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Civil Society, Governance and Regional Integration in Africa, edited by Adekunle Amuwo, Hippolyt Pul, and Irene O. Adadevoh, Nairobi: Development Policy Management Forum, 2009, xiii+388 pp. \$30.00. ISBN 9966 7266 2 4

Review By: Percyslage Chigora

It undoubtedly that integration across the world has undergone a transformation with increased interaction of actors in integration process. With the rise in civil society organization in the Post Cold War their participation of in the processes of regional integration has been noticeable with intensity. Thus, *Civil Society, Governance and Regional Integration in Africa*, is well suited to address the subject matter. The authors in this volume tried to examine this linkage between civil society, governance and regional integration with special reference to Africa.

The book is organized in three parts with a separate introductory and conclusion chapters. In their opening the editors introduced the overall topic to the reader illuminating on central issues to be interrogated in this volume. In overall locating the centrality of civil society in African politics, noting “...the balance of power...has changed in favor of civil society and other non state actors since early 1990s....[and] the old ways by which the state treated and related to African civil society and peoples have changed for good” (p. 18).

The six chapters in Part One largely dwells on conceptual, methodological and historical issues. The strength of this part is its articulation of concepts and methodological issues surrounding governance, civil society and integration in Africa and putting them in its historical perspective with case studies being drawn from specific countries as well as region in Africa. The authors are in agreement on the centrality of civil society in transforming Africa towards development. In essence I would agree with Olutayo Charles Adesina's conclusion that the key to success in integration process lies in “the re-education of both the civil societies and the numerous state apparatus' (p. 137). And Blessings Chinsinga's conclusion that “the relationship between the state and the civil society must constantly be

reshaped and rethought in order to avoid the common tendencies especially in western scholarship to hegemonise the ambiguity and plurality within real civil and uncivil societies” (p. 125).

In part two the common theme emerging from the contributions is discussion on the politics of development and integration with much case studies emerging in Africa. The contribution by Geoffrey I. Nwaka examined the role of indigenous knowledge in governance and development and in the end noting, “the challenges and opportunities of integrating this knowledge in the process of governance and development are enormous” (p. 153). The chapter by Morrison Muleri analysed the Non Governmental Organisations' (NGOs) dependence and its impact of development. Using comparative case studies of developed country (UK), emerging Economy (India) and developing economy (Kenya), the author managed to capture key issues underpinning NGOs' activities and challenges. In essence he noted, NGOs from the North have immense control and influence over governance and management those in the South. In chapter nine Susan Waiyego Mwangi, interrogated the place of NEPAD as a new paradigm for Africa's development given a number of challenges the continent is facing, which she also raised. Dwelling on African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), Raphael Ogom reviewed the Africa's governance problem and situating NEPAD's APRM in Africa's governance and development agenda. Of importance the author noted “... whether or not the quest for democracy and good governance under NEPAD and the APRM would succeed or fail lies in the inter-play between the mobilization and engagement of the civil society and the state actors against the backdrop of the prebendal and neo-patrimonial African political order” (p. 228). In the following Chapter Charity Manyeruke analyzed the state and civil society's role in multilateral trading arrangements with particular reference to Zimbabwe. To which she recommended that “ in order to promote sustainable development in Africa, the civil society should not only complement efforts by the state in multilateral negotiations, but should be innovative and go down to grassroots level in order to ensure effective participation” (p. 240). The rather short chapters twelve and thirteen examined specific case study, with the first, illuminating of the place of regional organizations in empowering young people to participate in civic issues, and the second, examining the role of the civil society and state in conflict ridden society of Northern Uganda. In Chapter fourteen, S.R. Akinola analyzed the role of Community-based Security Institutions (CBSIs) at the background of the failure of the central government to providing security in Nigeria, and concluding “ a reversal of the present monocratic and centralized state-based security systems in favor of a polycentric, people-oriented and CBSIs is the only means of guaranteeing effective and enduring

community policing in Nigeria” (p. 272). The last chapter in Part two looked at Public and Private Partnerships (PPPs) in service delivery specifically focusing on water supply and sanitation. Key case studies (Senegal, Ghana, Lesotho) illuminated processes, challenges, and successes in the implementation of PPPs and in the final giving recommendation for the future of PPPs.

In the last part of the book, the three chapters dealt with processes of integration. John Akokpari examined challenges and prospects for integration in Africa. After examining conceptual and historical issues he analyzed major factors in Africa's regional integration. The last two chapters in this part dwells on the interface between the state and non state actors and their role in democratization and regional integration with good examples and case studies being provided.

In the conclusion the editors grappled with issues raised by contributors and highlighting the centrality of non-state and informal sector organizations in governance issues at both national and international level. They raised interesting policy issues for the state and the civil society. In the final noting, “Democracy and good governance in Africa will be the gainer and winner; and part of that gain will include increased agitation and self-initiated action for greater regional and continental integration of Africa's people for their greater common good. For civil society groups, that may be the end point for their greater project for which democratization, good governance, and regional integration are but necessary pathways to follow” (p. 377).

The text is a valuable source book for students and scholars interested in issues of civil society, integration and governance in Africa and politics in general. It provides stimulating reading new political issues and environment in Africa and provides a starting point for future research on issues raised on “the future in perspective” (p. 377-382).