confronted school headmasters demanding to know how school fees can be paid in foreign currency when workers are being paid in local currency (WOZA, 2008). WOZA also demanded increased educational opportunities and the availability of basic commodities at government-controlled prices for their families, arguing that they were the ones who bore the brunt of the suffering of children.

The association has embarked on a number of initiatives and protestations towards the realisation of its objective of engaging the state. Petitions, protest marches and demonstrations have come to characterise WOZA's mode of engagement with the state (WOZA Report, 2009:3) In recent years, WOZA has found itself joining other pro-democracy forces in denouncing human rights violations and demanding accountability and transparency from the state (Amnesty International Zimbabwe, 2009:2). They have also not been spared by restrictive legislation as they protested against various ills perpetrated by government. The movement has expressed that while to date no death has been recorded of a WOZA woman as a direct result of WOZA's activities, a high level of violence has occurred and women have suffered torture, injuries, incarceration, humiliation and trauma in order to keep their voices heard by Zimbabweans and the international community (WOZA Report, 2009:3).

Just like most pro-democracy CSOs, CBOs, NGOs and social movements, WOZA has been sucked into constitutional reform as it seeks to present the views of women in the drafting of a new constitution for the country (Sokwanele, 2011). Having realised that the political problems facing Zimbabwe emanate from a defective constitution, WOZA has embarked on the process of mobilising its members to participate in the constitution-making process seeking to '...*fully participate in order to ensure people are able to input into this most important of documents'* (Zimbabwe Charter, 2009).

4.2.4 Case Study 4: The National Constitutional Assembly (NCA)

With the formation of the NCA it was evident that civil society had realised the importance of a united voice against an increasingly despotic state. Formed out of many CSOs, individuals and unions, the NCA sought to 'agitate for constitutional change through advocacy and other

peaceful means' (Win, 2007:23). Formed in 1997, the NCA was a result of citizens' questions about the deficiencies of the country's democratic institutions, with professionals and individuals congregating in support of the constitutional reform process and putting it on the national agenda (Dorman, 2001:207). However on the contrary, the state showed '…no measured and serious effort at constitutional reform as it continued to introduce constitutional amendments mainly to centralise and consolidate its power and authority' (Sachikonye, 2011:4). ZANU PF presented civil society as secondary in the constitution-making process as evidenced by President Mugabe's statement that:

> *'…the procedure which all along I thought we would adopt is one which would first enable our party at the provincial and then at Central Committee levels to address the matter [*constitution-making process*] and come to some initial conclusions on the various parts of the constitution needing amendment. The views of other organisations will be collected in the process but only for consideration by us and in comparison with our own…''* (Mugabe in ACCORD article, 21 March 1998)

Civil society dissatisfaction increased as partisan constitutional amendments continued to benefit the ruling elites. This led to debates around an alternative constitution for the country as the '…centralised constitutional amendments sought to consolidate the power and authority of the ruling elites" (Sachikonye, 2011:4). Similarly Makumbe (2010:120) described the constitutional amendments as attempts by ZANU PF politicians '…to curb civic rights and intensify their control of the public'. Incensed by partisan constitutional amendments '…it was scarcely surprising that the initial clamour for constitutional reform emerged from outside ZANU PF party' (Sachikonye, 2011:8). Under the banner of the NCA, professionals, CSOs, NGOs, CBOs and opposition parties embarked on a constitutional reform debate '…because the existing constitution was viewed as serving the interests of the elite in power' (Makumbe, 2009:145). This led to the formation of the NCA to provide a vehicle through which citizens demanded participation in matters of public interest (Bratton, 2006:56).

Consequently the NCA has represented a unique experience and experiment in many ways as it provides the most opportune moment for citizens to play a role in the constitution-making process, the first ever in the history of the country (Raftopoulos, 2004:114). The NCA presents a new and unique experience by the NGO community in mobilising Zimbabweans around common issues of constitutional, political and social rights and justice (Makanje, et al, 2004:34), by providing a platform for a network of voices of dissent deliberating on

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constitutional reforms (Raftopoulos, 2004:114) and keeping democratisation as a priority issue on the national agenda and as an advocate for good governance (Sithole, 2001:160). In such a collective effort, citizens play a '…pivotal role in the drive to democratise the process of constitution-making through active participation' (Ihonvbere, 2000:2), in a country characterised by single-party hegemony (Ncube, 2010:45) and controlled by a narrow group of ZANU-PF and military officials who have used national resources and public institutions for personal enrichment (ICG Africa Report, 2004:ii). This has tended to compromise not only human rights, but also constitutional provisions that espouse these rights, resulting in the intensification of the constitutional reform debate in the country (ICG Africa Report, 2004:iii). The establishment of the NCA therefore was in response to calls for a constitutional reform process as it became increasingly evident that democracy was under threat from ruling elites who sought to cling to power even by unconstitutional means (Moyo, Makumbe & Raftopoulos, 2000; NCA Report, 1999), leading to the formation of the first coalition of pro-democracy civic groups to initiate the constitutional reform debate in the post-colonial period (Dorman, 2001:205).

According to Raftopoulos & Savage (2004:251), the constitution reform process initiated by the NCA demonstrates the possibility of appropriating the language of law and rights to effect social change. The language of law and rights allows relations and their attendant systems of domination to be more easily understood and challenged by disenfranchised communities and at the same time allows citizens to appreciate how power works through the institutions and rules which regulate their daily lives (Raftopoulos & Savage, 2004:252). These initiatives have been made possible by the existence of structures within the organisation which facilitate the flow of information to its members across the country. The NCA's day-to-day activities are run by a fulltime secretariat in Harare, which also supervises similar regional offices. In addition, the NCA has various task-oriented committees such as the Advocacy Committee, the Legal Committee, the Gender Committee, the Media Committee and the Disciplinary Committee, all of which meet on a regular basis (Dorman, 2001:206).

The NCA has engaged citizens through public meetings which seek '…to inject the discourse of constitutionalism into as many areas of discussion as possible' (Moyo, Makumbe & Raftopoulos, 2000:37). The information dissemination and educational strategies of the NCA have extended to newspapers, television and radio advertisements, with a heavy bias towards rural folk, who have been marginalised by much of the civil society movement in regard to

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the political developments in the country for a long time (NCA Report: 1999; Raftopoulos, 2000).

4.2.5 Bringing the constitutional reform debate to the people

A constitution and the legal order may lose legitimacy, when the constitution drafting process has not encouraged civic education, political participation, civic activism and respect for civil and human rights (Benomar, 2003:11). On a similar note, the NCA noted that ignorance was one of the factors that retarded the constitutional reform debate in the country (NCA, 1999). As a result, the NCA undertook a number of initiatives to enable citizens to understand the contents of the constitution (NCA, 1999), laying a strong foundation on the basis of which the constitutional reform process would be built and ensuring that citizens understood the constitutional contents (Dorman, 2001:208). Additionally, the NCA augmented its efforts of making the constitutional document understandable to the grassroots people by producing a summarised and simplified version and distributing this free of charge to people all over the country, in libraries and other public places where people could easily access the documents (Ncube, 1999:2).

Through donor funding, the NCA embarked on constitutional awareness programmes giving the people the urge to participate in drafting a new constitution for the country (Makumbe, 2009:12). By so doing, the NCA has facilitated interaction and debate among citizens within their localities. Once people could read the constitutional document in their local languages they would be likely to embark on discussions on the contents of the constitution among themselves, thereby initiating debate at local levels (Ncube, 1999:3). The NCA successfully mobilised citizens to reject the ZANU PF government-sponsored constitutional draft compiled by the Constitutional Commission which was '…dominated by ZANU PF elements who drew up a shoddy draft constitution that amounted to a travesty of justice and an insult to the intelligence of the people of Zimbabwe' (Makumbe, 2009:11). This successful rejection of the constitutional draft '…left the NCA as the main challenge to the constitutional reform process' (Sachikonye, 2011:10).

4.3 Networking of Selected Civic Groups as Agents of Social Change

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It has been argued that 'coalitions and alliances bolster advocacy by bringing together the strength and resources of diverse groups to create a more powerful voice for change' (Veneklasen & Miller, 2002:25). This is the premise on which non-state actors forged working relationships drawing from diverse groups to address the constitution reform process. The world of coalition building resonates from the basic motives behind the individual NGO's decision to join collaborative actions (Cakmak, 2007:1). Non-state entities, particularly the NGOs, are now more inclined to develop loose alliances in an attempt to exert the maximum pressure on the state (Cakmak, 2007:2). What has been common among all pro-democracy CSOs in the country has been their campaign for the restoration of citizens' constitutional rights. Despite some common features possibly used to identify the coalitions, these joint endeavours often display different tendencies depending on the case for which the individual actors gather together to exert the maximum possible influence (Cakmak, 2007:2). As a result, most of the pro-democracy CSOs in general, and the selected civic groups in particular, in this context ZimRights, CHRA and WOZA, found themselves sharing many common elements. Firstly, they are all affiliates of the NCA (See Appendix B, C and D)[34]. Secondly, they have found themselves addressing similar concerns that seek to promote human rights, good governance, democracy and the constitution reform process from a civil society perspective (Matyszak, 2009:2). If coalitions are based on commonly agreed values and principles, they can manage their own diversity in changing political circumstances (Win, 2007:27). This is the premise on which reworking relationships and social networks were established by the selected CSOs and other associated civic groups as they realised that they all needed to address the constitutional reform process.

These commonalities tended to pull the groups together, forging working relationships and linkages and forming a social movement coalition. Having realised their exclusion from the constitution-making process, several CSOs collaborated by making the constitution reform process a common factor among all pro-democracy actors. When the constitution reform process spilled into the unity government, the mandate to lead the process was given to Parliament (Sachikonye, 2011:13) and civil society felt short-changed and campaigned for incorporation into the process. Consequently, the interaction between the selected groups with the NCA and among themselves has been on an *ad hoc* basis, such as during protest marches connected with constitutional matters and other human rights and governance issues.

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[34] The Appendices show how CSOs forge network spaces and work together towards a common agenda, herein that of drafting a new constitution for the country

This has positioned the NCA not only as a focal point in articulating a civil society perspective on constitutional reform in the country, but the involvement of other pro-democracy civic groups with the NCA has also helped to buttress its image. This has enabled the NCA to act as the glue that helped to keep various civic groups focused on a specific objective, in this context the constitution reform process (Makumbe, 2010:12). The affiliation of various civic groups of the NCA has also helped to enliven the constitution reform debate as each of the various affiliates has performed complementary functions. All the constitution reform debates by the various civic groups have been conducted under the banner of the NCA. This has presented the NCA as the backbone of its affiliates not only in constitutional matters, but also in pro-democracy CSOs' campaign for constitutional reform and the restoration of democracy.

Despite the inclusive Government having failed to recognise the significance of civil society in the constitution-making process, the NCA has not given up on its campaign to mobilise citizens for a 'people-driven' constitution. It has collaborated with some of its affiliates to deploy its members to monitor the process. In changed circumstances where civil society groups are not been incorporated into the constitution-making process may transformed civil society into '...a reinvigorated and politically aware civil society supported by an array of international donor agencies and NGOs, [are] at the heart of this new movement" (Ihonvbere, 2000:3). On the same note, the collaboration of the Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP), the Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) and the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR), all affiliates of the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA), has strengthened and popularised the constitutional reform process. The three pro-democracy CSOs cumulatively dispatched 420 monitors around the country to oversee the constitution-making process (Sachikonye, 2011:13).

Additionally, the NCA and its affiliates have threatened to embark on a parallel constitution-making process and to mobilise pro-democracy CSOs to reject the government-led constitutional draft as it did in 1999. The NCA has also discredited the draft constitution that will emerge from 'the fraudulent process led by Parliament' since it is being led by 'selfish and greedy politicians from ZANU PF and the MDC (Chivasa, 2010)[35]' The NCA has taken

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[35] Madock Chivasa ' NCA Campaigns For NO Vote on New Constitution' Available online at

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advantage of the high literacy rate among much of the country's population to render the constitution in different languages to facilitate inter-personal debate in different places (Makumbe, 2000:11).

While the selected CSOs have worked to achieve the same goal of democratising politics in the country, each has done this from a different perspective. Different groups have either worked as single entities or have joined with other groups to enhance democracy in the country. ZimRights has worked towards enhancing the understanding of human rights in the country, and recently has joined with other human rights organisations such as the Zimbabwe Peace Project and Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights in monitoring the constitution-making processes that took place in 2010.

4.4 Conclusion

The deteriorating political and economic crises of the 1990s spilled into the new millennium. In response, the few existing pro-democracy CSOs overcame their fear of the state's reprisals, with more pro-active and fearless civic groups mushrooming, seeking to reinforce the existing ones. The need for a concerted effort to confront the state was realised as CSOs moved to forge linkages and working relationships, resulting in the formation of coalitions. Coalitions such as the NCA which are informed by broad objectives that fitted into the agenda of numerous CSOs became popular, especially at a time when the constitution reform debate had taken centre stage. Seeking to cling to their political hegemony, the ruling elites enacted more restrictive legislation in response to increased civil society activity and demands for accountability and responsiveness. Existing CSOs, CBOs, NGOs and social movements re-aligned their objectives to contribute to the enhancing of democracy and good governance and at the same time to provide a conduit through which citizens could confront the increasingly brutal state with a united voice. The selected case studies for this study collaborated with one another and with other pro-democracy CSOs to confront the country's political challenges. Consequently most pro-democracy CSOs and civil society activists became targets of the state's brutal security machinery as it sought to silence voices of dissent. Donors began to be blamed for sponsoring the NGO sector '…because the sector

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http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/july6_2010.html **and** 'NANGO Welcomes COPAC's Decision to Involve CivilSocietyinObservingtheConstitutionalOutreachMeetings' Available on http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/july8_2010.html

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focuses mainly on democracy issues, governance and human rights, leading to these organisations being viewed by the Mugabe regime as serving the interests of so-called Western imperialism' (Makumbe, 2009:12; Bratton & Cho, 2006). This retributive reaction of the state towards CSOs has not spared the selected civic groups. The existence of restrictive legislation has not discouraged civic groups and their members from confronting the state. The increased visibility of the groups and their corresponding increase in membership has shown the resilience of pro-democracy movements. Increased protests in many parts of the country provided evidence of an increasingly restive population against the backdrop of an equally aggressive and authoritarian government. Collaborative efforts by numerous pro-democracy groups towards empowering citizens and enhancing citizen participation have helped in educating citizens on the significance of participation However, what has been observed is the fact that the ZANU PF component of the inclusive Government has continued not only to refuse to implement the terms of the GPA, but has also proceeded to violate human rights through intimidation, harassment and arbitrary arrest of human rights and civil society leaders.
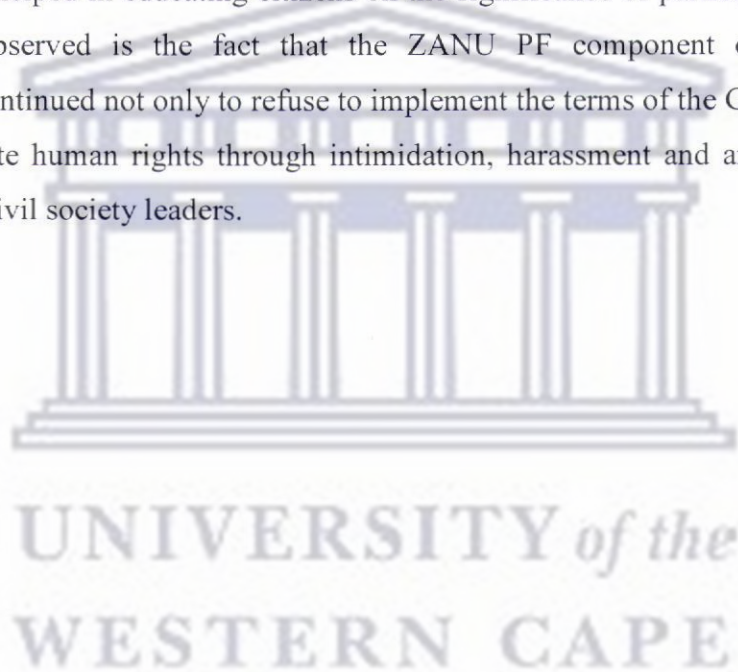
CHAPTER FIVE: SOCIAL STRUCTURE AS A DETERMINANT OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND MOBILISATION IN ZIMBABWE

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the activities of the four selected cases to determine whether these activities contributed to heightened citizen participation. The data presentation and analysis are presented in two parts involving a cumulative 300 tasks divided into 196 questionnaires for Chapter 5 and 104 face-to-face interviews for Chapter 6. Chapter 5 utilises a   deductive appproach to interpret quantitative data from questionnaire responses involving CSO respondents' biographical data to present a profile of those who belong to these organisations. The chapter discusses participants' biographical data, notably: age, gender; residential location (urban or rural) to establish the extent to which respondents' biographical data influences their propensity to participate within CSOs and as 'mobilisers' for democracy. Through documenting and tabulating participants' perceptions the researcher seeks to make inferences. The researcher also drew from other sources - such as selected CSOs' membership registers and EISA election reports on Zimbabwe - to establish changing voting patterns.

Respondents included ordinary members of selected civil society organisations, their secretariats and stakeholders, as well as members of the public who the researcher regarded would provide a vital contribution to the study. Chapters 5 and 6 collectively seek to complement each other in responding to the overarching Research Objective which reads:

To establish the extent to which civil society organisations have exploited formal and informal spaces to enhance citizen participation in governance processes in Zimbabwe, especially from the mid-1990s to 2010.

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5.2 Framework for Understanding Social Structure and Mobilisation in Zimbabwe

Drawing from debates on factors influencing citizen participation cited in the Literature Review for this study (see Chapter Two), as well as from the collective literary works of Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi entitled 'Studying Public Opinion in Africa: Social Structure' (2005: 36) and 'The Structure of Society', (2005: 163-169), the researcher has noted the influence of elements of social structures - notably, age, gender, residential location and level of education - on citizen participation. This section seeks to establish a framework for analysing the influence of the cited social structure elements on citizen participation and mobilisation.

In establishing a framework for social structure, the researcher seeks to explore social factors that influence behavioural patterns. It is generally assumed that these demographic effects 'shape the way in which individuals reason and behave, providing an explanation of why people think and act the way they do' (Mattes et al, 2005:36). In the case of age, the newer generation is open to change, with older people being more resistant to change. This presents the younger generation as reformist and more likely to support social change and the older generation as conservative. Citizens in urban areas have been perceived as existing in modern parts of society and are more likely to become supporters of reform by undertaking various acts of political and economic participation. A combination of residential location and gender presents men living in urban areas as pro-active and more likely to express support for democracy. The educated, stirred by scholarly debates around democracy, possess the urge to inquire and seek enlightenment, are dynamic and seek political and social change (World Bank, 2007:471). Below are some of the responses from participants, complemented by documentary analysis of CSOs' records and EISA Reports (2008) on Zimbabwe.

5.3 Responses from Selected Civil Society Organisations

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The data collection process for this study commenced in early December 2009 and was targeted at familiarising the researcher with some participants who were going to attend and participate in the NCA AGM where most affiliates were represented. The data collection process did not end with the NCA AGM but proceeded to cover the constitution- making outreach process which started in June 2010 and ended in March 2011. Participants at the NCA AGM enabled the researcher to conduct focus group interviews. Site visits to selected CSOs' offices were also undertaken to interview members of the secretariats and CSO members. In each CSO the researcher sought the help of a research assistant for the purpose of distributing and receiving completed questionnaires from the secretariat and members of the organisations who visited their respective organisations' offices for various purposes. The research assistants became contact persons. Below is the summary of interview schedules/questionnaires administered.

Civic Group	Questionnaires [n=196]	No. of Returns/Responses [n=196]	% Retention
ZimRights	35	35	100%
CHRA	35	35	100%
WOZA	35	35	100%
NCA	60	60	100%
Others	21	21	100%
TOTAL	196	196	100%

The researcher attributes the high ratio of survey questionnaire completion to the contact persons within the selected civic groups who not only received completed questionnaires, but who also followed up with respondents. Additionally, the researcher made use of focus group interviews to get respondents in one place to elicit maximum responses. Each civic group was allocated 35 questionnaires. The NCA was allocated 60 questionnaires by virtue of its being a coalition. A further 21 questionnaires were reserved for academics, local government officials and other members of the public whose operations fall within the realm of the study (hereafter referred to as 'Other').

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5.4 Analysis of Demographic Determinants Influencing Participation

5.4.1 Age and its Impact on Citizen Participation

In incorporating the age variable, the researcher sought to establish the extent to which it influences citizen participation.

Below are responses of participants per age group in response to the question *'How active have you been in civil society activities since becoming a member?'*

Age Range	% age	Level of Participation in Civics (n=196)				Cumulative participants in the age range
		Very Active	Active	Non-committal	Not Active	
18-25	25%		✓			49
26-35	29%	✓				57
36-45	24%		✓			47
46-55	12%			✓		24
56-69	7%			✓		14
+- 70	2%				✓	4
						196

The table shows that participants within the 18-45 age range appear to be more actively involved in CSO activities. Those within the 46-69 categories and those over 70 years exhibit correspondingly less commitment to participating in civic society and political activities.

Two questions dealt with perceptions on political reform and civil society involvement in the reform process.

n=196	Yes	No
Do you think there is a need for political reform in the country?	196	-
Should civil society groups be involved in campaigning for political	193	3

reforms?

The majority of participants expressed the view that political reform is necessary in Zimbabwe. The researcher observed that members of the different groups supported the idea of political alternatives and civil society influence on governance processes. This is why many of the participants are active members of CSOs with some taking leadership positions in various civic groups. The majority of participants concurred that civil society groups should play an active role in political reforms. The research established that citizens' propensity to participate in civil society activities and to some extent in political activity decreases with age, as represented by the graph below.
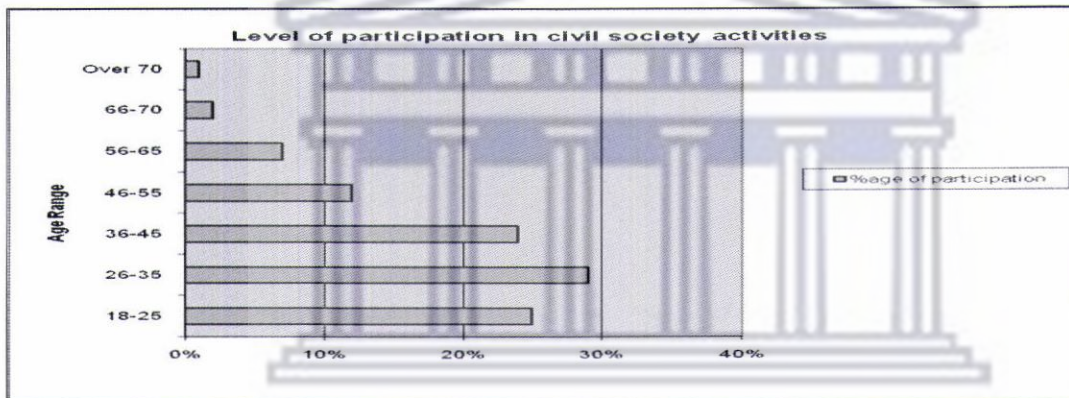
In responding to the question:

'*What has been the state of democracy in the country, especially from the mid-1990s?*' ll participants agreed that Zimbabwe does not meet the minimum prerequisites of democracy. Below is a representation of respondents to this question.

Age Range	Respondents	Remarks (n=196)				% Age of Total
		Democratic	Deteriorating Democracy	Very undemocratic	Failed State	
18-25	49		✓			25%
26-35	57			✓		29%
36-45	47			✓		24%
46-55	24			✓		12%
56-69	15			✓		7%
+- 70	4	✓				2%

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	196	-	53	143		100%

A total of 53 participants indicated that democratic standards in the country were deteriorating and 143 expressed how undemocratic the status quo has become. The fact that there is no group which expressed the view that Zimbabwe is a 'failed state' could imply that all participants are still optimistic that through continued engagement, democracy is achievable.

The responses below reinforce where the majority of participants had been affected by direct repression, with specific reference to several 'operations[36]' which the state perpetrated against pro-democracy activists (as discussed in previous chapters).

Which of the various operations have affected you? [n=196]	Yes	No
Operation Gukurahundi (1980) (political unrest)	2	194
Operation Bring Down Dishes (2008) (elections)	192	6
Operation I cannot Vote (2008) (elections)	177	19
Operation Where Did You Vote Your X (2008) (elections)	186	10
Operation Red Finger (2008) (elections)	180	16
Operation Shut Them Up (2008) (elections)	195	1
Operation Close Your Mouth (2010) (constitution making process)	188	8

In the first operation of 1980, most respondents were either not members of CSOs or were yet to be born, hence the large number of those who indicated 'No'. From 2008, most participants indicated 'Yes' which shows that they were denied their right to information and participation in peaceful elections and were even not allowed to participate in the constitution- making process of 2010.

In response to the question:

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[36] Refer to Chapter 3, section 3.9 for details of these operations.

n=196	Yes	No
Has any of your CSO meetings been denied by police for not having police clearance?	194	2

Most respondents within all the age groups expressed disappointment at the state's manipulation of legislation to prevent CSOs from engaging with their members They also noted that the requirement of a police clearance to hold a meeting was oppression which showed that the police force has become partisan and acted on behalf of ZANU PF to suppress CSOs from embarking on civic education programmes and other meetings that seek to create a critical mass. Most age groups concurred that failure by the state to provide an enabling environment for civil society organisations to operate has compromised democratic spaces in the country. The researcher observed that the few participants who indicated that they had not been prevented by the police from holding meetings with their members were welfare civic groups and not governance CSOs. This confirms the view that governance CSOs are seen as a threat to ZANU PF political hegemony.

5.4.2 Level of Literacy as a Determinant of Participation

The research focuses on literacy levels as another element of social structure. Literacy intertwines with other elements of social structures, notably age, gender and to some extent residential location. Below is a representation of participants' levels of literary that should be read together with data showing the age of participants. Levels of literacy and educational attainment were used interchangeably in this thesis.

The literacy rate of respondents ranged from basic to highly literate as indicated below.

Level of Education	Number of Respondents	Remarks
Basic literacy	35 =11 male & 24 female	0-7 yrs at school-barely literate
Fairly Literate	43=11 male & 32 female	7-10 yrs at school-can read and write
Attained 'O' Level	74=52 male & 22 female	11 yrs at school-can deliberate issues

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Attained 'A 'Level	**22**=15 male &7 female	13 yrs at school-can deliberate issues
Professional	**14**=18 male &6 female	Post 'A' Level qualification-able to provide a critical analysis
University education	**8**=6 male& 2 female	Attended university- can critically analyse issues
TOTAL	**196 Respondents**	A mixture ranging from those who can barely read to those who can provide a critical analysis of events and processes

The researcher has presented the various literacy categories of participants to establish the influence of education attainment on citizen participation. The high number of respondents with 'O' level of education (74) is because in the Zimbabwean context that is the basic qualification that every citizen strives to achieve. Below is a representation of respondents by level of literacy which indicates the highest population of participants in this study and the group that is most likely to participate more in civic affairs.
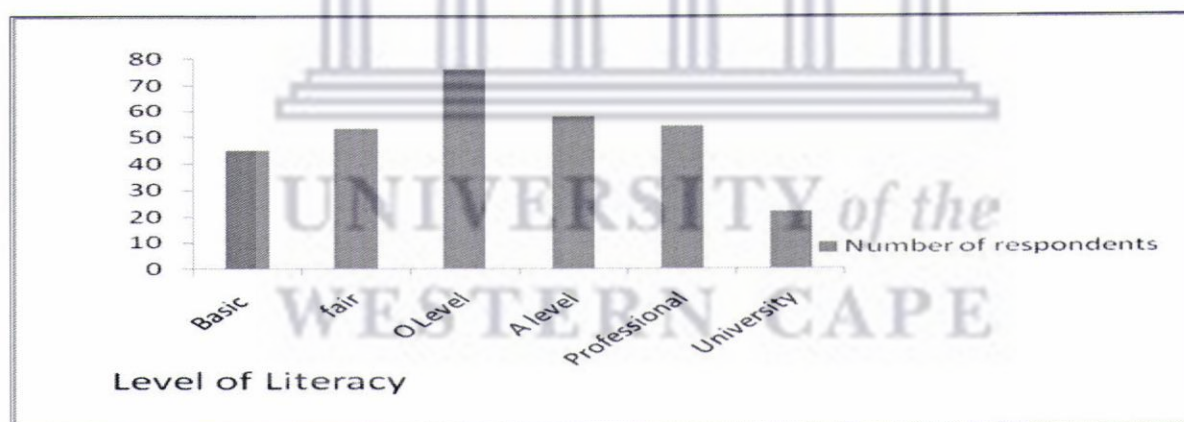
Those categorised under 'Fairly literate' (43) are most likely to be beneficiaries of the mass and compulsory education system of the 1980s-1990s, during which period everyone was compelled by the state to acquire the free education that was being provided. This implies that most of the respondents within this category may have attained their education during this time. The researcher attributes the low interest in civic affairs among those with lower levels of literacy to their limited understanding of the role of non-state actors in the governance of the country.

The researcher observed an economic dimension to the youths' participation as they seek to support any political leaders who would offer them economic opportunities such as jobs, further education and a sound national economy. The youths are also most likely to make increasing demands on government. Given the 80% unemployment rate at the time the interviews were conducted (2008), these two groups show the most disappointment with the government and the economy which has failed to offer them employment opportunities. This was worsened by the fact that most of the participants within the first four age ranges hold professional and academic qualifications that can ordinarily get them employment. This was shown by the number of those employed as indicated below:

n=196	Yes	No
Do you have a formal and/or professional qualification?	182	14
Are you formally employed?	8	188

The figures presented above show a high number of professionally qualified citizens with no formal employment. The researcher has observed that most of these participants are at their prime ages and as such form the bulk of the electorate, and would not be likely to vote for any poorly performing political party which does not provide job opportunities for them. As was discussed below, under 6.4.2, high literacy levels enable the youthful participants to critically analyse political and economic developments in the country and it is most likely they will be able to make independent judgments on the performance of political leaders.

Consequently, the researcher observed that those respondents whose level of education went beyond the minimum literacy level portrayed a high appreciation and comprehension of the intricacies of human rights and civil liberties. Such respondents were more likely to be active in civic and political affairs. In cases where respondents had low literacy levels, there appeared to be more fear and anxiety in response to government, leading to low levels of participation, with one respondent confirming the view that 'fear is the worst enemy to campaigning for democracy'[sic].

Responding to the question: 'Which forms of media are available to you or would you prefer?'

most age groups expressed the view that they have similar challenges as far as access to media is concerned. The researcher provided the following participants' responses:

	Local public print and electronic	26
n=196	Local independent print	150
Indicate your media	Foreign print and electronic	87
preferences	CSO newsletters and free radio sets	188
	Any media available	12

Many participants showed a preference towards one media form, with the majority choosing local independent media (150) or foreign media houses (87), and others depending on CSO newsletters and free radio stations. Those opting for 'local independent' media presented a high percentage of the population for this study because local independent media are not influenced by the state and these are also affordable, in relation to foreign tabloids or TV channels. The large number of participants depending on CSO newsletters and free radio sets is due to the fact that most do not have a dependable income and cannot afford services of foreign electronic media[37]. Those who could afford services of foreign media still reflect the relatively high number of 87, given the high poverty levels characterising the general citizenry. The lowest response of 26 responses was that of those who prefer local public print and electronic media. The majority of participants appear to have lost faith in the local public media as it is seen as the mouth piece of government.

The information above shows that the majority of participants rely on either foreign media and/or on newsletters and free radio sets distributed by CSOs to facilitate access to information to their members and members of the public, especially among grassroots population groups. As regards local independent media, it should be noted that it is only print media that exist as there are no independent TV or radio stations in Zimbabwe. Regarding foreign print and electronic media, not many people can afford these forms of media hence the low number of respondents who have access to them. The researcher has also observed

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[37] Independent press reports quote media sources as saying that 'Impoverished villagers have sacrificed their livestock to invest in free-to-air satellite dishes as local broadcaster ZBC continues to churn out coarse propaganda in support of ZANU (PF)', cited from an online newspaper article *'Villagers sacrifice herds to get decent news'* in http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk and http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/oct16_2011.html [Accessed on 17 October, 2011]

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from the above set of responses that people have become very selective when it comes to media preferences as shown above where only 12 participants out of 196 indicated that they are comfortable with any information source available.

5.5 Voter [Civic] Education, Elections and Voting Patterns

The researcher has considered civic education as falling within the education discourse as presented in the social structure elements, although this may not involve formal education. In this case, voter/civic education seek to inform and educate citizens about the importance, purpose and modalities of participating in elections, with a view to encouraging citizens to vote. In this context citizens are also encouraged to regard elections and electoral processes as citizen entitlements and as a responsibility and obligation in which responsible citizens should take part. In seeking to establish the relevance of participants' level of participation in elections, the researcher was guided by the question:

'How often have you participated in elections?' the responses to which are represented in the table below:

Election Period [n=196]	1990	1995	2000	2002	2005	2008
CSO Members Who Voted	22	62	111	146	167	194
CSO Members Who Did not Vote	37	34	85	50	29	2
Total	59	96	196	196	196	196

Despite the fact that there were other elections before 1990, the researcher has started from the 1990 elections because that is the period on which the study is concentrating. Other elections such as those of 1980 and 1985 are not relevant in this study because the period prior to 1990 is not relevant to the scope of this study. It is from the year 2000 that the full complement of participants was able to participate in all elections.

The information above shows that in the 1990 and 1995 elections, some of the participants in this study had not yet reached the legal age of majority which in Zimbabwe is 18 years; hence the total for 1990 and 1995 is 59 and 96 respectively. Additionally, the data above indicates increasing trends towards participating in elections. The 18-26 and 27-35 age ranges are not included in the 1990 elections because these had not yet reached the legal age of majority..

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Some participants from this group only became eligible to vote from 1995 onwards, hence these are included in the number of those who took part in the elections after 1990. Those cited as 'CSO Members Who Did not Vote' show the number of participants from the cumulative total of 196 for this chapter who did not vote in each election session. The data shows that in each election session more people from this sample of 196 are voting, while fewer are failing to vote for one reason or another. By 2008 the number of those who did not vote dropped to 2, indicating an increased willingness to vote, which is mostly likely as a result of voter education by CSOs as they intensified their engagement with citizens through their outreach programmes in response to deteriorating democratic institutions, as has been discussed in Chapter 3, under sections 3.4, 3.5, 3.6 and 3.7.

The increase in the number of people who participated in elections and the subsequent decrease of those who did not vote show general trends in electoral processes that characterised the Zimbabwean electoral and political landscape during the cited electoral periods. Information gathered in this study has been correlated with that from documentary analysis of the EISA Report of 2008 which also gives figures of consecutive elections from 1980 to 2008. The researcher has drawn from the EISA Report to establish voting patterns during the various election periods, especially from 1990. Thorough documentary analysis of the EISA Election Report of 2008 on Zimbabwe has attested to the rise in the number of voters from 1980 to 2008, when the last national elections were held. The researcher also noted that through voter education programmes all the selected civic groups have encouraged their members to regularly participate in elections as a way of contributing to democracy.

Respondents from within selected CSO membership expressed the view that their engagement with civil society organisations had transformed their attitudes towards elections and increased their resolve to register and participate in elections. Various CSO structures indicated that they emphasise within their membership the detrimental impact of voter apathy as it would promote and perpetuate anarchy and authoritarianism in the country. CSO respondents were asked the open- ended question:

'How do you seek to promote the conduct of free and fair elections in Zimbabwe?'

In response to the above question, secretariats of selected civic organisations confirmed that they have supplemented voter education with the observation and monitoring of elections in

Zimbabwe. In participating in election monitoring, the selected CSOs sought to achieve gender equity as one of the elements of social structures, as not doing so would have compromised the exercise. What can be noted from the data in the table below is that with each consecutive election, civil society groups became increasingly prepared to appoint election monitors as a way of involving citizens in the whole electoral process in different capacities. Below are figures provided by the CSOs showing involvement as election monitors.

Civic Group	1990	1995	2000	2002	2005	2008
ZimRights	-	3	7	9	12	28
WOZA	-	-	-	5	7	9
NCA	-	-	12	25	36	56
Total	-	3	19	39	55	93

Blank spaces indicate that the CSO had not been established when elections for the specific year were conducted. The data above indicates that CSOs intensified their efforts to be part of the electoral processes by monitoring the whole electoral process and where necessary identifying any breach of the Electoral Act.

5.6 Interacting with the Citizenry through Workshops

While the researcher is aware that the selected civic groups were equally engaged with their members, this section focuses on activities of the NCA because this encompasses most CSOs including the selected cases. The NCA regularly rolls out national consultative forums including workshops and voter/civic education programmes across the country. The researcher utilised NCA records to extract information on workshops conducted in different parts of the country. In all cases all affiliates of the NCA were represented at these workshops. Of all the workshops run by the NCA the researcher selected those of 2007 when the most CSOs had intensified their engagement with their members and members of the public. The workshops were carried out in 2007 on the eve of the national elections to prepare citizens for the elections conducted in 2008. The researcher drew from workshop records of the NCA grassroots itineraries from January to December 2007. Documentary analysis indicated that in various sectoral areas, a total of 35 gender workshops were held and

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attracted 1346 participants, while 25 youth workshops were attended by 1018 participants and 48 public workshops by 6068 participants, all from January to December 2007. The majority of participants were women; of the 6068 attendees at the public workshops, 56% were female while 44% were male. The NCA takes cognisance of the marginalisation of women mostly in rural areas. Below are the statistics of the public workshops held across the country during the cited period.

Region	Total Number of Workshops	No. of Participants	Attendance %	
			Female	Male
Bulawayo	7	1147	64	36
Harare	6	925	54	46
Manicaland	6	614	59	41
Mash. Central	1	52	77	23
Mash. West	5	696	41	59
Masvingo	6	757	60	40
Mat. North	7	755	53	47
Mat.South	5	586	59	41
Midlands	5	536	51	49
Total Average	48	6068	56	44

Source: NCA Records January to December 2007

The information above indicates the number of people who attended NCA workshops at different venues, disaggregated by gender. The workshops were held in different residential locations (urban and rural) and in each case the attendance was high. Some provinces reflect a fewer number of workshops than other provinces. This appears to have been largely due to intimidation. For example, the coordinator cited Mashonaland as having held one workshop for the whole of 2007 because the province is a ZANU PF political stronghold. Additionally, the police in this province allegedly connived with the ZANU PF political leadership in the province to prevent the NCA from holding workshops.

5.7 Trends of Enhanced Citizen Participation

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From the activities of the selected CSOs and participants' responses, the researcher observed emerging trends that are key drivers of citizen participation. These trends were drawn from participants' responses, documentary and content analyses of EISA election reports as well as from electoral statistics. The identification of trends seeks to respond to the research objective which reads:

To establish and present trends of enhanced citizen participation as a manifestation of increased civic awareness.

The trends of citizen participation identified include (but are not limited to) increased organisational membership, increased political awareness leading to participation in elections and ward meeting attendance, as well as diminishing voter apathy.

5.7.1 Increased Membership as an Indicator of Raised Awareness

Most CSOS studied here have experienced an upsurge in membership, as indicated in their respective membership registers, especially from the late 1990s. Civic leadership from the selected civic groups expressed their overarching objective as being that of seeking to create critical citizens who are able contribute to the democratic discourse.

CSOs' outreach programmes were identified as being responsible for the increased awareness and penetration of civil society into rural areas. Although this study does not seek to make a comparative analysis of civil society membership in urban and rural areas, available evidence and literature indicate an overall increase in citizen participation in civics by both rural and urban citizens. This could partly be due to improved access to information by those from both residential locations. The figures presented below are those of paid-up members.

Year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
ZimRights	1000	1700	4240	6650	9950	13315	41400	53100	62450	83400	95000	101400	113000	115000
CHRA	-	-	36000	48000	56000	65900	66000	68500	68790	68856	69000	71455	71599	72963
WOZA	-	-	-	-	-	3424	4873	5519	5712	8395	8596	8784	8796	8864

The high civil society membership is attributable to a number of reasons. Firstly, **it is due to** the outreach programmes of CSOs targeted at grassroots population groups, many of whom are found in rural areas where the majority of the population lives. Secondly, decentralisation

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of structures of civic groups has enabled mobilisation of CSO members as well as members of the public. The penetration by civic organisations in remote parts of the country has enabled the creation of an informed rural population who understand the significance of elections and how to make decisive political choices. Thirdly, improved access to information in both residential locations has facilitated sharing of ideas. Fourthly, unlike in the past when high literacy levels were concentrated in urban areas, the shrinking of the economy and the hyperinflationary environment have seen urban/rural migration, as young graduates, unable to secure employment, resorted to farming activities in rural areas. This migration pattern was further exacerbated by the forceful removal of informal settlement settlers from urban areas by the ZANU PF government under *Operation Murambatsvina*[38], during which an estimated 700 000 people were rendered homeless after the destruction of their shelters. The table above, on increasing membership of the selected cases, has been reproduced in graph form for clarity..
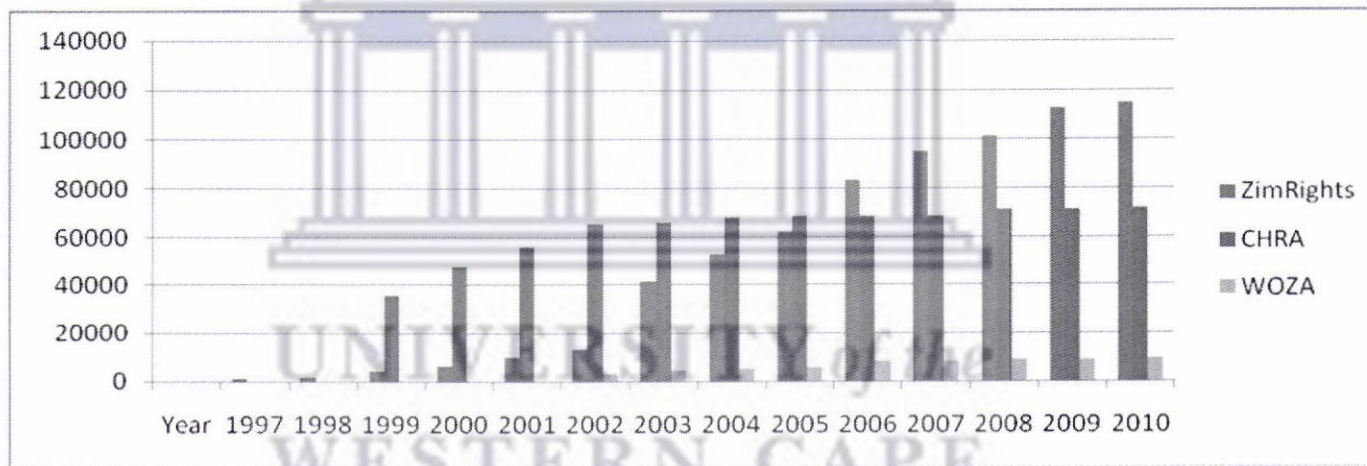
The data could possibly imply that citizens have attained a high degree of awareness as indicated by their increasing membership of CSOs whose influence could also most likely have affected their political behaviour during elections.

The NCA has also realised increased membership over the years, both in terms of affiliates as well as in number of individuals joining the civic group.[39]

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[38] Refer to Chapter 3 (section 3.9) *The Institutionalisation of Violence in Zimbabwean Politics* in this study.

[39] **Source:** NCA Report, 2010

Year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
NCA	21060	47016	52300	56650	62950	186200	201941	288675	372450	383400	335020	541500	634400	760500

The huge membership increases within the NCA from the early 2000s corresponds with the extent of democratic decay during the same time. It seems likely that civil society growth during the period after 2004 could have been a response to the deteriorating political and economic situation that began to set in during the same time. It is most likely that this could imply that the instability within the political dispensation influenced an upsurge in civil society growth, as anger and frustration among the population increased the people's resolve for political change - more so from 2005 to 2010, as shown in the figure below. Once again the information presented above has been reproduced below to highlight changing voting patterns and for purposes of clarity.
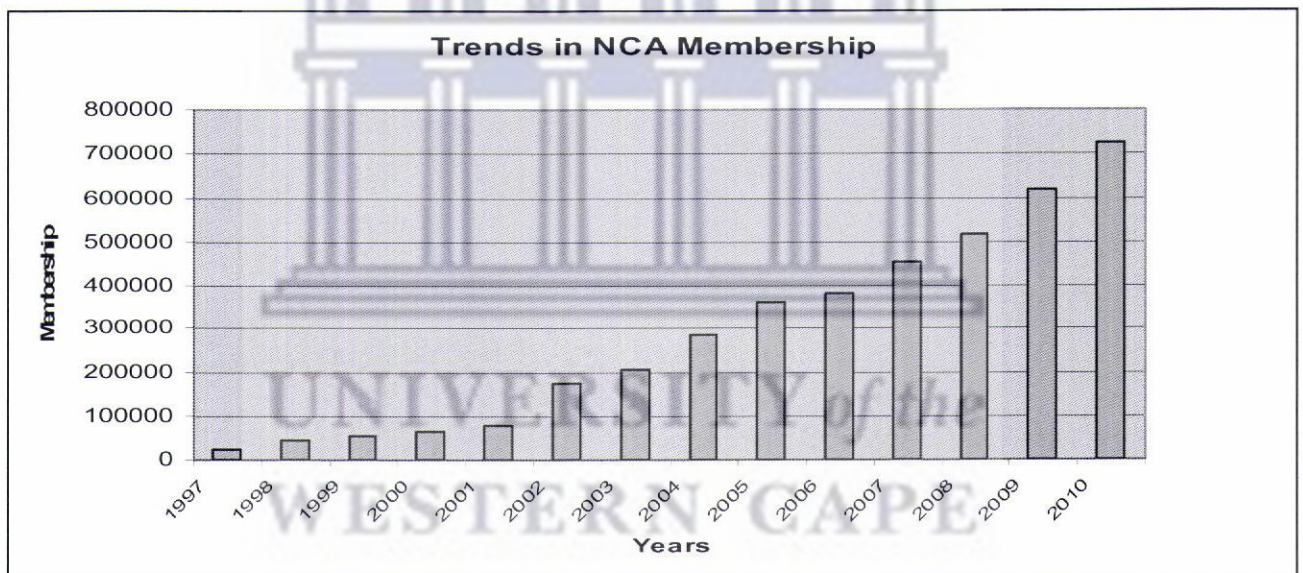
Source: NCA Report, 2010

5.7.2 Selected Indicators of Political Awareness

Section 5.2 of this chapter has indicated that CSOs help in shaping the way citizens behave and relate to political issues. Similarly the influence of CSOs on citizens' political behaviour has been observed in this study. The data presented below reveals vital information on the political behaviour of respondents especially from 1997 to 2009. The data was collected from an NCA focus group workshop. The researcher selected at least 25 participants from each of

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the selected cases to establish the level of political awareness from 1997-2009. The exercise was carried out to determine citizens' awareness of various political and electoral processes and the factors that either promote or inhibit participation. The statistical data below seeks to show the increase in the number of people who joined CSOs and their responses to guiding questions that seek to establish their involvement in civic organisations. This section is a continuation of attempts to further determine participants' level of political awareness. Responses were expressed as a percentage of the total population of respondents for this session.

Selected Indicators of Political Awareness	Rural (%)		Urban (%)	
	1997	2009	1997	2009
Hold membership to more than one CSO	18	57	56	85
Hold any position within CSO structures	3	13	48	74
Participate in Protest Marches	4	9	88	76
Aware that participation in elections is a right	13	67	85	96
Attend civic education sessions by civic groups	18	75	65	76
Hold any position in a political party	28	95	65	97
Participated in the elections	16	68	65	82
Aware of constitution reform process	16	67	18	75
Aware of Fundamental Rights	29	56	76	93

The presentation shows that for each question, responses indicate an increase in the number of people confirming a transformation in their level of political awareness. However, the researcher noted that more people were joining other CSOs in addition to those in which they had initially held membership. The researcher once again attributes this trend to increased political awareness. Additionally, the information above presents urban citizens as more pro-active in the activities of civil society organisations than their rural counterparts. Observations from the above statistical data indicate that despite high attendance at civic education sessions, rural people have not been visible in other public activities that require one to exhibit one's political affiliation, for fear of victimisation. The opposite is true of those

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in urban areas who engage in civil society activities. The high political affiliation in rural and urban areas adds to the dimension of increased political awareness. However this does not suggest that there is no political intimidation and politicisation of public institutions in urban areas, but it seems those in urban areas are more likely to be prepared to contend with these threats and in some cases outnumber those seeking to intimidate them. Additionally, the increase from 18% to 75% of those who became aware of the constitution reform process indicates that people became gradually aware of the political developments in the country and of the pivotal role of a people-driven constitution in a democracy. The same applies to the increase in the number of people who opted for positions within pro-democracy civil society organisations which rose from 48% in 1997 to 74% by 2009.

As has been discussed under section 3.4, 3.5, 3.6 and 3.7 in Chapter 3, victimisation by ZANU PF operatives characterised many of the political activities of the 1990s and 2000s as it became evident that the party had lost public appeal. In response to this threat to its hegemony, politically motivated violence was perpetrated in the form of 'operations' mostly in rural areas.

In response to the question: *'What major factor has impacted on political participation by citizens in the country?'* several respondents indicated that there were several factors that militated against citizen participation notably in rural areas, where intimidation and harassment, and politicisation of traditional leaders and youth militants have become rampant. Both of these institutions have become extensions of ZANU PF's campaign machinery. Additionally, threat of harm by the youth militias and confiscation of land by traditional chiefs belonging to those who do not support ZANU PF have tended to discourage people from participating in CSOs' activities and/or freely expressing their political choices. Below is a summary of responses from participants on the prevalence of factors that militate against political participation in rural and urban areas.

Factors Influencing Political Participation [n=196]		Residential Location	
		Rural	Urban
Freedom of expression		No	No
	Youth Militia	Yes	Yes

Intimidation and Harassment	Traditional Chiefs	Yes	No
Physical Assault		Yes	Yes
Voting Closely Monitored		Yes	Yes
Eviction From Homestead		Yes	Yes
Confiscation of Property and Livestock		Yes	No

Participants drawn from both rural and urban areas pointed out that factors cited on the table above have influenced their participation in politics. As indicated above, freedom of expression has been curtailed in both residential locations, while intimidation was found to be more prevalent in rural areas than in urban areas. Physical assault was also found to be common in both locations, but was more prevalent in rural areas. In both cases, monitoring of voting was found to be a common practice but more so in rural areas, where villagers were forced to vote for ZANU PF or risk being evicted from their rural homesteads and even having their livestock and land taken over by youth militia and other ZANU PF supporters. It has been noted that physical assault occurred in both locations, including rape, beatings and even destruction of property of those perceived to belong to political parties other than ZANU PF. Civil society groups have not been spared in this wave of politically-motivated violence as they have been accused of seeking to influence the electorate, with relief NGOs having been targeted and accused of politicising food aid in rural areas.

5.7.3 Ward Meeting Attendance as a Sign of Raised Awareness

In seeking to establish whether attendance at ward meetings was related to raised civic awareness among residents the researcher explored data of feedback meetings between councillors from 1992-2010. Additionally, the researcher consulted councillors' records of meetings and those of CHRA representatives who usually make contributions to such meetings.

How would you rate the performance of councillors in your ward? [n-186]

	Very Good	Satisfactory	Very Bad	Not Sure
Level of effectiveness	41	123	22	4
Frequency of Report back meetings with residents	147	35	4	-
Ability to have problems in the wards resolved	5	33	145	3

This data does not include the 10 councillors whose performance was being assessed by residents, hence there were 186 respondents. The residents were of the opinion that councillors showed satisfactory effectiveness in representing residents in council and were very good at providing constant feedback to residents. The residents showed high confidence in their councillors because these councillors had just been elected and their performance had not been tried and tested. However, the majority of residents bemoaned the councillors' inability to resolve their problems of frequent water cuts and sewer bursts.

Additionally, the researcher also sought participants' opinions on the extent to which residents could influence local government policy by asking:

To what extent can residents influence local governance? [n-196]				
	To a large extent	To some extent	Not at all	Not Sure
In budgetary processes	98	56	35	7
In service delivery	123	58	12	3
In formulating council policy	94	33	31	38

Responses to this question are from both councillors and residents. In the various responses, participants showed that residents have a role to play in enhancing local governance. In all columns the respondents were of the opinion that residents can influence developments in local governance. However, on policy formulation most respondents held the notion that such issues should be left to local government officials. In regard to budgetary processes, participants felt that they should be incorporated in deciding how the money should be spent. The above table shows that there are still residents who feel that they do not have the capacity to influence policy issues, but that they can be involved in other processes.

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Which of the areas do residents want addressed at ward meetings? [n-196]				
	To a large extent	To some extent	Not at all	Not Sure
Budgetary Issues	123	24	26	23
Service Delivery	178	18	-	-
Provision of Housing	196	-	-	-

The researcher sought participants' perceptions on whether attendance at ward meetings presents residents' level of awareness in civic affairs. It emerged that residents want issues of housing addressed more than anything else. All respondents also showed interest in having problems of service delivery resolved. Additionally, they have shown an interest in participating in local council budgetary processes, indicating that rate payers would want to know and determine how their money is used.

CHRA, which had records of all such meetings, also provided the statistics, most of which generally tallied with what had been provided by different councillors. The researcher presents attendance at ward meetings in one of the most active wards, Ward 6 in Mabvuku, where confrontation with the local authority over service delivery has been prevalent. The figures represent annual average attendance at each meeting from 1997- to 2010.

The graph indicates a steady drop in attendance from 1999 to 2001, eventually rising again from 2002-2004. The years 2004-2007 experienced a stable rise before experiencing a sharp rise between 2008-2010. As has been referred to in sections 3.4 to 3.7 in Chapter 3, government agrarian policies (mostly in 1999-2000) and policies on informal settlements (in 2005) displaced many residents and this is highly likely to have influenced demographic patterns in many urban areas.

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Average Attendance per annum
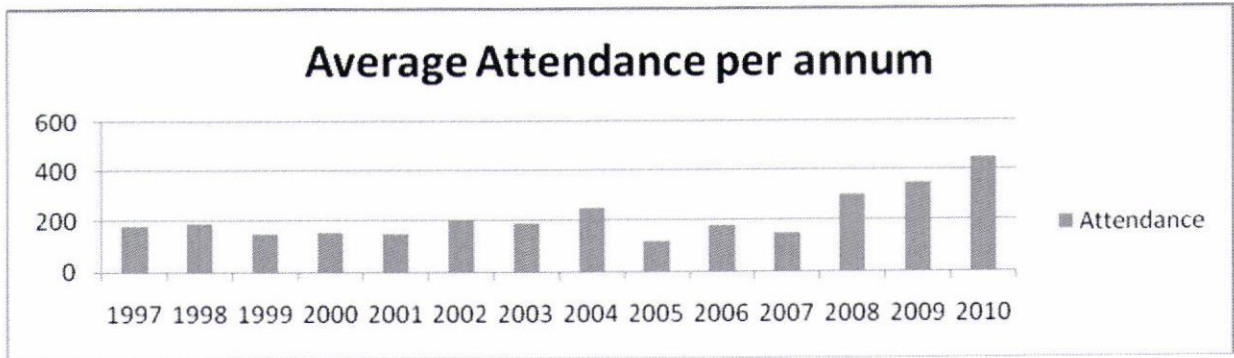
It could be that from 2006 further deteriorating democratic standards increased anger within most citizenss at a time when CSOs had also intensified their activities to create a critical mass which led to an upsurge in ward meetings from 2008. The study obsered a correlation between developments at local government level and events at mainstream political level where civil society has shown that it has the capability to influence and shape citizens' political behaviour, notably in their participation in elections.

5.7.4 Increased Awareness and the Electoral Processes

The various developments cited above created an increasingly restive population eager for political and social change. This also provided the impetus for citizens to want to participate in elections as a way of expressing themselves and making their political choices. In attempting to establish whether there can be a correlation between EISA electoral figures and NCA membership figures, the researcher sought to reconcile these two variables - the EISA and the NCA figures. In presenting the statistical data below, the researcher does not seek to suggest that the upsurge in registered voters in consecutive years was the sole result of efforts by the NCA and its pro-democracy affiliates, but that these efforts were a contributory factor in raising public awareness about the significance of participating in elections. The graph below shows that as the number of registered voters increased, the membership of the NCA also increased, leading to the assumption that there seems to be a correlation between the rising figures of registered voters and the membership of the NCA. Below is a presentation showing increased civil society membership and decreasing voter apathy.

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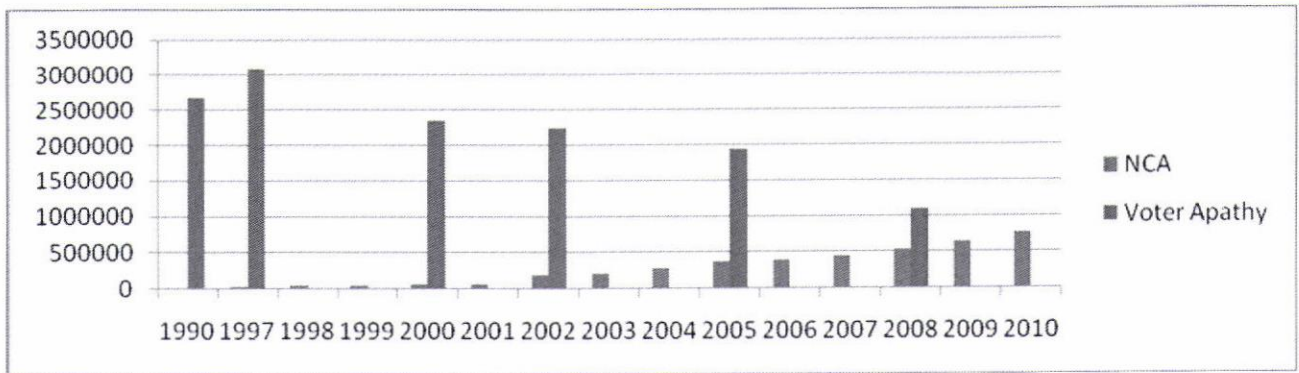
A gradual increase in registered voters for successive elections is evident, especially from 2000, and a decrease in voter apathy is apparent. At the same time the percentages of registered voters who failed to participate in elections continued to decrease, reflecting raised awareness of the significance of participating in elections. The general picture given by this representation confirms the role of CSOs as a key driver in mobilising citizens to participate in elections.

5.7.5 Evidence of Diminishing Voter Apathy

As has been cited above, increasing the civil society membership base and increasing the number of registered voters and those who actually participated in elections translated to a corresponding decrease in voter apathy. Drawing from the EISA Election Report on Zimbabwe of 2008 on voting patterns and the number of registered voters, the researcher established a decrease in voter apathy. Below is a statistical representation of people registered to vote, those who voted at each voting session and those who did not vote from 1990 to 2008 when the last election was held.

Status	1990	1995	2000	2002	2005	2008
Registered Voters	4,440816	4,646891	5, 049815	5,288763	5,568637	5,934768
Valid Votes	1,757859	1,557558	2,706973	3,046891	3,634645	4,937240
Did not vote	2,682957	3,089333	2,342842	2,241872	1,933992	1,097528

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Voter apathy (%)	60.4%	47.7%	46.3%	42.4%	34.7%	18.5%

Source: Electoral Institute for Southern Africa Report (EISA) (2008) on Zimbabwe

The line graph below offers a presentation of the decrease in voter apathy.
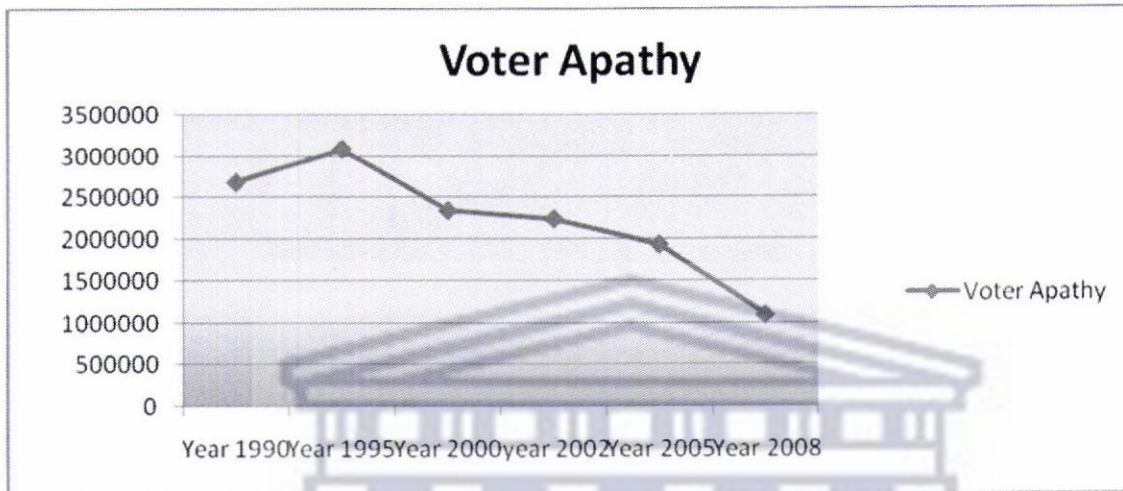
Collective efforts by CSOs through the formation of coalitions is most likely to have contributed to the decrease in voter apathy as almost all CSOs sought to mobilise their members to participate in elections, leading to an incremental shift in voting patterns as shown below. Given the above statistics, the researcher is of the view that increased civil society membership is highly likely to have influenced voting patterns. What seems to be a correlation between the increasing popularity of opposition politics on one hand and the growth of civil society membership on the other could be indicative of the fact that civil society worked in collaboration with oppositional political parties which performed well in the 2008 elections.

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter presented the quantitative findings from the fieldwork involving 196 participants. Elements of social structure determinants of participation, notably age and residential location, as well as levels of literacy, showed that they play a significant role in shaping citizens' political behaviour. Through their activities, such as workshops and voter education programmes, CSOs help in shaping citizens' perceptions, beliefs and preferences as well as the habits of thinking that they bring to the political arena. This is done through imparting vital information that enables citizens to make informed decisions. Trends of

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participation - notably, increased CSO membership and increased attendance at ward meetings - were identified as being evident in most political activity during the period under study. The chapter underlines the close relationship between civic education, raised political awareness, high voter turnout and a decrease in voter apathy.

CHAPTER SIX: PATTERNS OF CIVIC SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT: PARTICIPANTS' PERCEPTIONS

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed quantitative data as it pertains to findings from respondents and CSO institutional records. The chapter sought to establish to what extent various demographic determinants influence participants' capacity to participate (Mattes et al, 2005: 163-169). This chapter complements the previous chapter by discussing participants' perceptions of factors influencing citizen participation and emerging patterns of civic society engagement. Chapter 6 employs content analysis to interpret narrative data from 104 face-to-face interviews and seeks to present participants' perceptions of various questions around the subject of participation. However, for ethical reasons, the identities of respondents are not disclosed.

This chapter uses interpretative content analysis which best allows for critical analysis of respondents' statements, relevant literary works and documents/reports in order to draw

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meaning from them (Creswell, 2008:24). The cited elements of social structure impact on the mobilisation of citizens (Tilly, 2004:1788; Tarrow; 1998:199; Kamete, 2009:62). Protest campaigns facilitated by CSOs enabled them to exhibit the trappings of social movements (Kamete, 2009:57) given that civic groups become social movements if they are able to mount a 'campaign', that is, 'a sustained, organised public effort making claims on target authorities' (Tilly, 2004:257). This behaviour of CSOs puts protest action at the forefront of most pro-democracy CSOs' confrontation with the authoritarian state.

Participants' responses bring to the fore several important factors that influence CSO operations that enhance citizen participation and which are contained within elements of social structures. As highlighted at the beginning of the study, interviews and questionnaires were deployed interchangeably depending on the literacy levels of respondents, the setting and the information being sought (Azarya 1992:83-91). Participants included secretariat members (and founders) of selected CSOs, CSO structures, CSOs' members, academics and their literary works and councillors, as well as political/social commentators. Focus group interviews with members of selected CSOs were undertaken during workshops (Babbie, 2005:36; Wong, 2008:2) during which the researcher became a participant in workshop proceedings. Being a participant in workshops opened up an opportunity for the collection of a variety of empirical materials – such as case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, interactions and visual texts (Newman & Benz, 1998:23). This environment gave the researcher the opportunity to interact with respondents and be able to probe further. As a result, the researcher was able to attend and participate in NCA workshops where other CSOs were represented, given that NCA is a coalition of many CSOs. This chapter complements Chapter 5 in responding to the Research Objective which reads:

To identify and analyse determinants and patterns of participation in governance processes in Zimbabwe in relation to civil society activity

The early stages of the interview process started on 9 December 2009, in anticipation of the NCA's Annual General Meeting (AGM) from 17 December to 23 December 2009. During the AGM most CSOs affiliated to the NCA were represented, thereby giving the researcher the opportunity to conduct focus group interviews. Additionally the researcher made site visits to offices of the selected CSOs to interview members of the respective secretariats and management.

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6.2 Discussion of Participants' Perceptions of Participation

In this section the study provides qualitative extracts from full-length narrative interviews by way of word-for-word statements. These narrative testimonies were drawn from a total of 104 participants interviewed at a focus group during the AGM gathering as well as during site visits to CSO offices where members of secretariats and members of CSOs were also interviewed. The interview process was carried out during the period from 17 December 2009 to 30 April 2010 which was the fieldwork phase for this thesis.

While numerous interviews were conducted, in documenting the responses, the researcher chose to incorporate only those responses that presented a clear opinion and response to the question asked. The dates indicated in brackets are those on which the interviews were conducted. Respondents have also been numbered to avoid confusion and for ethical reasons.

The study identified themes which were drawn from regular statements by respondents. Themes that were identified include: identification of key drivers of participation, civil society structure, and access to information, the impact of restrictive legislation on citizen participation, state-civil society relations and the role of donors. Consequently each theme was dealt with separately and the participants' perceptions presented alongside.

6.2.1 Key Drivers of Participation

From literature findings and during interviews and discussions, the researcher has identified key elements of social structures, such as respondents' age, education levels and residential location.

Responding to the question: *'What are some of the key drivers of participation?'* most participants cited level of education and age, as well as residential location. One academic respondent expressed the view that:

> *'Enlightening and educating citizens are the most viable pre-requisites for participation because it is mostly from informed[40] and confident citizens knowledgeable about events on the ground that one would expect a meaningful contribution to the democratic discourse'* (Academic respondent 3, 25 March 2010).

A political/social commentator merged literacy, access to information and mobilisation as factors that promote effective participation by noting that:

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[40] For this study 'informed' does not necessarily mean educated. Even those with low literacy levels can be informed on certain issues

'...moderate to high literacy levels, coupled with access to appropriate information and effective mobilisation culminates in higher levels of participation and vice versa because without each of these factors, meaningful participation would be hard to come by' (Political commentator 1, 21 April 2010).

The study also noted that a harsh environment presents a stimulus for mobilisation. This is further confirmed by one respondent who noted that:

'Citizens react differently during times of crises and are forced out of passivity to face the reality of the situation at hand and to seek lasting solutions to crises facing them' (CSO respondent 21, 22 April 2010).

Residential location has come out in literature as a determining factor that promotes participation. This research also sought to establish whether citizens' residential location has a bearing on their capability to participate at different levels, at least in the Zimbabwean context. Most respondents concurred that ordinarily residential location is a factor of participation, but in the Zimbabwean context, this has been reversed because of the government policies on the land redistribution programme and informal settlements which resulted in the displacement of millions of people, therefore disrupting the urban/rural divide. One participant noted that:

'The rural/urban divide has been deliberately destroyed by the state through its skewed policies on land redistribution and informal settlements where many people were displaced and forced into rural areas and vice versa' (ZimRights activist, 21 March 2010).

6.2.2 Civil Society Structures

CSO structures have been used to disseminate information, and to keep citizens informed. These structures can therefore either promote or inhibit participation. Most CSOs have highly decentralised structures that seek to enable the organisations to reach out to different places and people. Responding to the question:

'How have structures within your CSO enabled the group to realise their objective of enhancing participation?'

Different respondents concurred that structures are a vital tool for communication and information dissemination. One respondent noted that:

'Organisational structures facilitate in information dissemination to our members as well as to members of the public. Additionally, our structures provide a communication channel and links between the office and our members and vice versa' (CSO respondent 3, 17 December, 2009).

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Another respondent indicated that:

> 'We are able to gauge the success of our programmes through our structures which are in constant interaction with our members, especially grassroots people' (CSO respondent 18, 19 17 December, 2009).

However, one former district chairperson within one of the CSOs bemoaned the lack of transparency and accountability in some CSOs. Asked to substantiate this claim, the respondent stated that:

> 'For most CSOs structures are positions which are supposed to be rotational and contractual. However, owing to the fact that for some members of these structures it has become a source of income, any threat to this position may lead to serious infighting within the CSO. This has led to undue influence on the membership to re-elect under-performing candidates into the organisational structures and this has compromised the performance of such CSOs' (CSO respondent 17, 23 December, 2009).

The same respondent cited embezzlement of funds by members of structures among some CSOs as prevalent, leading to some donors withdrawing their financial support to such CSOs.

Similarly, another participant alluded to in-fighting among members of different organisational structures, pointing out that:

> 'Decision- making processes have been disrupted every time there is a squabble among members of organisational structures due to infighting for position, with different members of different structures issuing conflicting statements and information. This has created logistical problems for some CSOs. This infighting has also in some cases resulted in the donors withdrawing funding, leading to the near-collapse of some CSOs' (CSO respondent 18, 5 February, 2010).

Both respondents cited internal squabbles within CSOs as compromising the working of CSO structures.

6.2.3 Promoting Citizen Participation through Civil Society Activities

CSOs have come to represent a medium through which citizens can confront the state and demand accountability, transparency and responsiveness. In this study, the majority of respondents acknowledged the vital role that CSOs have played and continue to play to provide a channel for making demands on the state. The majority of respondents concurred that CSOs provide a training ground for activists and for educating citizens in mobilising for democracy. Consequently positive and negative perceptions relating to each of these factors were provided by participants.

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On the positive side, the researcher asked:

'What has been the impact of CSOs on citizens' capacity to participate?'

to which two respondents cited provision of training for citizens through enlightenment. The first respondent expressed the view that:

> *'Civic groups help in shaping the mindset, political preferences of individuals, self-understandings as well as sharpening thought processes that citizens, doubling as the electorate, would bring to the political arena* (CSO respondent 15, 19 December 2009).

The second respondent and a chairperson of a coalition of CSOs nationally concurred with the previous respondent, stating that:

> *'CSOs are an important vehicle for democratisation and been regarded as training ground for democratic citizenship and as a conduit towards broader forms of political participation'* [sic] (CSO chairperson 2, 7 December, 2009)

Probed further to provide an example of how civil society has gone about inciting debate among citizens, participants were asked the question: *'What do you think has been the most significant achievement of pro-democracy CSOs in the country since the 1990s?'*

A respondent pointed out that:

> *'One of the most significant achievements of civil society groups in the country has been that rallying behind the NCA to initiate the constitutional reform debate through compiling a small easy-to-read pamphlet out of the constitutional document and increasing accessibility to it thereby fermenting debate among the general citizenry on what a constitution is all about and what should be contained in it'* (CSO chairperson 2, 21 December 2009).

This general argument was echoed by various structures of different CSOs at an AGM that concurred that NCA has simplified the constitutional reform process by making it understandable to the marginalised groups by translating it into local languages and making it accessible to the general public.

The bottom line of the two responses indicates that civil society provides both training for enlightenment and simplifies what could ordinarily be seen as complex political concepts and practices such as constitutionalism and democracy. Respondents were asked: *'What is the most outstanding challenge that CSOs have encountered in their operations, especially in Zimbabwe?'* One of the respondents pointed out that:

> *'Most NGOs that have been accused of seeking to topple the government are the very institutions that have been involved in efforts to help citizens. Similarly NGOs have played a key role in monitoring and providing transparency in the 2008 electoral*

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process and alerting the population and the international community on the level of electoral fraud and retributive violence that followed. That partly explains NGO sector's hatred by the Harare administration' (CSO respondent 19, 7 February, 2010).

Seeking to elaborate on what CSO Respondent 19 had said, another respondent pointed out that:

'A general commitment to democratisation by pro-democracy CSOs has resulted in authorities viewing civil society as belonging to oppositional politics as was evidenced by the case during the 2000 constitutional referendum when civil society sponsored the rejection of the draft constitution. The state's response to this rejection was one of retribution, sparking the enactment of numerous repressive pieces of legislation which many CSOs opposed' (CSO chairperson 1, 19 December, 2009).

Following up on the need for restrictive legislation to govern CSOs' operations, a former CSO coordinator justified the existence of such legislation by saying that:

'...for there to be law and order in a country, there have got to be strict laws, and not a walk in the park, be it for civil society organisations of individuals, even high profile government officials' (CSO respondent 14, 21 December 2009).

However, other contributions presented CSOs as groups whose weaknesses are anchored in their inability to produce tangible results, their donor-dependence and their inability to transform state perceptions of human rights and democracy. Responding to the above question, one such respondent presented CSOs as follows:

'We as civil society have distinguished ourselves by being good at reacting to state's activity and remaining in the same position where we were 10 years ago. We continue to address the same issues we were addressing 10 years ago, using the same methods, but expecting different results' (CSO respondent academic 4, 23 December 2009).

Citing more weaknesses in CSO operations, another activist pointed out that:

'Civil society actions involving protest action have become so predictable that I wonder whether serious people still take us seriously. We continue to be good at describing human rights violations and bad at prescribing appropriate remedial action. That takes us nowhere' [CSO respondent 59, 29 April 2010).

The respondent concluded by expressing the view that CSOs should re-strategise if they are to make any impact on democracy.

6.2.4 Impact of Restrictive Legislation on State-Civil Society Relations

Existing key legislation has informed the relationship between the state and civil society. It would be difficult to talk about state-civil society relations without making reference to existing key legislation guiding citizen participation. Members of the National and Regional

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Council structures interviewed expressed the view that their operations have been derailed by repressive legal requirements that require police clearance for any gathering, including report-back meetings. In response to the question *'How has existing legislation affected mobilisation of your members?'* one respondent stated that:

> *'Existing legislation has adversely affected our interaction with our members. One cannot seek police clearance to meet with people in your constituency. Also one cannot seek for clearance to embark on demonstrations and protests against deteriorating democratic institutions. You cannot expect an authoritarian state to allow you to expose its misdeeds in the streets. And I don't know if proceeding to protest would be regarded as taking the law in our hands'* (NCA respondent 4, 22 December 2009).

The above perceptions were reinforced by a WOZA activist who pointed out that:

> *'Fighting for democracy calls for sacrifice and for there to be democracy in the country, citizens have got to sacrifice their lives in the face of a brutal regime that is not prepared to share and widen political space. This is not an easy task'* (WOZA activist 5, 22 December 2009).

Seeking to establish what legislators should do about the existence of such repressive legislation, there was a general understanding that such legislation should be repealed, with one respondent summarising what most respondents had expressed by noting that:

> *'...politicians are wasting time engaging in turf and useless wars fighting for positions instead of spending time exploring ways of making efforts to repeal draconian laws governing people's freedoms'* (ZimRights activist 4, 23 December 2009).

Seeking perceptions on the skewed election processes in Zimbabwe, the following question was asked: *'What is the role of elections in promoting democracy and how can CSOs contribute in this regard?'* One respondent expressed that elections are pivotal to any democracy. She further noted that:

> *'In a democracy, free and fair elections are necessary and in this regard, voter education plays a vital role in educating the electorate to make informed decisions, provided there is no intimidation and people are free to express their will and results are respected'* (ZESN[41] respondent 1, 28 December 2009).

6.2.5 Civil Society and Constitutional Reform

The constitution- making process has not only pulled most pro-democracy CSOs together, but has also paved the way for the establishment of pro-democracy coalitions and networks.

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[41] The Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) is an affiliate of the NCA and in this case came under the coalition umbrella of the NCA

In this case, the researcher conducted interviews with various people who indicated that a constitution facilitates the establishment of CSO structures for a strong democracy and keeping political leaders in check. Responding to the question: *'What is the role of a constitution in a democracy?'* a respondent pointed out that:

> *'A constitution is key to limiting the power of politicians which should be controlled so as to avoid authoritative accesses of power* [sic]. *It is also necessary to avoid the detrimental impact of arbitrary decisions that can be made by politicians by seeking accountability and responsiveness from them'* (NCA constitutional expert 2, 19 February 2010).

With reference to the current constitution-making process, the researcher inquired: *'Do you think the current arrangement where the Select Parliamentary Committee leads the constitution-making process would not compromise citizen participation?'* to which another NCA respondent pointed out that the exercise of collecting the views of the public should have been carried out by an independent body and not by politicians. He asserted that:

> *'As NCA we insist that politicians should not dictate by whom, when and how a constitution should be drawn'* (NCA respondent 1, 19 December, 2009).

Probed further on the NCA and other pro-democratic CSOs' next step once the state completes drawing up a new constitution, another respondent revealed that:

> *'Once the process by parliament has been concluded, the NCA and our affiliates would start campaigning for the rejection of this document, followed by our own people-driven constitution-making process involving all stakeholders'* (NCA respondent 3, 19 December, 2009).

Women participants representing WOZA also expressed their support for the constitution-making process driven by CSOs. In response to the question:

'Do you mobilise your members to participate in elections and the constitution-making process?' a respondent maintained that:

> *'WOZA realizes that citizens should not continue to complain about human rights and democratic decay without doing anything about it. Firstly we encourage our members to be part of the constitution that they want to see [sic]. On elections, since 2009 we have mobilised Zimbabweans to continue with the action that they took in March 2008 of voting for a political party of their choice'* (WOZA chief respondent, 20 January, 2011).

Responding to the same question, another respondent from a resident association expressed the view that:

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'A constitution allows citizens to enjoy rights and liberties. Without a constitution in place, one could just imagine what could be happening today in Zimbabwe where even with a constitution in place there is still lawlessness. We urge residents to contribute to a democratic constitution' (CHRA respondent 1, 21 December 2009).

Commenting on the question: *'What do you think is the role of the SADC in settling the political impasse within the Inclusive Government?'* an activist within WOZA noted that:

'SADC is well placed to persuade and put pressure on [President] Mugabe to allow international [election] monitors to come in. Civic society should therefore engage SADC to talk to [President] Mugabe. It is also part of our role to help in the resolution of any crises as well as to monitor elections' (WOZA activist 3, 21 December 2009).

Other participants showed support for the idea that elections are to meet the minimum requirements of being free and that fair civil society should be actively involved in election observing and monitoring to help promote transparency.

6.2.6 Access to Information and Citizen Empowerment

Information as a citizen empowerment tool featured prominently among various respondents. Responding to the question:

'To what extent does information empower citizens?' One member of the NCA information department asserted that:

'Making information available to citizens is a prerequisite for empowering them to make informed political decisions and be able to engage in fruitful decisions on issues that affect them and their families' (NCA respondent 15, 27 April, 2010).

Further responses on the vital importance of access to information showed that information is a confidence builder. One human rights activist mostly engaged in grassroots mobilisation noted that:

'Information is a powerful empowerment tool that enables citizens to exert greater demands on the state to establish good governance structures and strong democratic institutions' (ZimRights activist 3, 19 December 2009).

In response to the question: *'How does ignorance affect citizens' decision-making capacity and how do CSOs alleviate the situation?'* a civic leader pointed out that:

'Political parties usually thrive on the ignorance of the electorate about their right to vote for any political party of their choice and civil society groups have come into the

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fray to increase citizens' civic awareness through civic education programmes' (CSO respondent, 18 December, 2009).

The same informant further elaborated that by distributing free radio sets to rural people, CSOs have sought to empower through information provision.

Media practices have also been cited in this study as exerting influence on people's access to information. Responding to the question: *'What has been the impact of media control on citizens?'* a respondent had this to say:

> *'Controlling the media entails controlling how citizens get access to information, in what form and when they should get this information. Look at the current state of affairs in the country where the state broadcaster monopolises the airwaves. People want a wide choice of print and electronic media to choose from. That is what I call democracy, my friend [sic]'* (Political commentator respondent 1, 12 February 2010).

Concerning access to information, one member of the ZimRights secretariat queried the monopolisation of the media in favour of ZANU PF and the limiting of information available to citizens and questioned:

> *'How can people make informed choices at the ballot box when the only voice heard on public media and across the land is that of President Mugabe?'* (ZimRights respondent 5, 29 December, 2009).

Given the concern presented by some respondents above about limited access to information provided by the state, the researcher sought to establish what the state was doing about it. Responding to the question:

'What have legislators done to facilitate information dissemination in their localities?' one civic/political leader pointed out that:

> *'We as parliamentarians are unfair to the people of Zimbabwe, especially those in rural areas who due to poor reception of our local broadcaster, end up only getting vital information from pirate radio stations such as Studio 7 and RadioVOP[42]. A survey that I carried out in my constituency reveals that more than 60 percent of the people are dependent on pirate radio stations for information'* (CSO respondent 28, 22 April, 2010).

Another academic who has since moved into mainstream politics summarised the significance of CSOs in contributing to citizen enlightenment, by asserting that:

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[42] Studio 7 is a radio station of the Voice of America broadcasting from Washington, while RadioVOP is Radio Voice of the People and is London-based

'When citizens are enlightened about their rights, they get empowered. It becomes difficult to oppress them and even harder for state actors to break the fortress created when such enlightened minds work in NGOs where they are able to disseminate information to their members. In the Zimbabwean context where there are numerous CBOs populated with correspondingly numerous human rights and civil society activists who can easily preach the gospel of regime change, given that in a healthy democracy, regimes have to be regularly changed (Academic respondent 5, 22 March, 2010).

The academic further noted that an informed citizen (even those with low literacy levels) is easy to mobilise and is prepared to participate in issues that he/she understands. Most of the personal perceptions on the importance of access to information have concurred that information is a vital tool that educates and empowers citizens to make informed decisions.

6.2.7 Women and Participation in Public Life

It has been argued that women have been denied access to decision-making due to the view that societies define women's space as being private rather than public (Morna, 2004:31). Of all decision-making processes, politics is the most notable public space which has been the most hostile about granting access to women (Morna, 2004:31). This is the premise on which the researcher interacted with respondents seeking to explore opportunities available for women to participate.

In this section respondents were drawn from various CSOs and these were either men or women. As has been highlighted above, regular protests by WOZA activists and activists from other CSOs demanding accountability from the state have resulted in the arrest of many protesters. This is the environment of fear and suspicion which has discouraged women from claiming participatory spaces. However, despite these challenges, the researcher, through snowballing and referrals, was able to interview WOZA activists. Issues such as fear and intimidation against women were cited by the majority of female respondents as some of the challenges to participation faced by them. One respondent cited violence and intimidation of women, noting that:

'Most women are overcome by fear and become victims of rape, torture and intimidation, usually perpetrated as a punitive measure for taking part in protests or being married to civil society activists or active politicians belonging to different

political organisations. This has impacted negatively on women's capacity to participate in politics, but most have endured' (CSO respondent 24, 25 April, 2010).

The researcher observed that women are intimidated by serious accusations such as those of treason. In some cases, women activists have been intimidated by accusations of a sensitive nature from politicians and state security agents accusing them of engaging in subversive activities. One respondent, a Midlands provincial member of a CSO Coordinating Committee, pointed out that a regular accusation against women activists that had frightened most women activists has been:

'You will be charged with "engaging in subversive activities" which presents a threat to state security and which attracts a long stretch in prison' (WOZA activist 1,19 December, 2009).

They noted that such allegations attract lengthy custodial sentences, hence the fear of leaving behind children tended to overwhelm most women activists with fear. The same respondent elaborated that most women activists have children and other dependents hence they are fearful of leaving them behind once they are arrested.

Responding to the question:

'What role have female politicians played in promoting the rights of women and children, and, if any, have they been able to adequately represent the interests of women and children?

The majority of WOZA respondents accused female politicians of being insensitive to the plight of their women counterparts with some women parliamentarians having supported the enactment of repressive laws like POSA and AIPPA, which action:

'...has shown the magnitude of insensitivity of government officials to the plight of the general public, especially the deterioration of the economy, shortage of basic commodities, the collapse of education and health delivery systems in the country and the failure by government to repeal restrictive legislation' (WOZA respondent 2, 19 December 2009).

Angered by such levels of insensitivity by the state, WOZA has mobilised their members around constitutional reforms to put new laws in place. Two senior members of WOZA cited protest action and mobilisation of their members to participate in a new constitution for the country to pave the way for the establishment of a more democratic dispensation. The first respondent pointed out that:

'As women, we have realised the lack of political commitment to address the political and economic crises that bedevilled the country. We have now resorted to regular protest action not only to embarrass political leadership, but to publicise the plight of women and children and high poverty levels in the country' (WOZA activist 5, 22 December, 2009).

The second respondent noted that:

'Our organisation has sought to be part of pro-democratic forces seeking to restore democracy in the country by supporting the NCA in its campaign for a new people-driven constitution for Zimbabwe' (WOZA activist 6, 22 December, 2009).

The general picture presented by various female respondents shows that women bear the brunt of the political and economic crises more than their male counterparts and have resolved to join the broader fight for democracy in the country. As has been expressed above, in every crisis situation women are the worst-affected victims.

6.2.8 Participating Through Residents' Associations

The creation of social organisations such as residents' associations has enabled residents to make collective demands to local authorities for responsiveness, accountability and transparency. This is the premise on which CHRA has been incorporated into this study to present local voices of residents. In this case respondents were drawn from CHRA members of secretariat and residents. The first question sought to establish respondents' perception of the role of residents' associations in promoting good local governance: *'What role do residents' associations play in promoting good local governance?'* In response to this question, a councillor from one of the residents' associations within the CHRA argued that:

'Civil society involvement in development activities and local governance emanates from citizens' desire and urge to contribute to debates that seek to enhance participation based on decision-making processes that are informed by community involvement and a commitment to democratisation (Local government expert respondent 1, 21 April 2010)

Responding to the same question another resident expressed the view that:

'Local government is the best level that is closest to the people and as such can facilitate easy articulation and response to local needs, which further places authorities in a position where they can harness local knowledge' (Resident respondent 5, 16 February, 2010).

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On what reforms residents want within the current local government structure and operations, another participant pointed out that the Urban Councils Act provides that local authorities are required to execute certain processes, such as make the annual budgetary processes *in consultation with* residents and not *in collaboration* with residents. This leaves council officials with the mandate to compile the final budget and even make other decisions on behalf of residents and only inform residents of officials' decisions. This is despite the fact that it is the very residents who make the financial contributions required to run the affairs of the local authority. Responding to the question: *'What does the CHRA seek to achieve in local governance through mobilising residents?'* a member of the National Management of the association expressed the view that:

> *'Residents' associations in general and CHRA in particular seek to provide a training ground for the creation of a pro-active breed of residents who are able to campaign and demand for and participate in local governance'* (CSO respondent 39, 29 April 2010).

Another respondent from within the senior management of the pointed out that the organisation draws its mandate and strength from the regular meetings that it holds with residents where strategies on how residents can best influence policy decisions in council are developed. He referred to one of their recent meetings with residents where the CHRA agreed with residents to establish a non-partisan Task Force that would sit in council meetings alongside councillors to monitor proceedings with a view to reporting back to residents.

In response to the question: *'Has central government shown interest in regularising local spaces for residents to operate?'* one CHRA management respondent indicated that in Zimbabwe:

> *'The institution of local government has been crippled by lack of capacity to nurture civil society, define and protect citizen spaces. At the same time central government have sought to close participatory space for residents through empowering the Minister of Local Government to make major decisions, arbitrarily [sic]. We in residents' associations perceive this as a result of mistrust that central government hold of citizens'* (CSO respondent 43, 30 April, 2010).

Responding to the same question, another respondent maintained that:

> *'Despite all the cited setbacks, pro-democracy civil society in Zimbabwe has undergone considerable growth in terms of size, focus, partnerships and approaches seeking to contribute to widening of participatory spaces'* (CSO respondent 45, 30 April, 2010).

Another academic, a civil society activist, noted that:

'The current constitution reform process presents a window of opportunity for local government reforms because it incorporates local government reforms so residents, instead of continuing to blame the government, should participate in the constitution reform process' (Academic respondent 4, 26 March 2010).

These statements regard civil society at whatever level as vital in mobilising citizens for reforms and social and political change.

6.2.9 Perceptions on Donor Community Activities

The role of foreign donors drew different responses. It can be acknowledged that in most cases civil society groups do not have adequate financial resources and the influence of the donor community on civil society has been flagged in different sections of this study. This section deliberates on perceptions of participants on donor funding to CSOs. In sum, participants viewed donors to CSOs as playing a significant role in enabling CSOs to function, while others pointed out that they have ulterior motives.

The question: *'To what extent have donors influenced activities and operations within your CSO?'* attracted mixed reaction and a variety of responses, with some accusing donors of meddling in internal affairs and decision-making processes of CSOs and, at the same time, of meddling in political processes of the country. One of those respondents who showed support for donors expressed the view that donors are necessary as they inject financial resources to promote civil society activities. He pointed out that:

'...Donors are our lifeline and without them we cannot operate efficiently and our overall existence depends on them' (CSO respondent 37, 29 April, 2010).

Moreover a participant and representative of one of the donor agencies present at one of the AGMs argued that:

'...donors seek to help in building capacity and strong democratic institutions through citizen empowerment' (Donor respondent 1, 21 February, 2010).

Then there are those who sounded suspicious at the direct involvement of diplomatic missions based in Zimbabwe in the funding of some CSOs.

Asked the question: *'Can donor funding of pro-democracy CSOs be perceived as meddling in local politics or internal affairs of local CSOs?'* a senior CSO member responded that:

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'It is us who have problems of seeking to build our capacity and democratic structures and donors come in to finance our programmes. You cannot expect donors to pour out their money without getting involved to determine how and for what purpose their money is used. Here and there they might want this to be done in a slightly different way and if we agree, then they can provide funds. That cannot be said to meddling, at least according to us. Therefore donors through their host countries come in to bail out people under authoritarian rule' (CSO respondent 26, 27 April, 2010).

Responding to the same question, some participants presented different perceptions. One participant indicated that:

'It becomes suspicious if embassies and diplomatic missions openly seek to meddle and participate in the political processes of a sovereign state. This means the host countries of such embassies are behind these machinations, notably around regime change' (Political commentator respondent 2, 30 April, 2010).

The respondent noted that this behaviour of local diplomatic missions has created mistrust between the state and civil society groups with the state accusing civil society groups with foreign funds as agents having a regime change agenda.

A respondent who doubles as an academic, political commentator and journalist has accused CSO leaders of:

'Using citizens to secure donor funding by which funds minimally trickle down to the general public or towards the realisation of the broader CSOs' goals. Donors have tended to project their own agendas and incorporate these into those of civil society organisations. In such cases, donors have acted as background partners of CSOs by providing back-up financial support [sic]' (Political commentator respondent 3, 21 March, 2010).

The above respondent was supported by a former CSO leader who pointed out that:

'Civil society in Zimbabwe is not motivated by the desire to serve the people but by the desire to make money and always see a crisis everywhere so that they keep getting donor funds especially those organisations that masquerade as human rights organisations. Such civic groups are benefitting from the suffering of the majority of Zimbabweans with no show of remorse [sic]. They are no different from the selfish politicians; they are in effect two sides of the same coin' (CSO respondent 27, 25 March, 2010).

The second batch of respondents portrayed CSOs and their leaders as having selfish ambitions and seeking to manipulate citizens by exaggerating the scale of crises to draw donor funding which is allegedly diverted for other purposes that do not benefit the citizens. If these accusations are anything to go by, they bring into question the level of democracy in such CSOs which are themselves campaigning for democracy.

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6.2.10 Protest Action and Participation

Participation in Zimbabwe, especially in governance processes, has been diminishing at a very fast pace as a result of deteriorating democratic institutions, especially from the mid-1990s. In response, CSOs embarked on numerous initiatives to draw the attention of the state and one such initiative was protest action. In response to protest action by CSOs, the state has taken numerous drastic measures against CSOs activists, ranging from arrests, to detention without charge, beatings and even abductions of activists, accusing them of having a regime change agenda. This section of the study seeks to establish the perceptions of CSO members and activists about the effectiveness of protest action as a way of seeking engagement with the state.

Responding to the question: *'Do you think protest action is the best option for you to engage the state?'* an NCA/ZimRights member and participant maintained that:

> *'Protest action has played and continues to play a significant role as the most audible language that the regime can understand. The various forms of protest represent an expression of discomfort at the level of democratic decay that has been experienced in the country in the last decade'* (CSO respondent 28, 25 March, 2010).

The research also sought to establish the effectiveness of protest action. Responding to the question: *'What has been the impact of protest action?'* another highly-placed political respondent from one of the political parties in the inclusive Government pointed out that:

> *'Protest action has been able to shake the regime and at the same time alert the international community on the gross human rights violations and electoral fraud that have characterised the country's political landscape since the 1990s. After all when citizens take their rights and start to demand political space, there is nothing wrong. What has been disheartening has been the state's brutal response to these protests'* (CSO respondent 33, 26 April, 2010).

The researcher also incorporated an academic from within the Southern Africa Political Economic Series (SAPES) which is a think-tank and platform that encourages debates on political, social and economic developments on the African continent. The participant expressed his high regard for civil society and its propensity to motivate citizens to demand accountability, transparency and responsiveness from the state. He noted that:

'Civil society plays the vital role of strengthening democratic institutions, human rights, protection of the environment and the improvement of the quality of life,(all of which constitute) all the indispensible elements for the establishment of peaceful and more secure democratic societies' (Academic respondent 4, 12 March, 2010).

Another academic reiterated that civil society helps to strengthen democratic institutions through providing checks and balances on the activities of the state. He argued that:

'As the art of government becomes more specialised and technical, there is an acute need for its agencies to be scrutinised by competent critique in and out of the legislature which is what civil society is capable of doing' (Academic respondent 4, 15 March, 2010).

The study also interacted with human rights activists in an attempt to get their views on the state's response to protest action by CSOs and asked: *'Are you not afraid of arrest by law enforcement agents during protest marches?'* In response, one human rights activist maintained that people were now fed up with abuse by the state and concluded by saying that:

'Driven against the wall, it is man's inherent nature to cast away his fear and put up a fight for his rights and entitlements' (Academic respondent 7, 25 March, 2010).

The various responses in this section presented protest action as an effective way of engaging government although it has serious consequences for participants and activists.

6.2.11 Founders and Leaders of Selected Civic Groups

Just like the academics and local governance experts, this set of participants provided similar sentiments to those provided by CSOs activists. The two sets of participants in this category presented civil society activists as the hub of citizen participation. This also signalled the importance of practical exposure over theoretical knowledge such as that exhibited by academics and local government experts. Four CSO founders and leaders were incorporated into the study.

Asked: *'What drove you to come up with the idea of establishing a civic group?'* the founder of a human rights civic group pointed out that:

'The environment from 1980 was characterised by the absence of alternative players that would keep the government in check. With the deterioration of human rights from the early 1980s, it became clearly evident that there was a dire need for the establishment of institutions that would provide checks and balances on state activities. This was more so from the mid-1990s when it became evident that democracy was now

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shrinking. The brutal force of the Matabeleland Massacres of the early 1980s and the absence of a voice to criticise these human rights violations led to a group of professionals seeking to establish one such human rights CSO' (CSO respondent 7, 18 December, 2009).

At local government level, the researcher also sought reasons for the establishment of residents' associations, to which a senior founding member of a residents' association pointed out that residents are the recipients of services from the local authority and pay for these services. As such:

> *'It is justifiable that residents take part in deliberations that affect their lives and those which are driven by their payments. It is only residents who can determine whether a service is good or bad and whether the overall local governance in the city is good or bad. Residents are the best judges when it comes to that, not local government officials'* (Resident respondent 6, 21 December, 2009).

The respondent expressed that the association had done a good job of confronting the local authority on behalf of residents and in most cases, the authority had been responsive. He further pointed out that residents have expressed confidence in the work of CHRA as shown by the phenomenal growth of the association both in size and staff complement. He noted that residents' associations provide an indispensible tool for enhancing participatory local governance and:

> *'...present an effective avenue for advocacy and a vehicle for good and transparent local governance, despite restrictive legislation which has discouraged some of their members from protesting or holding meetings'* (Resident respondent 8, 22 December, 2009).

Another resident expressed the view that the CHRA has been drawn into mainstream political developments because policies set at this level affect residents. So through the CHRA, residents have embarked on programmes to summon parliamentarians for discussion. She expressed the view that the Harare City Council has done all it can to provide services to residents of the city, but that it cannot be blamed for some of its failures due to political and economic developments in the country. She noted that:

> *'Harare City Council should be forgiven for failing to provide certain services such as clean drinking water or other sanitary provisions because the national political leaders have run down the country's economy and politicised every institution to the extent that only the ruling elites benefit while ordinary citizens suffer basic shortages. However, the City Council should not be completely absolved of its mandate to provide services'* (Resident respondent 14, 7 February, 2010).

For ZimRights, one of the founding members of the association was interviewed and displayed in-depth knowledge of the goals of the group and the significant role that the civic groups had played in enhancing people's understanding of human rights in the country. Asked: *'Why have human rights become so significant in the post-independent era with most CSOs focussing their attention to human rights?'* the CSO activist expressed the view that:

> *'Human rights in Zimbabwe have been deteriorating since the attainment of political independence in 1980, notably as a result of political intolerance. This intolerance has intensified and became more aggressive, forcing civil society to mobilise their members to equally upgrade their activities towards a return to democracy'* (CSO respondent 29, 25 March, 2010).

Responding to the question: *'What contribution has civil society made to the democratic discourse?'* a senior member of one of the national structures of a CSO indicated that:

> *'The civil society discourse in Zimbabwe has been one of the most active in the post-colonial period in response to equally deteriorating democratic institutions and gross human rights violations. Civil society has confronted the state over the existence of a repressive legislation. Public perception of the civil society sector as a liberator and a catalyst has had a positive impact on citizens, due to the sector's ability to advocate effectively'* (CSO respondent 47, 30 April, 2010).

The respondent confirmed that his organisation has been credited with having steered the investigation into gross human rights violations and the subsequent publication of a book entitled *'Healing the Wounds'*, a documentation of human rights violations in the Matabeleland civil unrest in the early 1980s.

Responding to the question: *'What evidence is there to support your claim that human rights violations have been challenged by CSOs in the country?'* a respondent member of both ZimRights and CHRA commented:

> *'Yes there is ample evidence of increased human rights violations as has been shown by an increase in the number of litigation cases against police from 3 cases in 2001, rising to 15 cases between 2002 and 2007. This shows that while the state has increased its human rights violations, CSOs have equally increased their challenge to such violations through the legal channels'* (CSO respondent 29, 26 March, 2010).

In this context, increased cases of litigation not only show increased human rights violations by the state, but also present raised awareness among the general public.

Responding to the same question, another respondent pointed out that:

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'Human rights violations in the country have been upgraded from the routine police beatings of protestors and their detention to abduction of civil society activists and even disappearance of such voices of dissent. This is enough evidence on the upgraded level of human rights violations in the country.(CSO respondent 28, 28 April,2010)'

Such level of human rights violations has not instilled fear in the dissenting voices of civil society but has expedited the degeneration of democracy in the country.

6.2.12 Political and Social Commentators

To get an opinion from outside those of citizens and civil society activists, the researcher sought alternative perceptions from political and social commentators. Two political commentators and one social commentator were involved in the study. Most of these commentators deal with political issues hence their responses revolved around political developments in Zimbabwe.

Regarding the contentious issue of the latest constitution-making process under the inclusive government being led by the government, focus groups were asked to comment *'...about the exclusion of CSOs in the current constitution-making process.'* One political commentator expressed this view:

'I am one person who wholeheartedly supports the NCA's position that there is no way a 'people-driven' constitution could be written without the involvement of civil society. CSOs already have structures to connect with the citizens of the country at all levels. I support the NCA and the MDC-T when they say they will campaign for the rejection of a Parliamentary Select Committee draft constitution like what happened in 1999 when the NCA successfully campaigned for the rejection of one such constitution. I also stand by the NCA's suggestions of embarking on a parallel constitution-making process' (Political commentator 1, 25 April, 2010).

On the state's perception that civil society organisations have taken on the role of political opponents, the researcher asked: *'What do you make of the state's accusation that CSOs have taken up the role of opposition political players?'* An academic pointed out that:

'First and foremost, although most CSOs in Zimbabwe claim to be apolitical and impartial they are fighting a political war. But that does not make them political players' (Political commentator 2, 25 April, 2010).

Probed further, the respondent elaborated that:

'Although CSOs are not political players and do not contest elections, they mobilise citizens to support a specific political party or ideology. It is therefore the virtue of the war that they are waging with the state that makes them appear as if they are playing

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politics. They are not and they will remain non-political players and actors but exhibit some element of political preferences' (Political commentator 2, 25 April, 2010).

During informal discussions around political developments in the country, the social/political commentator noted that diminished participatory space and political intolerance have characterised much of Zimbabwe's 21ˢᵗ century political activities. In response to the question: *'What rights can you say have been violated by government over the years?'* The political commentator centred her responses on the breakdown of the rule of law but most importantly the violation of property rights. She noted that:

'The most violation of citizen rights that the post-colonial dispensation has seen has been the violation of property rights when the state arbitrarily expropriated commercial farms with no compensation to the previous owners, most of whom had bought the farms through bank loans' (Social commentator respondent 1, 16 February, 2010).

6.2.13 The Role of Councillors in Raising Citizen Awareness

The study has taken cognisance of councillors as elected officials who are close to citizens and have first-hand experience of residents' challenges. Additionally, by virtue of their closeness to residents, councillors are the most likely channel through which citizens can influence local government policy formulation and decision- making processes. As such, 10 councillors were interviewed.

Commenting on the question, *'Can attendance at ward meetings be regarded as a sign of raised awareness by residents?'* one councillor, speaking on behalf of fellow councillors, noted that:

'Although there was much political activity since the late 1990s, the economic meltdown and displacement of residents has resulted in low attendance rates at feedback meetings conducted by councillors. The trends towards low turnout at ward meetings in recent years could most likely have been the result of the displacement of residents in urban areas under Operation Murambatsvina' (Councillor respondent 4, 19 March, 2010).

Most councillors attributed the evictions to political considerations which portrayed the electorate in urban areas as supportive of oppositional politics. One councillor noted that:

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'Although ordinarily it could have been easier to mobilise residents to attend meetings, due to high poverty levels, the situation has become so desperate and residents prefer to spend more time fending for their families at the expense of attending councillors' feedback and consultative meetings as according to their views, the local authority did not have anything to provide to them; meetings and counter-meetings do not bring food to our tables' (Councillor respondent 6, 19 March, 2010).

This turn of political and economic events derailed the interaction between residents and councillors.

Another councillor confided in the researcher that the rise in attendance at feedback meetings has been common close to local government elections when politicians go all out to entice the electorate. He has observed a rise in attendance every time elections loomed, which might imply that politicians were using such meetings as a campaign tool (*Councillor respondent 8, 21 March, 2010*). However, CHRA respondents expressed a different opinion on the high ward meeting turnout, insisting that it could have been that residents are now more enlightened due to civic engagement with residents' associations at various forums and through their Advocacy Centre.

Councillors and CHRA representatives concurred that ward meetings had been adversely affected by existing legislation that discouraged public gathering, such as POSA.

Asked: *'Is there need for local government reform?'* one respondent noted that:

'The flawed component of the Urban Councils' Act has been its provision of executive powers to the Minister of Local Government who has subsequently manipulated the situation to ZANU PF's advantage and to his personal advantage and political survival. As a result it is necessary for this piece of legislation to be amended to grant space to elected councils to execute their mandate with minimum interference from the minister' (sic) (Councillor respondent 7, 20 March, 2010).

Some councillors concurred that they have to play a balancing act to satisfy both council and residents. This, they said, if not managed properly, would put their integrity at risk as they would need to seek re-election at some stage. Another councillor agreed that in the past, local authorities used to manipulate councillors to pass resolutions which disadvantaged residents but with an emerging crop of enlightened councillors, this practice has since ceased as both councillors and residents demand the adoption of a participatory approach, especially to budgeting processes (*Councillor respondent 9, 21 March, 2010*). Another councillor acknowledged the low level of public participation by pointing out that:

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'The politicisation of existing local government legislation has not given residents space to contribute to policy formulation and in the end has defied responding to ways that seek to deepen and broaden participation' (Councillor respondent 3, 15 March, 2010).

What also emerged from informal discussions with councillors was the fact that they are elected on political party lines resulted in their failure to create working synergies with councillors from other political parties. One councillor elaborates that:

'The political turf wars in local councils have resulted in a lack of synergy between councillors from different political parties and have contributed to councillors spending energy on petty political issues without making meaningful contributions that benefit residents in different constituencies' (Councillor respondent 5, 19 March, 2010).

Consequently, the research has demonstrated that this lack of synergy has impacted negatively on councillors' ability to engage in meaningful debates in council, leading to some residents contemplating boycotting payment of rates to the local authority.

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter presented the qualitative findings from the fieldwork and comprises personal perceptions of various respondents as they responded to questions. It emerged that there are numerous factors that facilitate or hinder participation. The factors are located within elements of social structure that include the age, gender and residential location, as well as the level of literacy of respondents. Access to information by citizens facilitates the creation of critical mass enabling the making of informed political decisions. It emerged that organisational structures are a vital communication and information dissemination tool for CSOs. Respondents' perceptions have affirmed that CSOs offer a training ground for democratic practices of governance. At local government level, residents' associations have come to offer a medium through which residents can contribute to good local governance. It has also been noted that protest action is not only about expressing dissatisfaction on the part of citizens but is also a show of increased awareness. Donors have come into the spotlight as seeking to promote civil society activities, with accusations being levelled against them that they harbour regime change agendas. However, the involvement of local diplomatic missions in funding CSOs has also raised suspicions about regime change.

Findings from this study confirm both Southern and Northern mobilisation theorists' arguments that the success of social movements rests mainly on the resources that are

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available to them (Moyo, 1993:2; Azarya, 1992:25; Ramjee & van Donk, 2011:11) and that formation of coalitions occurs more readily with already-existing organisations and with secured financial support (Bratton, 1989:421; Makumbe, 2009:12; Bratton & Cho, 2006:56; Sachikonye, 2010:145). This confirms the conclusions of Northern social movement analysts (Tilly, 2003; McCarthy & Zald, 2006:19). In addition, social movements help to mobilise the necessary structures and to open up political structures to accommodate the envisioned changes and generate consensus about social problems and possible solutions (Bratton & Cho, 2006:56; Kagoro, 2003:114). Drawing from empirical evidence on mobilisation, CSOs have been able to mobilise their members in the hope of the restoration of democracy in Zimbabwe.

While it is clear that democratic decay became the compelling reason for CSOs to mobilise their constituencies around strengthening democratic institutions and the creation of an enabling environment, the results, in terms of strengthening democratic institutions and processes, are less clear. Organised campaigns have come in the form of protest action by CSOs. The consequences of CSOs' mobilisation has been increased civil society engagement with citizens, as well as increased demands on the state, in some cases through protest action. Lack of adequate resources among most CSOs has caused a reliance on donor agencies. In this study, the role of donors has presented controversy, with different participants showing either support or criticism of donors in CSO activities. Nonetheless, CSOs have succeeded in establishing network spaces through the establishment of the NCA around the broader areas of constitutionalism after the realisation that the various CSOs are campaigning for the same cause –namely, that of strengthening democracy in the country.

These developments have not only been a challenge to the authoritarian state but have also shown that civil society has a pivotal role to play in campaigning for the democratisation of public institutions in Zimbabwe. In a country where democracy exists only in name in terms of the way in which the state continues to function, the impact of CSOs has been that of confronting the state to try to create an enabling and transparent electoral environment. As a result, most elections from the late1990s show the influence of civil society mobilisation of the electorate. The findings of the study show that there has been a paradigm shift by citizens towards participating in elections unlike in the early 1990s, when voter apathy dominated most electoral processes. However, the politicisation of electoral institutions has made it impossible for CSOs to realize their mission of establishing transparency in the conduct of

elections. Additionally, through civic education and election monitoring, CSOs have sought to establish transparency in electoral processes with mixed success. In the study, increased participation has indicated that CSOs have been able to mobilise their members to participate in elections and desist from voter apathy. What this means in relation to their broader campaign for democracy is that at least citizens have shown high levels of critical analysis of political issues and, by abandoning voter apathy, have shown that they are prepared to contribute to political change. Additionally, the findings from this study have also shown that the employment of repressive legislation does not entirely discourage CSOs and citizens from confronting the state but instead increases the resolve of citizens to contribute to the participatory discourse.

The perceptions from participants have indicated that pro-democracy CSOs in Zimbabwe have successfully mobilised their members to participate in different governance processes and campaign for the restoration of democracy. CSOs have been able to attract high numbers of citizens within their membership, and have contributed to reduced voter apathy and improved access to information for those in remote areas of the country thereby creating an informed rural citizenry. Additionally, the establishment of coalitions and networks from among pro-democracy CSOs has shown that CSOs have realised the need for a concerted effort to confront the state, demanding participatory democracy and good governance. However, given that these accomplishments have been realised in a country where democracy exists only in name, the impact on the overall democratic discourse has had minimal benefits for the ordinary citizen.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Introduction

This study sought to establish the extent to which civil society has explored alternative participatory spaces in Zimbabwe to enhance citizen participation. The research problem focused on the democratic decay that has evolved in Zimbabwe since the 1990s and the interaction between the state and CSOs as the latter sought to restore democracy, especially from the mid-1990s (Raftopoulos and Savage, 2004; Makumbe, 1998; Sachikonye, 2004). In interactions with the state, CSOs have sought to create a critical mass capable of making informed political decisions to enhance their participation in governance processes (Moyo, 1993:2; Sachikonye, 1995:135; Sithole, 2000:12; Raftopoulos & Alexander). Debates on factors influencing democracy such as repressive legislation, politicisation of public institutions and human rights violations by the state (Hammar & Raftopoulos, 2003:24;) were identified and an analytical framework constructed emphasising the interconnectedness between the practices of democracy, governance, civil society organisations and citizen participation (Adesina 1992:52-3; Gaventa, 2006:3;Azarya, 1992:25; Ramjee & van Donk, 2011:11; Diamond, 1995:57; Diamond & Plattner, 2003:xxiii; Edwards, 2009:2; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009:122; Diamond & Platter, 2003:7;Harbeson, 1994:291-5; Pellizzoni, 2003:56; Paul, 2005 cited in World Bank, 2007:247) . In analysing the democratic deficit in Zimbabwe, it emerged that there is increasing political intolerance of the political establishment that has sought to remain in power through the enactment of restrictive legislation and the politicisation and militarisation of most public institutions ((Raftopoulos & Mlambo, 2009; Sachikonye, 2011;2005:145; Bracking,2005:4; Masunungure, 2010; Makumbe, 2010:134; Masunungure,2010:14; Matyszak, 2009:25). Using four case studies, namely CHRA, ZimRights, WOZA and the NCA, the study sought to establish the extent to

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which their operations have influenced citizen participation or helped to shape citizens' political behaviour (Mattes et al, 2005:163-169; Kamete, 2009:62; Kagoro, 2003:114).

7.2 Framing the debates on Civil Society and Citizen Participation

The study provides an analytical framework based on debates around the factors that influence citizen participation. Civil society activities such as civic education and outreach programmes have been utilised to create a critical mass that can make informed political decisions (Dalton, 2008:78; Kamete, 2009:59). Protest action has been cited as one tool which most CSOs use to confront the state and demand accountability, transparency and responsiveness (Keane, 1998:13; (Davies, 2009:13; Harbeson, 1994:291-5).

The success of social movements and CBOs rests mainly on the resources that are available to them (Tilly, 2004:27), the formation of coalitions with already-existing organisations (Medearis, 2004:54), the securing of financial support (Bratton,1994:104;Tarrow,1998:198) and the mounting of effective and organised campaigns of political pressure (Ake, 1993:24;Kamete, 2009:61; McCarthy & Zald, 2006:19) and their potential social, cultural and political consequences (Tilly, 2003:3).

Various authors have cited elements of social structure - notably, age, gender, educational levels and residential location - as having an influence on citizens' level of participation (Mattes et al, 2005:163-169). Age has been identified as a vital factor regarding participation because the older one becomes, the less the urge to participate in CSOs' activities and political processes is apparent, especially if these activities are characterised by violence. Participants in their prime ages were cited as mostly reform- minded. Gender has also been cited as a factor in participation, with men more likely to participate in CSOs and political processes than their female counterparts (Meena, 1992; Makanje, 2004:3; Win, 2004:3). Residential location has presented urbanites as being more likely to be active in civil society and political activities than their rural counterparts due to the enabling environment found in most urban areas (Sachikonye, 2004; Nicholl, 2008; Makanje, 2004:3). Similarly, level of education mostly corresponds with the level of information citizens have and cuts across other elements of social structure. Consequently, most researchers have tended to equate level of education with the level of being informed. It has been noted that those citizens with higher educational attainment are more likely to be better informed about different processes than their less educated counterparts (Glasgow et al, 1993:83; Folscher, 2001 in World Bank,

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2007:251). This has led to the perception that citizens' level of education and information determines their level of participation in CSOs' activities and political processes, especially if these are not characterised by violence.

CSO structures have been known to enable activists to disseminate and acquire information (Gamson & Meyer, 2006:276). This mode of information sharing among civil society activists has enabled them to be conversant with CSO plans, notably those pertaining to protest action in which members are called upon to take part and identify with the cause of their civic groups (Jonga & Chirisa, 2009:175). Existing political discourse shapes the type of civil society that prevails in a country (Dalton, 2008:78) and in cases where democracy is under threat, pro-democracy CSOs campaign for the restoration and strengthening of crumbling democratic structures (McAdam et al, 2006:13; Mattes et al, 2005:165). In the course of their operations and activities, CSOs model and shape the political behaviour of their members and activists (Mattes et al, 2005:166). It has also been noted that as a result civil society, activists within civil society structures gain mobilisation skills to be able to enter mainstream politics.

Debates around access to information, just like those of level of education, have shown that it is a citizen entitlement and it is the obligation of the state to ensure that information reaches its citizens (Moyo, 1993:2; World Bank, 2007:217). It has been argued that an informed citizen is an empowered one. Access to information seeks to empower citizens to make informed decisions, especially political decisions. It has been acknowledged that it is the prerogative of the state to provide information to its citizens and for citizens to select the type of information that is useful. However, some states have been known to restrict information or determine the type of information and mode by which the information reaches the public. This is done deliberately to keep citizens uninformed.

Additionally, research has shown that authoritarian regimes enact and employ repressive legislation to curtail civil liberties, which is certainly the case in Zimbabwe (Moyo, 1993:2; World Bank, 2007:217; ZimRights Newsletter, 2008). Due to the intolerant characteristics of such regimes, state-civil society relations are strained. Political intolerance is common among such authoritarian regimes and the state's response to any voices of dissent is brutal as it has state security apparatus at its disposal (Moyo, Makumbe & Raftopoulos, 2000:21; Ihonvbere, 2000:4). In Zimbabwe, as in other authoritarian regimes, civil society actors are active despite

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repressive legislative and hostile operational environments (Moyo, Makumbe & Raftopoulos, 2000:24). Deliberations on authoritarian regimes have shown that it is not that there is no enabling legislation, but that dictators either ignore such legislation or enact additional legislation to repress citizens (Makumbe, 2010; Matyszak, 2009:25). This is the case in Zimbabwe, where POSA and AIPPA were enacted to counter growing voices of dissent among the population as democratic space continued to deteriorate, especially from the late 1990s (Moyo, Makumbe & Raftopoulos, 2000:24). It emerged that repressive legislation intended to curtail civil society activities had in fact united citizens and civil society activists to take a common stand and create network spaces, enabling them to confront the state with a united voice (Besson & Marti, 2006:35; Makanje et al, 2004:11).

While citizen participation is an entitlement for all citizens within a given polity, what has emerged from the available literature is that women encounter numerous challenges in their quest for equal participation, over and above the enormous challenges of assuming leadership positions within public spaces (Win, 2003:5; Logan & Bratton, 2006; Meena,1992; Gaidzanwa in Meena, 1992). One of the most significant challenges to women's participation has been the patriarchy which has characterised most African societies (Cohen, 1997: 148; Ndlovu, 2009:114). Additionally, the legislative framework in some countries has failed to accommodate women citizens, resulting in an unevenly contested playing field between men and women.

The ill-resourced nature of most CSOs has led to a reliance on donors which make financial interventions to assist CSOs. However there has been controversy on the role of donor financial aid with proponents of donors to CSOs acknowledging that the financial assistance provided by donors is used to facilitate the operations of CSOs (Bratton, 1989:421; Makumbe, 2009:12; Bratton & Cho, 2006). Critics have accused donors of meddling in local politics and harbouring a regime change agenda by dictating to CSOs how they should undertake their activities. The involvement of diplomatic missions in the financing of CSOs, especially pro-democracy CSOs, has been construed as meddling in local politics and as evidence of a regime change agenda (Moyo, 1993:3).

7.3 Summary of Research Findings

This section revisits each of the factors related to participation that were discussed in earlier analytical chapters, in the context of what has emerged from the empirical findings of the

study. Interviews and analyses of civil society activities demonstrate that state-civil society relations in Zimbabwe have been characterised by acrimony and constant clashes over political hegemony, especially from the mid-1990s, when it became evident that democratic institutions were deteriorating. It is on this premise that the increasingly intolerant regime responded to civil society demands for responsiveness with brutality, a political behaviour which gave civil society the strength to continue preparing citizens to confront the state and to participate in various governance processes, notably electoral processes.

7.3.1 Key Elements of Social Structure and Citizen Participation

Through the analysis of demographic data presented in the previous chapter, the study illustrates that key elements of social structure such as the age of participants, gender, level of education and residential location help in shaping the political behaviour and perceptions of citizens (Mattes et al, 2005:165) and eventually influence citizens' propensity to participate in public activities. It emerged that age is a significant determinant of participation with the elderly unlikely to embrace reforms (Mattes et al, 2005:166). However, research also illustrated that the youth[43] are mostly reform-minded (Mattes, 2005:165) and align themselves to political parties (Makumbe,2009:34), but can be prone to manipulation by selfish politicians who take advantage of youths' desire for employment to engage them in violent political activities (Luqman, 2010:10; Raftopoulos, 2004:21), as evidenced by the youth militia within ZANU PF who are used to perpetrate violence against civil society activists and other potential voices of dissent (Hammar & Raftopoulos,2003:23).

The research further illustrated that levels of education are a significant determinant of citizen participation, taking cognisance of the fact that an informed citizen can exert more pressure on government to deliver on its promises. This has demonstrated that educational levels and the level of information accessible to citizens promote citizen participation as citizens take up active roles in pro-democracy CSOs and political processes (World Bank, 2007:217).

7.3.2 Citizens' Capacity to Participate

The propensity among citizens to participate in a crisis situation is dependent on the level of government oppression (Sachikonye, 2004:45). In the Zimbabwean context, the democratic decay that set in and eroded most of the available democratic spaces activated citizens to

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[43] For this thesis, the youth are those up to 36 years, as has been highlighted in chapters 3,4 and 5

confront the state through CSOs. The study also noted that the emergence of most pro-democracy civil society organisations in the 1990s was not coincidental but was a response to deteriorating democratic institutions that had characterised much of the country's political, economic and social landscapes. It could therefore be concluded that in Zimbabwe CSOs and citizens are reciprocal partners that interact when there is a crisis, with civil society providing the medium and resources and citizens providing the human capacity needed to initiate the intended activities.

7.3.3 Civil Society Structures

Dissemination of information to members has formed the core business of most CSOs and it is mostly through their structures that they are able to reach out to their members (Diamond & Platter, 2003:7). This vital role of civil society structures has demonstrated that exchange and sharing of information within CSOs and among activists forms the core of their interactional activities (O'Neill, 2008:10).

Noting the efficient and effective coordination of CSO activities through organisational structures, the study has established the interconnectedness between and among different activities. It can therefore be concluded that the correlation between increased cases of civil disobedience and the intensification of civil society activities is a response to repressive practices of government. The correlation between increased incidences of protest action and an upsurge in civil society activity could be attributed to raise awareness of citizens who have realised the need for the adoption of a confrontational approach in engagement with the state (Gaventa, 2006:14). It can therefore be concluded that the success of protest action could be attributed to civil society structures' facilitation of protest action and efficient mobilisation.

The research has also demonstrated that protest action has transcended gender boundaries to include women, notably those from within WOZA who have constantly used protest marches to convey their message to government. This demonstrates that protest action cuts across gender boundaries and the political divide, as people from different political parties have found themselves in the streets demanding accountability and responsiveness from government.

7.3.4 Access to Information

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Evidence of the work of CSO structures and that of the state indicates that both have a mandate to inform citizens. For CSOs, their mandate is to create critical citizens who are able to contribute to a democratic dispensation by making informed decisions (Hadenius & Teorell, 2005:95). It is crucial that CSOs disseminate appropriate information to enable citizens to make informed decisions (Moyo, 1993:2; World Bank, 2007:217). This can be achieved through disseminating information that can help to empower their members. Based on data collected and perceptions of participants presented, it can be concluded that access to information is one of the most important factors towards creating an informed citizenry (Diamond & Platter, 2003:7). While it can be acknowledged that the authoritarian state in Zimbabwe has sought to restrict the flow of information and determine what information citizens get, CSOs have embarked on promotional activities to improve access to information by reaching out to communities, especially grassroots people in remote parts of the country. This demonstrates that outreach programmes by CSOs have enabled the provision of alternative sources of information to citizens, opening up space for public debate around various political, economic and social processes. In addition, the study has concluded that state propaganda presenting CSOs as agents of regime change has been met with disapproval by citizens as they continue to subscribe to civil society activities in large numbers as evidenced by the growth of most pro-democracy CSOs and diminishing voter apathy.

7.3.5 Repressive Legislation and Citizen Participation

The study has established that one of the instruments that the state has manipulated to suppress civil liberties is legislation. Repressive legislation has impacted on the relationship between the state and civil society in Zimbabwe in many ways (Makanje et al, 2004:11). By limiting media freedoms through such legal provisions as AIPPA and restricting civil liberties through POSA and AIPPA provisions, the state has employed existing legislative framework against CSOs and their activities. Moreover, the study has established that the state has sought to stifle democratic debates through enacting repressive legislation. The end result has been that of angering citizens and increasing their resolve to campaign for the democratisation of the media and other public spaces and for participation and seeking alternative ways of influencing political decisions (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2003:122). The research has also demonstrated that the impact of restrictive measures against citizens has

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resulted in citizen anger, making it easy for CSOs to mobilise them against the authoritarian state.

7.3.6 Establishment of Coalitions and Network Spaces within Civil Society

The repressive political environment in the country has resulted in most pro-democracy movements seeking to address one goal- that of campaigning for the restoration of democracy, through different ways. The realisation that most CSOs were fighting for a common purpose of democratisation led to the forging of linkages and working relations which in turn facilitated the formation of coalitions and network spaces that sought to strengthen their capacity to engage the state (Veneklasen & Miller, 2002:25). The study does not seek to give an impression of a united pro-democracy civil society movement in Zimbabwe, nor does it attempt to romanticise the role of civil society in enhancing citizen participation. Pro-democracy CSOs exhibit common purpose in their campaign for the restoration of democracy and the strengthening of democratic institutions. Through the establishment of coalitions such as the NCA, CSOs have been able to establish network spaces to collectively demand social and political change. While it is clear that the pro-democracy movement in the country has converged towards the restoration of democracy, this is not to say that they are opting for a regime change but rather to strengthen their positions and demands based on their common understandings of democracy. Given that coalitions are guided by collective common purpose, the study concluded that crises act as the glue that binds CSOs, especially in the formation of coalitions. This is how coalitions come about, as similar-minded CSOs forge linkages (Cakmak, 2007:1) as has been discussed in Chapter 6, section 6.4.5. It can be concluded that CSOs provide a training ground for human rights and civil society activists as well as those aspiring to mainstream politics, whose mobilisation skills earned during their tenure in civic society becomes useful in launching political careers. It can therefore be concluded that CSOs in Zimbabwe have made a major contribution to the politicisation of most human rights and civil society activists by shaping their behaviour to be able to influence government decisions in governance processes.

7.3.7 Residents' Association Activities and Good Local Governance

Participation in democratisation has also been exhibited at local levels where poor service delivery and increasing demands for a participatory approach to local governance have resulted in calls for local government reforms (Chikulo, 2010:145). Drawing from data on local governance perceptions of respondents, it can be concluded that residents in many urban areas, restless about poor service delivery and corruption, have either resuscitated defunct residents' associations or sought to establish new ones in areas where these had not existed. The research has also demonstrated that increased awareness of the importance of the participatory approach is likely to have been behind increased demand by residents to be involved in strengthening local governance structures and local government reforms (Kamete, 2009:47). It can also be concluded that residents have realised that the numerous challenges facing most urban areas require a collective effort to resolve them, hence residents' demand for participation in various local government institutions and processes, notably budgetary processes. Just as with the establishment of coalitions, it can be concluded that residents with urban localities have realised the importance of collective demand-making to strengthen residents' voices, hence the merging of splinter residents' associations in bigger cities such as Harare and Bulawayo where the Combined Harare Residence Association (CHRA) and the Bulawayo United Residents' Association (BURA) respectively have been established. In addition, many of these associations which had all along operated on a virtual basis have established centres where residents can come for consultation.

7.3.8 Women and Participation in Public Life

Literature on the participation of women in CSO and political activities has presented women as less involved in seeking leadership positions but more active in other lower level activities, such as being ordinary members of CSOs or political parties. Events referred to in the study have shown that participation of women in public life is very low, especially those aspiring for leadership positions as shown in Chapter 5. This confirms McFadden's argument that women tend to shy away from public spaces, especially those with leadership commitments (McFadden, 1992:92). However participation of women in activities other than assuming leadership positions has been seen to be more than their male counterparts. This was confirmed by the large number of women who attended CSO workshops as compared to men. Some feminist scholars (MacKinnon, 1989:48; Meena,1992:19; Kabeer, 2001:46) have presented patriarchy as imposing a domineering effect on women's participation in public

spaces but this study did not find evidence for this claim. What this study established is that both men and women make a collective claim on democracy and seek ways of playing a role in restoring it. It can therefore be concluded that crisis situations enable societies to set aside minor differences or traditions (such as patriarchy) that tend to separate their roles as they seek to confront common problems in their midst. The active participation of both men and women demonstrates that the urge to confront challenges transcends gender and suppresses the negative effects of patriarchy, even if temporarily.

7.3.9 Donor Funding

It is widely acknowledged that most CSOs do not have adequate resources, resulting in donors coming in with the much needed financial resources to operationalise CSO activities (Makumbe, 2009:12; Bratton & Cho, 2006). In this study, donor funding for pro-democracy CSOs has attracted mixed reactions from participants. The observation has been that most pro-democracy civil society groups have foreign donors or donors with foreign associations. The research has demonstrated that while it is common knowledge that most CSOs get donor funding, accusations of some donors using such funding as a means of meddling in local politics have further emerged. The involvement of some diplomatic missions based in Zimbabwe in civil society activity has been viewed as confirmation of the involvement of host countries in funding local pro-democracy CSOs to campaign for democracy. It should also be noted that these accusations and counter- accusations have given credibility to the state's allegations that both civil society and the donor community are conniving to topple the government.

Having engaged in the debates about the role of donor funding in facilitating civil society activities and operations (Moyo, 1993:3; Bratton and Cho, 200616; Makumbe, 1998:99), it can be concluded that donor funding has gone a long way towards capacitating civil society groups, but the over-reliance on such funding has tended to cripple the operations of most groups once funds cease to come. Furthermore, in the Zimbabwean case, donors have come a long way in funding various civic groups for many years, but this has also increased mistrust between the state and the pro-democracy movement.

7.4 Conclusion

Various debates around civil society and its propensity to enhance democracy has shown that the existing political environment and other auxiliary factors are determinant in facilitating or debilitating the strengthening of democratic institutions within a polity (Cornwall, 2002a; Gaventa, 2004; Ramjee & van Donk, 2011; White, 1996; McEwan, 2003;Bourdieu, 2000). Findings from this study have shown that there are numerous factors that promote or hinder citizen participation. These factors range from elements of social structure, CSO internal politics, operations and activities and CSO resource mobilisation (involving donors) as well as the role of the state in seeking to influence citizens' political decisions. However, the overarching observation has been that faced with a crisis both men and women work together. Political crises act as the glue that binds similarly-minded CSOs, individuals and even divergent racial groups in pursuit of a common purpose. This has been shown by different CSOs forming coalitions and engaging in regular protest marches. Protest action has also shown that it has the ability to unite citizens in their gender, political and traditional diversity. In addition the civil society movement being partner in the governance of a country outside the state has shown its usefulness as the appropriate forum to engage the state.

Based on the factors and trends cited in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that pro-democracy civil society organisations' mobilisation in Zimbabwe has been a success story despite the challenges of facing an increasingly brutal state. This is despite the political intolerance of the state which has demonstrated, through brutally perpetrating violence on citizens, that authoritarian governments anger citizens to such an extent that their resolve to fight the state is increased, paving the way for more protest action.

It has also been noted that the level of repression exhibited by the state towards CSOs has helped to shape citizens' political behaviour and to encourage them to seek ways of dislodging the repressive regime (Mattes et al, 2005:167). This also demonstrates that repression of citizens by political leaders increases citizens' resolve to campaign for a more open society where civil liberties are freely dispensed by the state. It can therefore be concluded that faced with an intolerant and repressive regime, CSOs create their own spaces, especially where spaces have been closed or restricted. The case of WOZA has shown that women can take up the challenge and initiative to demand rights and privileges from the state, even through protest action, contrary to the perception of women held by McFadden

(1992:12) that women are not prepared to take up public spaces. Similarly, the case of the NCA has shown that different civil society sectors can establish their own network spaces to confront the state with a united voice. ZimRights, CHRA and WOZA, among other CSOs, have also shown that CSOs can reconcile their objectives and missions to align with those of the broader civil society movement by affiliating to the NCA and incorporating constitutional reform into their agendas.

Given the political nature of activities and operations that pro-democracy CSOs seek to confront and fight, it can be concluded that civil society organisations cannot claim to be apolitical when in fact they are dealing with political issues and political parties. Their involvement in campaigning for citizen participation, the restoration of democracy and good governance cannot be achieved without recourse to political solutions. CSOs have aligned themselves to political parties as was shown during the National Referendum of 1999 when different CSOs aligned themselves with the MDC to reject the constitutional draft spearheaded by government. Similarly the NCA has been involved in the constitution reform process, seeking to contribute to the writing of a people-driven constitution for the country.

In terms of the analytical framework it can be concluded that the level of repression of citizens tends to create commonalities through which citizens can identify with each other and make a collective effort to confront the state. However CSO activities continue to be dogged by lack of adequate financial resources leading to the involvement of donors to fund the activities. The research further demonstrated that as long as CSOs lack adequate financial resources and have to rely on external donors their relationship with the state will continue to be informed by suspicion of a regime change agenda. As a result, the tension around mobilising for democracy between pro-democracy CSOs and the state is thus likely to remain, and the research presented here shows that tactics and alliances to pressure the state require constant adaptation. Yet the need for CSO and civil society action in Zimbabwe cannot be questioned.
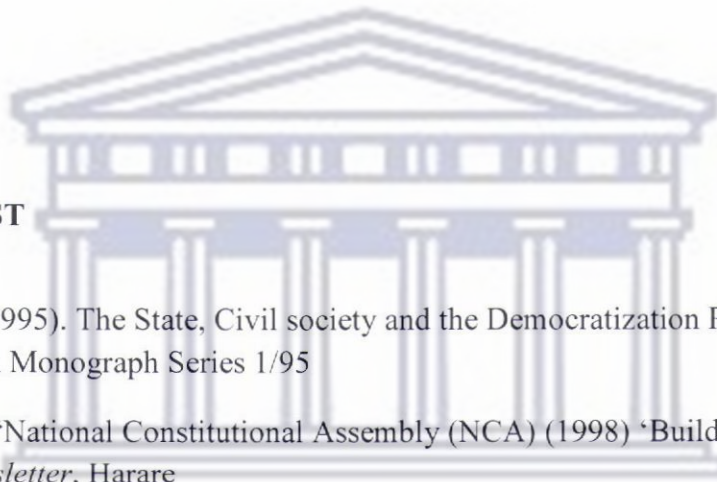
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Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaires and Interview Schedules

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Respondent No.			

******PLEASE SHOW YOUR PREFERENCE BY MEANS OF A TICK******

1.

I am a PhD student from the University of the Western Cape. I do not represent the government or any political party. I am exploring the extent to which civil society have enhanced (or failed to enhance) citizen participation in governance processes in Zimbabwe. This is purely for academic purposes and your responses will be kept confidential. Your input would be a vital tool to achieve the objectives of this study.

2.

What is your age range?	Please tick	
18-24		
25-30		
31-40		
42-50		
51-60		
Over 60		
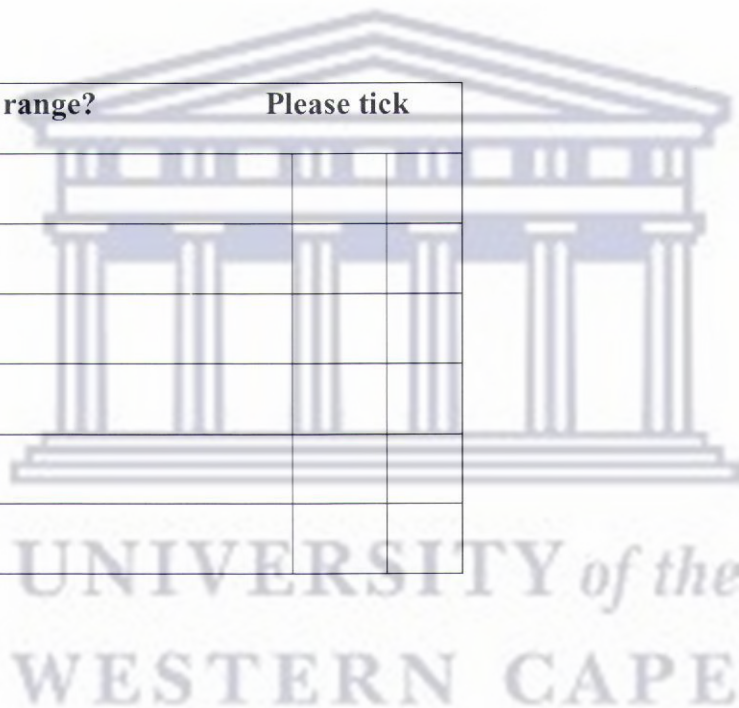
3.

Respondents Gender.	
Male	
Female	

4.

What is your highest standard of education completed	
No formal education	
Informal schooling	
Some Primary schooling	
Primary completed	
Some secondary schooling	
Secondary/high School Completed	
Some University	
University Completed	
Post graduate	

5.

Where is your permanent residence located?	Rural	urban	Peri-urban	Farm
	1	2	3	4

6.

8. Which **ONE** of the following is your main source of news? You can choose more than one					
A. Newspapers-government					
B. Newspapers-independent					
C. Radio-ZBC					
A. Radio-foreign stations-specify					
B. Television-local					

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C. Television-foreign						

7.

Which of the following sources of information do you have access to?		
	Local	**Foreign**
Newspapers		
Radio		
TV-Local station		
Satellite transmission		

8.

Which Civil Society Organization(s) (CSO/s) do you belong to?		
ZimRights		
CHRA		
WOZA		
NCA		
Other………………		

9.

What is the main objective of your civic organization (s)?	
1-To educate citizens on human and people's rights	
2-To represent the needs of rate payers	
3-To represent the needs of women and children	
4- To facilitate constitutional debate and citizen participation in the affairs of the country	

5-A combination of the above	
6- Don't know	

10.

Which one of the following have you participated in?	
Liberation Struggle	1
National Youth Service	2
Land Redistribution programme-takeover of white commercial farms	3
Government sponsored Constitutional Commission of 1999	5
NCA led-constitution reform process	6
None of these	9

11.

How often does the civil society organization/s hold meetings?						
	weekly	Fortnightly	monthly	Bi-annually	Annually	When necessary
	5	4	3	2	1	9

12.

In such meetings, what topics are discussed?		
Prevailing political and economic conditions in the country		
Educating citizens/members of human rights		
Receiving reports of human rights situation from different		

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places		
Outreach programmes for grassroots people and the general citizenry		
To provide leadership for citizens in their engagement with government		

13.

What, in your opinion, is the function of civil society organizations?		
1-To represent the wishes of citizens		
To protest against what government does		
To help in resolution of problems affecting citizens in society		
To provide checks and balances on state activities		
To provide leadership for citizens in their engagement with government		

14.

The role of civil society organization in your area			
Statement 1: CSOs help to educate communities about their rights and roles in community development.		Statement 2: CSOs provide leadership for citizens to demand their rights, freedoms and privileges from the state	
Agree very strongly with statement 1	Agree with statement 1	Agree with statement 2	Agree very strongly with statement 2

15.

What strategy/ies does your civic organization draw the attention of authorities or demand accountability from authorities on issues affecting citizens in general?	
1-Through peaceful engagement with government (local or central)	
2-Through petitions to authorities	
3-Through passive resistance	
4- Through protests and demonstrations, usually with violent undertones	

16.

What benefits have you drawn from your membership in this organization?		
1-Have been educated on civic issues		
Have been enlightened to human rights and other entitlements for citizens		
Strategies to engage government		
To present issues affecting citizens in the community		
Other… (specify)……………………………………………..		

17.

In general how would you describe:	Very Good	Fairly Good	Neither Bad or Good	Fairly Bad	Very Bad	Don't know

A. The present economic conditions of this country						
B. Your living conditions						

18.

How interested would you say you are in public affairs [political/economic/social]?	
Very interested	
Somewhat interested	
Not very interested	
Not at all interested	
Don't know *[Do not read]*	

19.

In Zimbabwe, which of these rights do you exercise freely?				
	Not at all free	Not very free	Somewhat free	Completely free
A. to say what you think (*expression*)				
B. To join any organisation you want				
C. To choose who you vote for without feeling pressured				
D. To move freely anytime, anywhere				
E. To meet and discuss with friends freely				

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20.

What kind of society would you like to live in, in this country?			
STATEMENT 1: **Citizens should be more active in questioning actions of leaders**		**STATEMENT 2:** **In our country, citizens should show more respect for authority**	
Agree very strongly with statement 1 1	Agree with statement 1 2	Agree with statement 2 3	Agree very strongly with statement 2 4
Agree with neither			
Don't know			

21.

What is your community involvement?	Official	Active member	Inactive member	Ordinary member
A. Civil groups				
B. religious group (e.g. church, mosque),traditional religions				
C. Political parties				
D. Elections and electoral processes				
E. Ward Forum committees				
F. Some other community association or community group				

22.

As a responsible member of your community, which of the following activities

have you been involved in, or do you regularly participate in?					
	Often	Several times	Once or twice	Would do if had a chance	Would never do this
A. Attended community meeting					
B. Attended demonstration or protest march					

23.

Have you participated in any election before, if Yes, which one?						
	Yes					No
	1980-1985	1990-1995	2000-2002	2005-2008		

24.

With regard to the most recent, 2008 elections, which statement is true for you?	
Managed to vote in last election	1
Decided not to vote-(voter apathy)	2
You could not find the polling station	3
You were prevented from voting	4
You did not have time to vote	5
You did not vote for some other reason	6
You were not registered	7

25.

According to your opinion, how should politicians achieve their political goals?	
Through forcing people to adopt programmes or vote for them	
Through politically-motivated violence on those with different political views or preferences Through civic education	
Through consensus and consultation	

26.

Which constitutional drafting process did you participate in or have access to?	Participated	Access
The Lancaster House Constitution of 1979		
The Constitutional Commission document of 1999		
The NCA Draft Constitution of 1999		
The Kariba Constitutional Draft		
The current constitutional drafting process		
None of the above		

27.

The last time you contacted the ward councilor or MP, did you go:				
	Alone	with a group	Not applicable (did not contact ward councilor	Don't know

Alone or in a group				

28.

For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you disagree or agree?						
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
A. The courts have the right to make decisions that people always abide by.						
B. The police always have the right to make people obey the law						
C. The tax department always has the right to make people pay taxes						

29.

How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you had enough about them to say?					
	Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	A lot	Don't Know
The President Robert Mugabe					
Parliament /					
The Mayor/s					
Elected Local Municipal Council					
Political parties					

The Police					
The Courts of Law					
Community Policing Forums (Watch Committees)					
Ward Committees (Mbizo/Amaveni)					
School Governing Boards					

30.

How much time does your ward councillor spend time meeting people and addressing issues in this constituency? [read out options]						
	Almost all the time	At least weekly	At least once a month	At least once a year	Never	Don't know

31.

Choose any <u>THREE</u> factors that have been much talked about in recent years in Zimbabwe [Indicate in order of significance]	1st response	2nd response	3rd response
Crime and Security			
Corruption			
Political Violence			
Elections and electoral processes			

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Gender & Women's issues			
Democracy/political rights			

32.

To what extent has government been able to provide the following basic rights to citizens?					
	Very badly	Fairly badly	Fairly well	Very well	Don't know/
A. A good the economy					
C. Providing employment opportunity					
D. Keeping prices down					
E. narrowing gap between rich and poor					
G. Improving basic health services					
H. Addressing educational needs					
I. Providing water and sanitation services					
J. Providing basic commodities					
K. Fighting corruption in government					
O. Empowering women					

33.

How well do you think local government is practicing the following procedures? Or haven't you heard enough to have an opinion?

	Very badly	Fairly badly	Fairly well	Very well	Don't know/
A. Making the councils program of work known to ordinary people					
B. Providing citizens with information about the councils budget (i.e. revenues and expenditures)					
C. Allowing citizens like yourself to participate					
D. Consulting others (including traditional, civic, and community leaders) before making decisions					
E. Providing effective ways of to handle complaints about local councilors or officials					
F. Guaranteeing that local government revenues are used for public services and not for private gain					

34.

When there are problems with how local government is run in your community, how much can an ordinary person do to improve the situation				
Nothing	A small amount	Some	A great deal	Don't know [don't read]

35.

How often has local government authority in your area enabled citizens to participate in the municipal budgetary process?				
Nothing	A small amount	Some	A great deal	Don't know [don't read]

36.

If you yourself have seen problems in how local government is run in your community, how often, if at all, did you do any of the following:						
	Never	Once or twice	Several times	Many times	Remarks	
A. Discuss the problem with other people in your community						
B. Join with others in your community to address a problem						
C. Discuss problems with other community, religious, or traditional leaders						
D. Write a letter to a newspaper or call a radio show?						
E. Make a complaint to local government officials, for example by going in person						
Make a complaint to other government officials, for example, by going in person or by writing a letter						

37.

Looking at the group of councilors who are presently serving on your local government council, how qualified do you think they are to do their jobs? Please rate them according to the following types of qualifications. Or haven't you heard enough to have an opinion?					
	Very qualified	Fairly qualified	Fairly unqualified	Very unqualified	Remarks

A. Their level of education					
B. the extent that they care about the community					
C. Their experience at managing public service programs					
D. Their honesty in handling public funds					

38.

How easy or difficult is it for an ordinary person to have their voice heard between elections	
Very easy	4
Somewhat easy	3
Somewhat difficult	2
Very difficult	1
Don't know [Don't read]	9

40.

Which of the following mobilization strategies have been more effective in articulating objectives of the whole civil society spectrum in Zimbabwe, and WHY?				
Demonstrations	Mass protests	Passive resistance	Civil disobedience	Don't know [don't read]

41 "What has been the state of democracy in the country, especially from the mid-1990s?"

Democratic	Deteriorating Democracy	Very undemocratic	Failed State

42 "How active have you been in civil society activities since becoming a member?

Age Range	Very Active	Active	Non-committal	Not Active
18-25				
26-35				
36-45				
46-55				
56-69				
+- 70				

43.

	Yes	No
Do you think there is need for political reform in the country?		
Should civil society groups be involved in campaigning for political reforms?		

44.

Which of the various operations have affected you?	Yes	No
Operation Gukurahundi (1980) (political unrest)		
Operation Bring Down Dishes (2008) (elections)		
Operation I cannot Vote (2008) (elections)		
Operation Where Did You Vote Your X (2008) (elections)		
Operation Red Finger (2008) (elections)		
Operation Shut Them Up (2008) (elections)		
Operation Close Your Mouth (2010) (constitution making process)		

45

	Yes	No
Has any of your CSO meetings been denied by police for not having		

police clearance		

46

	Yes	No
Do you have a formal and/or professional qualification		
Are you formally employed?		

47. Which forms of media are available to you or would you prefer?

Indicate your media preferences	Local public print and electronic	
	Local independent print	
	Foreign print and electronic	
	CSO newsletters and free radio sets	
	Any media available	

48. How often have you participated in elections? Tick all those elections that you have participated in

Election Period	1990	1995	2000	2002	2005	2008

49. Please respond to the questions below:

Selected Indicators of Political Awareness	Rural (%)		Urban (%)	
	1997	2009	1997	2009
Hold membership to more than one CSO				
Hold any position within CSO structures				
Participate in Protest Marches				
Aware that participation in elections is a right				

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Attend civic education sessions by civic groups				
Hold any position in a political party				
Participated in the elections				
Aware of constitution reform process				
Aware of Fundamental Rights				

50. What major factor has impacted on political participation by citizens in the country?

		Residential Location	
Factors Influencing Political Participation		**Rural**	**Urban**
Freedom of expression			
Intimidation and Harassment	Youth Militia		
	Traditional Chiefs		
Physical Assault			
Voting Closely Monitored			
Eviction From Homestead			
Confiscation of Property and Livestock			

51.

How would you rate the performance of councilors in your ward?				
	Very Good	Satisfactory	Very Bad	Not Sure
Level of effectiveness				
Frequency of Report back meetings with residents				
Ability to have problems in the wards resolved				

To what extent can residents influence local governance				
	To a large extent	To some extent	Not at all	Not Sure
In budgetary processes				
In service delivery				
In formulating council policy				

52.

Which of the areas do residents want addressed at ward meeting?				
	To a large extent	To some extent	Not at all	Not Sure
Budgetary Issues				
Service Delivery				
Provision of Housing				
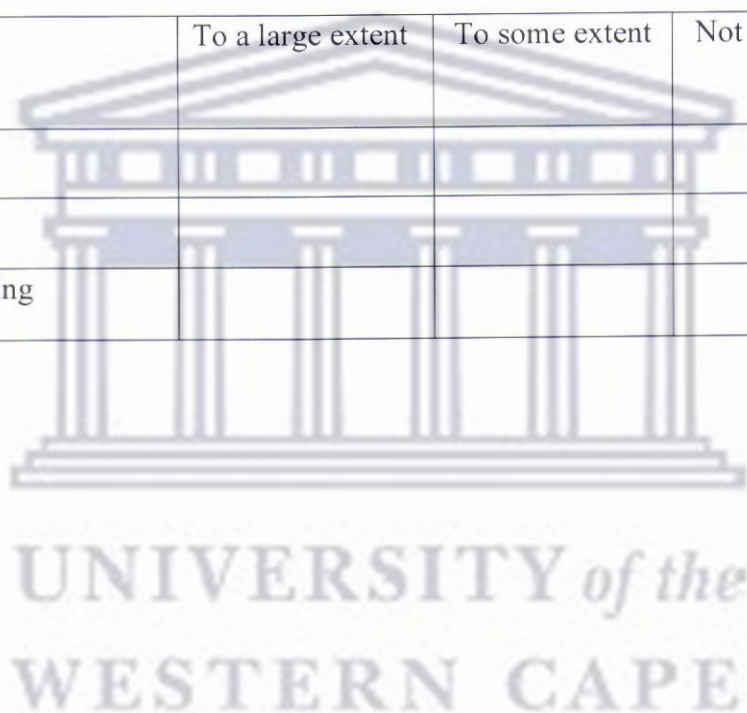
INTERVIEW SCHEDULES-CSOs' Management/Secretariat

I am a PhD student at the University of the Western Cape and am collecting information to establish what methods your organization has explored to engage government on issues affecting your organization. The data collected will be used for academic purposes ONLY. No names or identities will be revealed, unless with the specific permission of the participant.

Respondent No.			

Please feel free to respond to the questions below:

1-When was your organization formed? …………………….and who are your base members [e.g. open to anybody, human rights activists,
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

2-What is your total membership to date?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
………

3-What is your source of funding? (a) Subscriptions from members ………(b) national (c)International donors …….. [Name countries of donor/s]…………………………………

4-Is your membership predominantly rural or urban? Briefly explain that choice?……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

5-What is the main objective of your civic organization? What do you intend to achieve?……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

6-How do you mobilize your members wherever you want to engage government?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

7-Does your CSO have structures at grassroots levels? Yes………No…………………

If so, what is the purpose of such structures?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

8-What methods do you use to engage government or attract government's attention to problems facing your members?……………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

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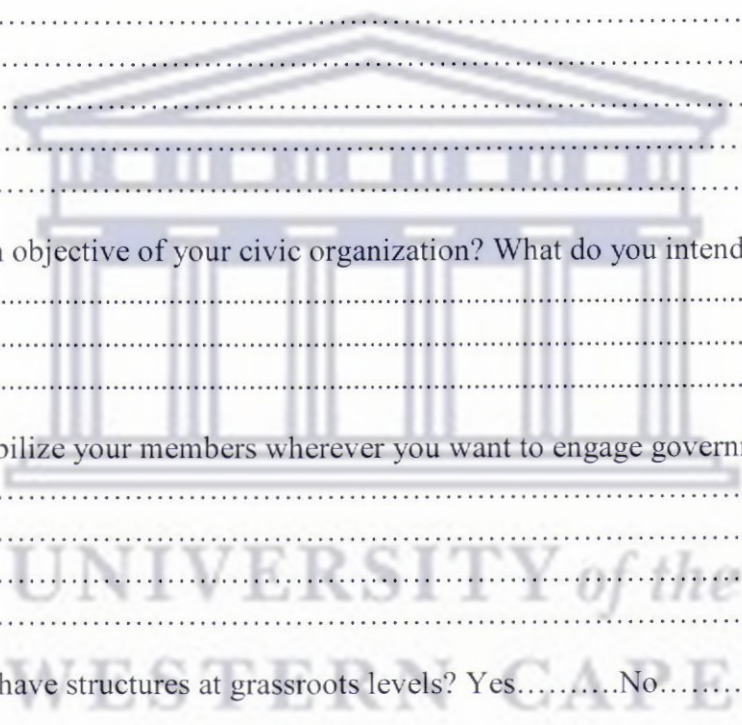
9-Do you [or have you] explore[d] legal channels or resort to protest action to attract government attention?

....
....
....
....

10-Have you explored legal channels to challenge government and existing laws that infringe on your operations? If yes, please briefly explain the court verdict? What was your opinion of the verdict?

....
....
....
....

11-What impact did such a verdict have on your members?...
....
....
....

12-[**If applicable to you**] Of the two [*civil disobedience* and **legal action**] channels of communication between your organization and government, which one have you found to be more convenient, and why?...
....
....
....

13- What is your attitude towards the police's reaction to your mobilization strategies?
....
....
....
....

14-Given the opportunity to advice government, what would you say about the need to incorporate people's views in the decision-making processes?...
....
....
....

15-Since the formation of your organization, what do you think were the successes and failures?...

....
....

16-In reference to [11] above, for the successes, what was the reaction of government; and for failures, what did [do you intend to] do to overcome these?...
....
....

17-How would you describe the relationship between the government and your CSO in particular and between government and civil society in Zimbabwe in general?

(a)...
....
....
....

(b)...
....
....
....

18-How would you describe some of the existing laws in relationship to the realization of your objectives?...
....
....
....

19-How have you taken advantage of existing laws to realize your organizational objectives?...
....
....
....

20-What success and challenges have your CSO posted/encountered, especially after 1997?

Successes...
....
....
....

Challenges...
....
....
....

Thank you

Interview Schedules for Academics

Respondent No.			

I am a PhD student at the University of the Western Cape's School of Government and am undertaking a research study entitled "Civil Society and Citizen Participation in Governance Processes in Zimbabwe, 1997-2008", to establish the extent to which selected civil society organizations have enhanced citizen participation in governance processes. I am aware you have published widely on this or other similar issues. Your input would therefore be of much benefit.

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Please kindly respond to the following questions, providing as much detail as you can.

1-How would you describe the relationship between government and civil society in Zimbabwe over the years? Briefly explain

……
……
……

2-What in your opinion has been the extent to which civil society in Zimbabwe has contributed to the enhancement of citizen participation at various spheres of government?

……
……
……

3-What formal and informal participatory spaces have been available to civic organizations in Zimbabwe, and have these been fully exploited by the civil society movement in the country?

……
……
……

4-What in your opinion has been the impact of key legislation in the enhancement or hindrance of citizen participation through various civil society organizations?

……
……
……

5-What in your opinion would be the most urgent issue to be addressed in an attempt to create a more an enabling environment that would facilitate good interaction between government and civil society in general?

……
……
……

6- Of the various civil society organizations in Zimbabwe, which one(s) would you consider to have done more for the incorporation of citizens into the decision-making processes than others? Why do you say so?

……
……
……

7-What do you suggest should be done by government or by civil society to enhance their performance in promoting citizen involvement in policy formulation and implementation?

....
....
....

8-What do you make of the accusation levelled against most civil society organisations in general that they are aimed at toppling the government? Why do you say so?

....
....
....

9-To what extent [and with what results] has the formation of coalitions or networking by several CSOs have helped to strengthen the civil society movement's resolve to restore democracy in Zimbabwe, especially since the late 1990s?

....
....
....

10- To what extent have key legislative provisions guiding citizen participation benefited the people at grassroots level?

....
....
....

11-What challenges face civil societies in Zimbabwe and how best can these be overcome?

....
....
....

12- Given that you have published widely on civil society in Zimbabwe/citizen participation and/or human rights, to date, what has been your overall thrust on the topics of democracy, governance, human rights, civil society and/or citizen participation?

....
....
....

13-To what extent and with what results have police brutality and harassment of activists violated and civil liberties and hindered citizen participation?

....
....
....

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14-In your opinion, how effective has been the **Ministry of Home Affairs** in managing and the voter's role and administer elections since 1990, taking into cognizance the allegations that the voter's role is/have been in shambles, and WHY has this very Ministry been the most controversial in the power-sharing impasse?

....

....

15-To what extent have the AU and SADC, through the enactment of the *SADC Guidelines on the Conduct of Democratic Elections*, been instrumental in ensuring the promotion of the conduct of free and fair elections and unhindered citizen participation in electoral processes within the SADC regional grouping in general and in Zimbabwe in particular?

....

....

....

16-Which of the following mobilization strategies have been more effective in articulating objectives of the whole civil society spectrum in Zimbabwe, and WHY?

(i) demonstrations

(ii) ....

(ii) mass protests

....

(iii)passive

(iv)resistance...

(v) civil disobedience

(vi)...

17-What contributions do you think have been made by civil society in voter education and monitoring since 1997

....

....

....

18-To what extent and with what results, have electoral laws enhanced/restricted citizen participation in governance and citizen participation in Zimbabwe? Would the disbanding of ZEC improve the conduct of free and fair elections in Zimbabwe?

....

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....
....
....

19-Give a brief comment on the militarization of the electoral process in Zimbabwe and its impact on the electorate over the years

....
....
....
....
....

20-Given the magnitude of the current constitutional crisis in Zimbabwe, what is your opinion on the progress of the constitutional reform debate that started with the formation of the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) in 1997?

....
....
....

21-Given the trend that almost all election results have been characterized by disputed results since 1995, where do you think the problem emanates from?

....
....
....

22-Given the current power-sharing impasse/stand-off between ZANU PF and the two MDC formations, what decisive role has civil society played (or should play) in persuading or coercing the two feuding political parties to come to a political settlement?

....
....
....
....

23-What do you see as challenges facing the constitutional-making process, given the recent establishment of a Constitutional Commission in Zimbabwe?

24-What would be the impact of leaving out the NCA in the constitutional-making process, given that the recently-established Constitutional Commission is comprised solely of legislators and civil society is not visibly involved?

25- What opportunities would be/have been created by the establishment of the following institutions in recent months or in the near future?

(i)   Constitutional Commission

....
....
....

(ii)   Joint Implementation and Monitoring Committee (JOMIC)

....
....

(iii)   Civil Society Monitoring Mechanism

....
....

(iv)   The Zimbabwe Rights Commission

....
....

(v)   The disbanding of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission

....
....
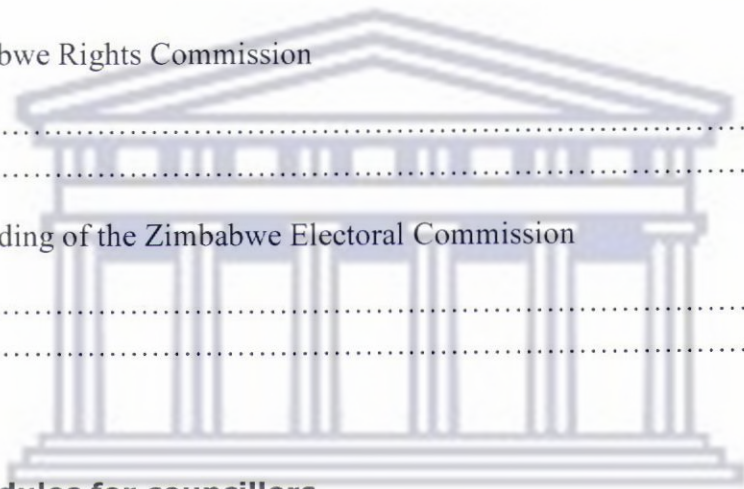
Interview schedules for councillors

Respondent No.		

May you kindly spare me a few minutes to respond to these questions pertaining to citizen participation? This is for academic purposes only and no identities will be revealed, unless permitted to do so by the respondent.

1-As a civic leader, do you think it is necessary to incorporate the opinions of the grassroots people in the decision-making processes at various levels of government, starting with Local government? Briefly, explain your position

....
....
....

2-Do you think Residents Associations deserve to exist in this town/city, and do these institutions sufficiently represents the wishes and interests of the rate-payers?

....
....
....

3- How were you elected to this position? Through political party structures or by other means available?

....
....
....

4-As a civic leader, to what extent do you think you have sufficiently represented and articulated the interests of your constituency to date? What achievements have you made so far in serving the interests of the public?

....
....
....

5-How have you sought to address problems of service delivery within your constituency, and were you /have you always been successful I doing so?
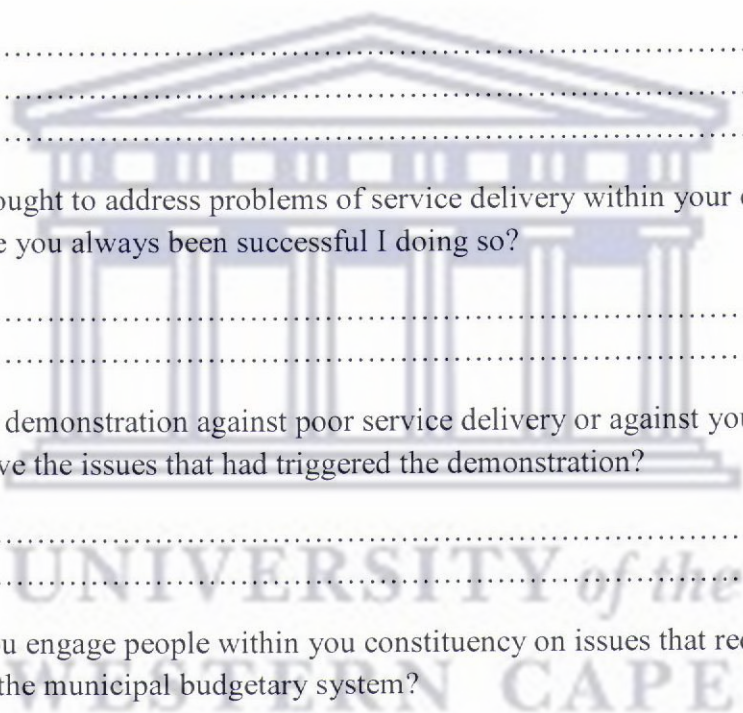
....
....

6-Has there been a demonstration against poor service delivery or against your leadership? How did you resolve the issues that had triggered the demonstration?

....
....

7-How often do you engage people within you constituency on issues that require public deliberations, like the municipal budgetary system?

....
....
....

Appendix B

ALL-STAKEHOLDERS REGIONAL CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE

Kwekwe

Tuesday, 17 October 2006

07h30 – 08h45:	REGISTRATION
08h45 – 09h00:	INTRODUCTORY REMARKS: Secretariat
09h00 – 09h15:	OPENING DEVOTION AND MOTIVATION: Christian Alliance
09h15 – 09h45:	FIGHTING FOR A DEMOCRATIC CONSTITUTION IN ZIMBABWE- A BRIEF HISTORY: CZC
09h45 – 10h15:	ZIMBABWE'S POLITICAL AND SOCIO –ECONOMIC CRISIS; THE CONSTITUTION AS THE SOLUTION: ZCTU
10h15 – 10h30:	TEA BREAK
10h30 – 11h00:	LESSONS FROM THE CONSITUTIONAL REFORM STRUGGLE SINCE 1997: ZLHR
11h00 – 11h30:	HIGHLIGHTING THE ROLE OF WOMEN AT THE CENTRE OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM STRUGGLE: Women Coalition
11h30 - 12:00	LOCATING THE YOUTH'S ROLE IN THE CONSTITUTIONAL STRUGGLE: ZINASU
12h00 – 13h00	STAKEHOLDERS' INTERVENTIONS (Secretariat to facilitate)
13h00 – 14h00:	LUNCH
14h00 – 14h30:	UNPACKING THE STAKEHOLDERS CONFERENCE: NCA- D, Madhuku
14h30 – 15h00:	WAY FORWARD;
	CLOSING PRAYER

"DECIDING ZIMBABWE'S DESTINY" A NEW CONSTITUTION FOR ALL, BY ALL – NOW!

1

A sample itinerary of pro-democracy CSOs as they hold joint conferences, a practice which has become prevalent as CSOs worked together towards political change, with most pro-democracy CSOs rallying behind the NCA as they campaign for a new constitution for the country.

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Appendix C

"Deciding Zimbabwe's Destiny"

Fighting Together for a People's Constitution!

The people of Zimbabwe are intensifying demands for a people driven and democratic constitution that can help solve in the current political, social and economic problems.

Only a new, democratic Constitution will:

1   guarantee our rights to food, jobs, health and education

2   result in free and fair elections that are without violence and rigging

3   lead to the existence of a people's government that does not destroy people's houses or threaten those of different political opinions

4   bring order and transparency to the Land Reform programme

We have suffered enough. We demand a new Constitution NOW !!!!

Networking within the pro-democracy civil society movement has become common practice since the mid-1990s as democratic space in the country showed evidence of diminishing and the constitution reform debate gained momentum

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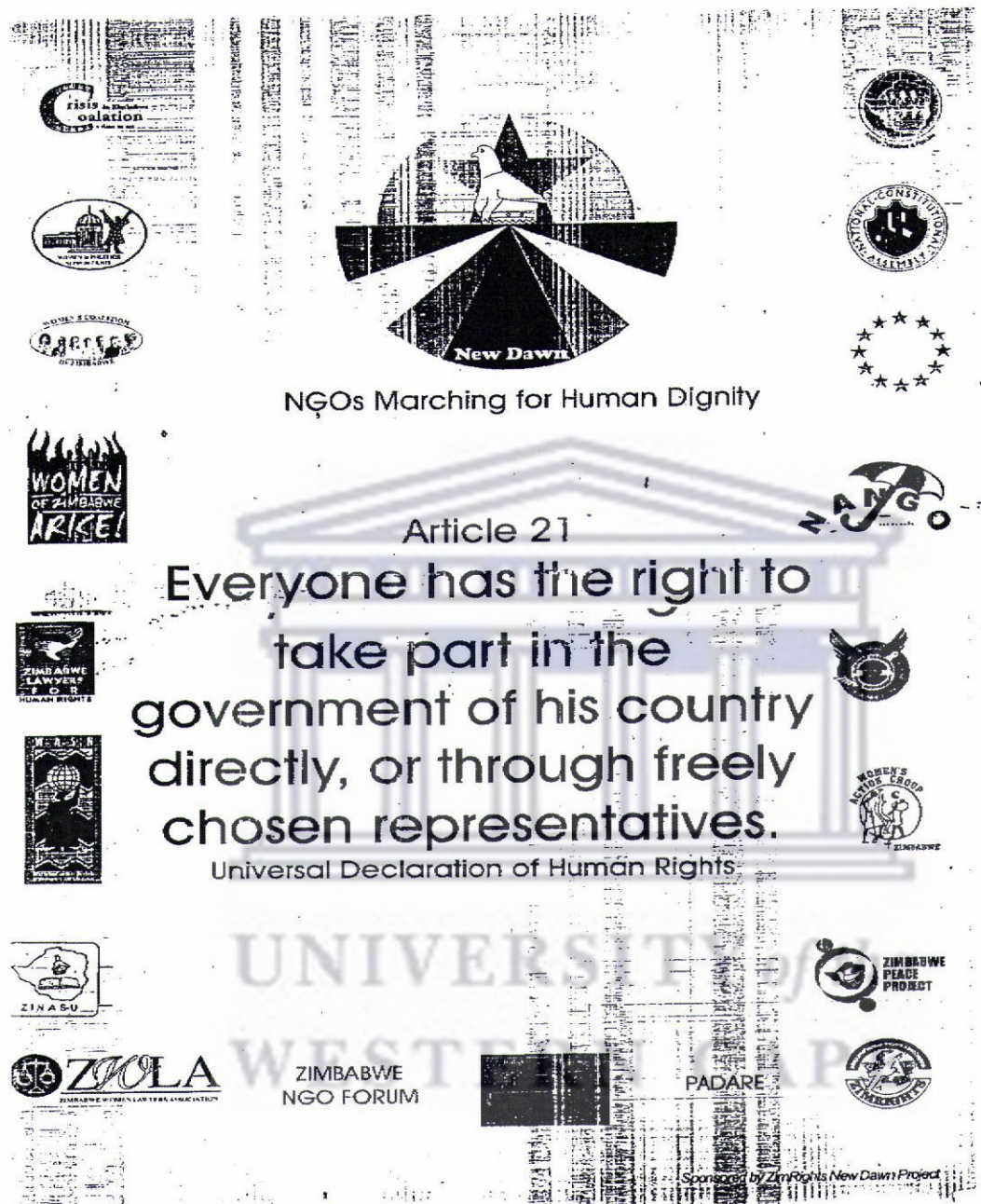
A sample poster of pro-democracy CSOs in the country as they forge working relationships and networks by establishing coalitions and alliances and holding joint conferences

Appendix E

-22 2004   The Financial   APPENDIX A
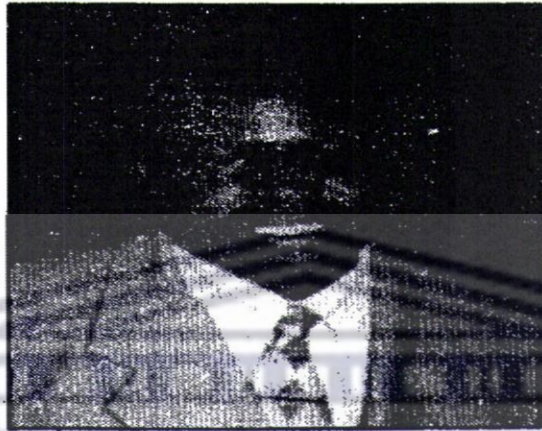
NGOs accused of dabbling in politics

THE Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, Paul Mangwana is on record as saying there is too much room for Non-Governmental Organisations to engage in politics because of laxity on the part of government to scrutinise their operations.

The government has accused NGOs of creating parallel governance structures in their areas of operation in an effort to effect regime change in the country.

All NGOs are required to comply with the new Private Voluntary Organisations Act or risk being shut down and prosecuted.

In a notice to NGOs, the government warned all organisations to register under the new regulations following reports that some organisations were operating illegally.

It is however not clear whether all the organisations have complied with the government directive.

The government argues that NGOs should be registered for them to account for donor funds. The government also wants to monitor whether the funds were being used to achieve the objectives stated during the registration process.

They advised private voluntary organisations that were not registered in terms of the Act to apply to register two years ago after revelations that dirty money was being channelled into the country through bogus organisations.

Government said it was concerned by reports that some NGOs were promoting political agendas under the guise of helping local communities.

Paul Mangwana

Governance and Human Rights NGOs have been accused of meddling in politics and harbouring a regime change agenda

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Civil society groups close ranks

ZIMBABWEAN civil society organisations represented by the Crisis Zimbabwe Coalition, National Association for Non-Governmental Organisations (NANGO) and the Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) have reiterated the need for regional solidarity amongst non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Southern Africa to deal with problems of governance and human rights in Zimbabwe.

The organisations made the remarks at a meeting which was hosted by the Southern African Human Rights NGO Network in Port Luis at the Municipal Hall in Mauritius and addressed by Brian Kagoro, the Crisis Coalition chairperson, Jona Mudehwe, the executive director of NANGO and Reginald Matchaba-Hove, the chairperson of ZESN.

Addressing the meeting which was attended by journalists and Mauritian NGOs, Kagoro argued that it was imperative that the Southern African Development Community (SADC) member countries respect the complimentary role that civil society plays and that governments need to adhere to democratic principles as enshrined in various SADC protocols and the African Union Consultative Act.

Kagoro also argued that the abuse of citizenry in Southern Africa and Zimbabwe in particular is on the rise and that this is being done under the guise of liberation or nationalist politics and Pan Africanism.

In Zimbabwe this has taken different forms starting with a controversial land reform programme that has seen the majority of the ruling ZANU PF party func-

tionaries largely benefiting at the expense of the majority of citizens.

The civil society organisations made the following demands on the Zimbabwean situation:

● There must be an end to state-sponsored violence that has been evidenced in all past elections particularly the June 2000 parliamentary and March 2002 Presidential elections.

● That there be in place an independent electoral commission to run and oversee the conduct of elections and that this be agreed to by Parliament.

● The repeal of draconian legislation such as the Public Order and Security Act (POSA), Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) and the Broadcasting Services Act (BSA) which constitute apartheid-type legislation.

● That the government dismantles the

infrastructure of violence in action and in language.

● That there be an amicable relationship between the state and civil society in Zimbabwe with the state allowing women, youths, labour and voluntary associations to define their own agenda as civics and that the government of Zimbabwe's determination to gag the activities of NGOs in the NGO Bill constitutes an affront on the freedom of the people.

It was noted that the forthcoming elections in Zimbabwe constitute a litmus test on the Zimbabwean government on its commitment to genuine democratic reforms.

Civics noted that is was ironic that the government was introducing so-called electoral reforms but at the same time showing determination to proscribe the NGOs fighting for human rights and good governance.

Brian Kagoro

Most pro-democracy CSOs have established coalitions as they 'close ranks' to confront the state with a united voice to demand the restoration of democracy in the country

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Zimbabwe Human Rights Association W/O 3/93

Certificate

This is to certify that

has been successfully trained as an Election Monitor

With an understanding of:
Essential Features of Democracy, Key Election Terms, Key Provisions of Electoral Law, Key Provisions of Electoral Regulations, Election Management, Principles for Civil Society Monitoring, Ethics of Election Monitoring, Judging Elections, Reporting on the Monitors' Assessment of an Election, Evaluating Monitoring, Monitors Role between Elections

Election Monitor's Workshop
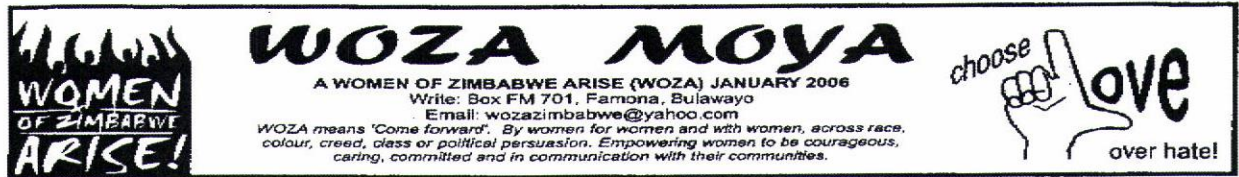funded by the European Union
April, 2000
Zimbabwe

Zimrights, Regional Chairperson   ZimRights, Trainer

A sample certificate of election monitors as evidence of CSOs' involvement in the training of election monitors as way of enlightening citizens and equipping them with skills to be able to monitor elections in the country

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Appendix H

WOZA MOYA

A WOMEN OF ZIMBABWE ARISE (WOZA) JANUARY 2006
Write: Box FM 701, Famona, Bulawayo
Email: wozazimbabwe@yahoo.com
WOZA means 'Come forward'. By women for women and with women, across race, colour, creed, class or political persuasion. Empowering women to be courageous, caring, committed and in communication with their communities.

choose love over hate!

Zimbabweans want SOCIAL JUSTICE! But what is it?

It could be defined as a system whereby all people can enjoy their economic, social, cultural and political rights, in a climate of equality and dignity and where past injustices have been recognized and dealt with.

The liberation war has unfinished business! Social justice was never delivered so Zimbabweans remain disempowered. Social Justice is an aspect totally neglected by politicians. Walk the streets of Zimbabwe and you will feel and see that Zimbabweans are in a constant state of fear, wanting and waiting. Fear of their own leaders whom they can only elect in a state of fear. Wanting and waiting for those same leaders to notice that they are thinking human beings with needs.

Patrice Lumumba in his last letter to his wife wrote....."I know and feel in my heart that sooner or later my people will rid themselves of all their enemies, both internal and external, and that they will rise as one person to say no to degradation and shame and regain their dignity in the clear light of the sun."

UPatrice Lumumba encwadini yakhe yokucina ebhalela umkakhe wathi "Ngiyazi njalo ngilemizwa enhliziyweni yami yokuthi masinyazana kumbe kusikhathi esibucwadlana, abantu bami bazazikhulula kuzitha zabo zombili, eziselizweni labo lezingaphandle kwelizwe, njalo bazasukuma bemuntu munye, ngalizwi linye bale ukweyiswa lokubalihlazo, kodwa bathole isithunzi ilanga ligwaze umhlaba."

Patrice Lumumba mutsamba yake yokupedzisira kumudzimai wake akanyora achiti... "ndinoziva nekunzwa muhana yangu kuti nhasi kana mangwana vanhu vemunyika yangu vachakwanisa kubvisa ruvengo pakati pavo uye vachazo kwanisa kusumuka semunhu mumwe vachiramba kudzvanyirirwa nekushungurudzwa vachizova zvakare nechiremera zuva rakacheka nyika.

NXA SISITHI ABANTU BEZIMBABWE BAFUNA INHLAKAHLE LOKUZOTHA SITSHONI? SINGATHI YIKUQONDISA AMAGOBO EZEMPILAKAHLE LOKUZOTHISA UZULU.

Ingachasiswa njengo mkhuba, kumbe indlela, yokwenza lapho abantu bonke abathola Amalungelo ezeNotho, Inhlalakahle, ezaMasiko, lezoMbusazwe, njalo kulomumo ovumela ukulingana kwabantu njalo kubanika isithunzi, kunanzwe njalo kucubungulwe ukuhlukuluzwa kwabantu okwedlulayo. **Impi yeNkululeko ayilungisanga ngenhlalakahle kazulu, kodwa ithathele amaZimbabwe amandla okuziphilisa.** Inhlalakahle kazulu yinto engekho enjongweni yabazombangazwe. Nxa uhamba emigwaqweni yeZimbabwe uba lemizwa njalo ubone ukuthi abantu beZimbabwe basesimeni sokwesaba, sokufuna lokulindela. Besaba abakhokheli babo, abenelisa ukubakhetha besesimeni sovalo. Bafuna njalo balindele ukuthi mhlawumbe abakhokheli banye bazananzelela ukuthi labo bangabantu abacabangayo njalo abalenswelo.

KANA TICHITI VANHU VEMUZIMBABWE VANODA MAGARIRO AKARURAMA UYE ANEMUTSIGO TINOREVEI?

Tinga tsanangure tichiti magariro anoita kuti munhu wese ange aine kodzero dzezve upfumi, hwe gutsa ruzhinji. **Hondo yechimurenga haina kugadzirisa nyaya yemagariro akarurama uye anemutsigo naizvozvo vanhu veZimbabwe havana masimba okurarama upenyu hwakanaka.** Nyaya yemagariro akarurama uye anemutsigo inyaya inogaro kanganwika nevezvematongerwo enyika. Kana ukafamba mumasitiriti emuZimbabwe uchaona nekunzwa muhana mako kuti vanhu munyika vanogara vachigotya, vachingoshuwira nekumirira. Vanhu vanotya vatungamiriri vavakasarudza vachingotya. Vanoshuwira nekumirira kuti vatungamiri ivava vaonewo kuti ivo vanhuwo vane zvido zvavo.

The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights recently met in Banjul, The Gambia and signed a resolution on Zimbabwe on 5ᵗʰ December 2005. They expressed their deep concern at the deterioration of the human rights situation, continuing human rights violations and also expressed alarm at the number of internally displaced persons caused by the forced evictions carried out by the government. They requested access to people in need of aid and asked the government to ensure that those responsible for Operation Murambatsvina are brought to justice without delay. They went on to call on the government to respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of expression, association and assembly by repealing or amending repressive legislation, such as the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the Broadcasting Services Act and the Public Order and Security Act and to repeal or amend Constitutional Amendment (No.17) and provide an environment conducive to constitutional reform based on fundamental rights.

January 2006 Edition - WOZA MOYA/ HUYA MWEYA (Meaning: Come Holy Spirit/ Cleansing Wind)

An example of a poster of WOZA during a conference of NCA affiliates in 2007