

Chapter 7

Peacebuilding Through Indigenous Knowledge Systems: Lessons from Civil Society Organisations in Zimbabwe



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Abstract Since the attainment of independence in 1980, Zimbabwe has remained troubled with the question of how to effectively build peace. This question has been tackled through different peacebuilding approaches and actors yielding mixed results. The liberal peacebuilding model has been dominant from 1980 to the present. Unfortunately, the nation remains stuck in negative peace. Against this background, a crop of civil society organisations (CSOs) emerged in peacebuilding using the Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) which is housed under sustainable peacebuilding theory. The CSOs have made use of local cultures, language, idioms and practices mainly in the rural areas with the aim of transforming conflict hotspots into zones of peace. However, there is scarce conventional literature on the lessons, experiences and results of CSOs that have used IKS in peacebuilding in Zimbabwe. The lessons drawn in this chapter, help peacebuilders on the extent to which IKS are relevant or can be effective in building durable peace. The chapter unbundles CSOs peacebuilding experiences using documentary review and in-depth interviews with peacebuilding practitioners, local communities, and academics.

Keywords Peacebuilding · Sustainable peace · Civil society · Indigenous knowledge

7.1 Introduction

The quest for peace remains a daunting task for both academics and peacebuilding practitioners. Societies are at one point at peace or at war and again in search of solutions to resolve and transform conflicts. Against this background, civil society organisations (CSOs) have occupied the middle space (between communities and the government) with an effort to building peace in societies. The chapter begins with a brief background of the nature of conflicts that confront Zimbabwe, exposing the weaknesses of past peacebuilding efforts that have resulted in conflict resurgence or the continuation of fragile and negative peace. The section highlights the categories of CSOs that are found in the peacebuilding space. The next section of the chapter

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examines peacebuilding theory and locates the inception of Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS). The chapter then turns to discuss lessons drawn from CSOs building peace through IKS. Lastly, a conclusion is drawn. Pseudonyms which include Civil Society Official A (CSOA), Civil Society Official B (CSOB), Civil Society Official CCS C (CSOC), PeacebuilderA, Community LeaderA are used to present the findings from interview respondents.

7.2 Unpacking Zimbabwe's Broken Past

Zimbabwe has experienced many conflicts since the colonial era. The major and recurring conflicts are structural in nature. During colonial rule from 1890-1980, the successive white minority governments retained power using inhumane methods such as violence, oppressive and discriminatory laws against the black majority. The ills of the colonial system led to African resistance that morphed into an armed struggle that resulted in the death of many people and left the society divided. The liberation struggle, a series of negotiations and international pressure led to the independence of the country in 1980 (Laakso 2003, p. 2; Munhande/Nciizah 2013). Unfortunately, Zimbabwe inherited a system of authoritarian rule from the white colonial government (Masunungure 2011). While CSOs were present during the Mugabe era, they failed to make an impact.

The peacebuilding space has often been dominated by the political elite, with CSOs playing a secondary role. At independence, there were calls made by the political elite in Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) led by Robert Mugabe, to reunite and reconcile with 'former enemies'. The 'enemies' were the Rhodesian Front (RF) of the Smith government and later Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) led by Nkomo. In the reconciliation call, the political elite was concerned with state-building as opposed to peacebuilding, hence, the reconciliation was aimed at gaining control over the government by the black majority. Sachikonye (2012) argues that the reconciliation between whites and blacks was based on interests rather than attitudes. As a result, positive peace was not achieved since it requires a change in attitudes, beliefs and perceptions about the other person or group. The high politics (power politics) during this era made it impossible for CSOs' voices to be heard by the state and the governed.

Aside from the black and white tensions, the black-to-black conflict also emerged in the first decade of independence. The country witnessed major human rights atrocities that were committed by the state in Midlands and Matabeleland areas during Operation *Gukurahundi*. The affected areas lie in the central and southern parts of Zimbabwe, where the main inhabitants are the Ndebele-speaking people who are the second-largest ethnic group in the country. The violations left huge scars which are yet to be addressed up to the time of writing. In fact, there are still debates on how to effectively heal the wounds (Mashingaidze 2005, p. 85; Sachikonye 2012, p. 19; Cameroon 2017, p. 1). The calls for reconciliation were elite-centric. With the polarisation, CSOs are also divided on how the 1983–6 conflict can be resolved and

transformed into durable peace. However, the post-Mugabe era has seen opening up on the *Gukurahundi* conflict and results are yet to be seen on how CSOs will effectively tackle it. The black-to-black reconciliation between the political elite in the ZANU and the ZAPU ended the violence and resulted in the Unity Accord signed in 1987. The terms of reconciliation in the Unity Accord resulted in the ZAPU joining the ZANU in the government (Mashingaidze 2005, p. 86). However, the process was more of political pragmatism in search of stability and power consolidation than promoting genuine reconciliation. The indigenous peacebuilding approaches were conveniently ignored.

Apart from the first decade experiences, the country has been torn and polarised by a series of election-related violence and conflicts over land and natural resources. The failed reconciliation efforts, epitomised by recurring conflicts, indicate the need for a holistic peacebuilding strategy in Zimbabwe. Paffenholz (2010) states that peacebuilding is a process aimed at achieving peace in which structures and institutions are developed based on justice, equity and cooperation; and the aim of peacebuilding is to prevent and manage armed conflict and sustain peace after large organised violence has ended.

7.3 Civil Society Organisations and Peacebuilding in Zimbabwe

Gyimah-Boadi (1996) defines civil society as the realm between the household, family and the state. According to Sachikonye (1995, p. 7) civil society relates to “an aggregate of institutions whose members are engaged primarily in a complex of non-state activities, economic and cultural production, voluntary associations and household life and who in this way preserve and transform their identity by exercising all sorts of pressures or controls upon state institutions”. According to Spurk (2010, p. 6), civil society “consists of a huge variety of mainly voluntary organisations and associations that maintain different objectives, interests and ideologies.” From these definitions, civil society (loosely or tightly organised) perform an assortment of activities that are intended to fill the gaps left or created by the state, family and the business sector. The CSOs are therefore formed to give an expression and direction to the social, political, spiritual and cultural needs of its members, including peacebuilding (Barnes 2005, p.7).

The CSOs are not homogenous entities both in composition and outlook (Zigomo 2012; Sachikonye 2012) and can be categorised according to type. While several categories exist, Sachikonye (2012, p. 133) groups the CSOs into the developmental, humanitarian and governance related clusters. Masunungure (2014, p. 9) puts CSOs in Zimbabwe into three main generations which include: first generation (comprised of humanitarian based CSOs); development-oriented CSOs; and governance-oriented CSOs. The CSOs found in the development generation are those that were born in the first decade of independence in Zimbabwe. These include the

Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) and the Association of Women's Clubs (AWCs) (Masunungure 2014; Sachikonye 2012). The third generation of governance-based CSOs emerged in the second decade when the country began to face economic problems (Masunungure 2014, p. 9). Amongst these are student-led groups such as the Zimbabwe National Students Union (ZINASU) (ibid). This chapter adopts the typology used by Masunungure in understanding the evolution of CSOs in Zimbabwe. From the generations of CSOs, I focused on the first generation which includes CSOs that are found in the humanitarian cluster.

The chapter is guided by the peacebuilding theory. Paffenholz (2010, p. 45) states that peacebuilding is a process aimed at achieving peace whereby structures and institutions based on justice, equity and cooperation are developed. Peacebuilding addresses the underlying causes of a conflict and prevents their transformation into violence (Galtung 1975, p. 297). Two branches emerge from this theory: liberal and sustainable peacebuilding. Liberal peacebuilding is premised on democratic rebuilding of states after an armed conflict (Paffenholz 2010, p. 46). Liberal peacebuilding is also traced from the ideas of Immanuel Kant in his 1795 'Perpetual Peace' where peacebuilding could occur between states embracing democratic values (Kant, 1795). It placed emphasis on bringing shattered states into conformity with the international system's prevailing standards of domestic governance (Paris 2002, p. 638). The key issues that emerge from liberal peace models are democratisation, economic liberalisation, human rights and rule of law (Donais 2012, p. 23). The CSOs that fall within the category of democratisation and governance has assumed these functions in their advocacy roles in bringing change in the Zimbabwean context. The chapter builds upon the weaknesses of the liberal model that lack input from 'below'. These approaches reflect the universal solutions to conflicts without considering the context-specific realities.

Apart from the liberal peacebuilding approach, this chapter locates the efforts of the CSOs in peacebuilding within the sustainable peacebuilding framework. Sustainable peacebuilding has a wider focus of peacebuilding while liberal has a short-medium term focus akin to state-building (Paffenholz 2010, p. 49). Proponents of sustainable peacebuilding include Lederach, who argues that it involves the creation of structures, processes and training of people within a generation (Lederach 1997). Paffenholz (2010, p. 47) observes that Lederach's definition is premised on promoting sustainable reconciliation within societies. He further argues that sustainability is a proactive process that can result in a spiral of peace and development as opposed to a spiral of violence and destruction. Sustainable peacebuilding involves transformation of the attitudes, behaviour and differences of groups into an engine of peace (Peinado 2003). In addition, sustainable peacebuilding implies a complete transformation of the state and society with a focus on socio-economic rebuilding aimed at addressing the underlying causes of a conflict (ibid).

Another dimension of a sustainable peacebuilding model is that it focuses on democratising the political institutions in order to bring a new spirit into the political system that is legitimate, effective and capable of responding to social frictions by allowing peaceful resolutions (Paffenholz 2010). It can be noted that sustainable peacebuilding is a multi-pronged issue that encompasses physical infrastructure,

re-launching of the economy, addressing national reconciliation, establishing new institutional and political reforms for resolving conflicts peacefully (Peinado 2003). There are the CSOs that can pay attention to building and reforming norms and institutions that bridge electoral violence, structures based on insecurity and fear to structures based on security and trust that can sustain peace and democracy (Saki/Katema 2011). Such roles can be played effectively by the local CSOs who have greater proximity to the local people, thereby forging lasting peace (Harpviken/Kjellaman 2004).

7.4 Indigenous Knowledge Systems as a Tool for Peacebuilding

In the sustainable peacebuilding framework, I noted that some of the CSOs have built peace using IKS. The IKS is an alternative to liberal peacebuilding (Close 2016, 2017). It embraces longer-term bottom-up initiatives that seek to build inclusive social capital necessary for durable peacebuilding models (Brown 2016). In the Zimbabwean context, in *Shona* culture, the IKS is rooted in the concept of *Hunhu* or *Hunhuism*. The concept is moulded on an African vision that strives for an upright and virtuous individual (Sibanda 2014, p. 26). To be virtuous in the *Shona* context, one must respect the cultural values, morals and norms. They are uncodified laws that are embedded in natural law. The spirit of *Hunhu* is understood best by the local people with the use of their own language. For example, a *Shona* idiom which says *Mwana ndewa amai kana ari mudumbu asi kana abuda ndewe munhu wese* loosely translated means: "A baby belongs to the mother whilst it is still in the womb but once it is born it belongs to everyone". This shows that everyone has a duty to look after and take care of the others in the community. Sibanda (2014, p. 26) argues that *Hunhu* is being human. It implies rationality and recognises that one cannot exist without the other or the society as whole. Mapara (2009, p. 142) defines it as what indigenous people know and do or what they have known and done for generations. The IKS involves long historical practices that are applied to a defined local community; it is firmly rooted in customary law or a set of rules and prohibitions followed by indigenous people (Adeosun 2015). From these definitions, Africans and Zimbabweans have their own local ways of relating socially, politically and economically. These local ways have tied groups together, for example, in community projects and in some cases resolving communal problems. The core values in IKS include promoting a culture of respect, love, unity, cooperation and tolerance. The absence of this has led to conflict resurgence in Zimbabwean societies. The CSOs have played a role in educating and socialising or reawakening *hunhuism* which is an appeal to moral values of the people. The incorporation and extent of success by CSOs is discussed in this chapter.

7.4.1 Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Peacebuilding

The practice of building peace through IKS is not new to humankind. Each society has its own unique way of resolving conflicts and establishing peace. While this is as old as history, little is known in conventional academic literature about the practice of IKS by the CSOs in peacebuilding in Zimbabwe. The IKS have been preferred in peacebuilding in that they create a sense of ownership and breeds legitimacy of the initiatives and programmes. In this respect, CSOs have tapped into local culture, beliefs, proverbs and practices to advocate, socialise and strengthen local knowledge that promotes peace and unity within communities. This section details the experiences by CSOs in building peace through IKS.

7.4.2 Envision Zimbabwe Women Trust Experience in Peacebuilding

CSOs have made use of IKS in peacebuilding extensively in rural areas and somewhat in the urban settings. Envision Zimbabwe Women Trust is one such organisation that has embraced IKS in building a culture of peace in the rural parts of the country. The organisation embraced the concept of inclusivity and working with the local people to reconcile broken relationship after the 2008 election violence. The CSO ran a peacebuilding programme called 'Building bridges' where it engaged traditional leaders who were once perpetrators of violence in the area (www.peacedirect.org). Under the programme, the organisation held workshops with the local community together with the traditional leaders who after the programme transformed to agents for peace and active mediators in the community (www.peacedirect.org). Local people who participated in the workshops noted that there were remarkable changes in the community as people could now trust each other and even eat together during community engagements (www.peacedirect.org).

The key issue that made the programme a success was the involvement of the traditional leaders to be the champions of peace in the community. Local people trust more their local leaders and the trust becomes stronger if they become agents of positive change (interview with a peacebuilderA).¹ In the rural areas, chiefs, traditional leaders and village elders have a local command that is tied to the customary beliefs.² It is believed that when one breaks the instructions from the community elders, a bad omen will occur to the offender or community. The CSO further succeeded in sowing peace by making the local people co-authors of the programme, it was a method of 'doing with rather than doing for'. Maphosa/Keasley (2014) view it as peace from within. In this regard, embracing inclusivity and co-authoring peace with the local community resonated with the principles of IKS that led to positive change in the

¹ Interview with PeacebuilderA, in Harare, 5 November 2020.

² Ibid.

community. The CSO was sensitive to local needs, managed to work with the local resources and actively engaged the people. Engagements I had with the local people in the community revealed that the community was now peaceful to the extent that since 2008 there have been very few if not none cases of election-related violence. The peaceful electoral environment in the 2013 and 2018 elections appears to show that election-related violence has subsided in the rural community (interview with a local community leaderA).³ Accordingly, the use of IKS strengthened the trust and unity in the community, which are essential in creating a base for durable peace.

7.4.3 Peacebuilding Experiences of National Youth Organisation

Another CSO that has managed to build peace using IKS principles is the National Youth Association of Youth Organisation (NAYO). The organisation is youth-oriented and aims to bring peace and active engagement of the youths in matters of public life. Through stakeholder and area mapping, the organisation organised festivals and later created of peace clubs in Harare (urban area). While they came up with idea of festivals and local peace clubs, they managed to have a smooth cooperation from the youths by playing a facilitatory role. Funk (2012, p. 392) argues that when engaging the bottom-up voices, CSOs must be “facilitators or midwives rather than headmasters in building peace”. The aim of the CSO was to enhance local skills in the youth to deal with conflict scenarios emanating from their communities. Solutions to conflicts were context specific and relevant. Building peace through this approach ensures that CSOs do not impose or bring generalised solutions to a problem. In the past such approaches resulted in fragile peace as they lack local legitimacy and ownership. Consultations with the local thus bolstered the CSO’s approach in peacebuilding.

Apart from festivals and the creation of local peace clubs, the organisation implemented a Joint Work Group among the urban youths. The aim was to depolarise the community which was divided along party line. The Joint Work Group facilitated interactions and education among the youths involved. The interactions resulted in the youth breaking the polarisation and working together. The success was also attributed to the Government of National Unity (GNU) that had been created by the main political gladiators at the national level (www.peacedirect.org). Unfortunately, the end of this union saw the youths reverting to their political camps and engaging in intra-party factional conflicts (ibid). The experiences of building peace through IKS with the urban youths were strongly affected by the prevailing economic environment. The GNU managed to bring some economic stability whose gains cascaded to most citizens. Under this scenario the motivations to participate or being recruited to engage in political violence will be very minimum, the reverse of this is high in an unstable economic environment. In the later, youth are easily recruited as they

³ Telephone interview with Community leaderA, 7 November 2020.

will be in desperate need of money or food. This scenario could only be averted if the youths had managed to be socialised effectively to develop a culture of peace or zones of peace as in the case of community work done in rural areas.

Experience of the CSOs working in rural areas demonstrates that community projects help to unite people and generate bonds even in the face of economic challenges. This reality manifested in an interview I had with one CSO project manager.⁴ Their CSO works in rural parts of the country and embrace IKS in building peace. The CSO managed to build peace using local knowledge of the elderly people who told them about enhancing the *Zunde ramambo* concept (a practice where local communities work in a field to produce food that will cater for the whole community in times of hunger). Since food is a need to all, the CSO mobilised people with the assistance of local leaders (Chief and Headman) to till and plant maize for the benefit of the community. They managed to preach messages of peace and forgiveness which saw victims, perpetrators and instigators working together in the field. The effect of this was seen when outside political players wanted to sponsor violence in this community. The project brought unity, trust and a sense of collectiveness. The projects owned and run by the local people created a zone of peace and sustainability since the project is still running in the absence of the CSO. The practice by the CSO confirms Funk's (2012, p. 392) argument that external players are supposed to localise peace through networking and partnering with local actors, tap into indigenous peace resources. Indeed, networking with the local elders and traditional leaders helped to bring an idea of building durable peace through IKS under the *Zunde ramambo*.

7.5 Why Indigenous Knowledge Systems Work

Local language is one of the key components of IKS embraced in peacebuilding. Peacebuilding programmes must be in the local language. Language makes a programme more appealing and leaves permanent marks in people's lives and communities. This approach has also been embraced by the CSOs in their peacebuilding exercises. In an interview, a CSO member stated that:

They make use of local idioms in peacebuilding campaigns. This demonstrates an element of sensitivity to local context that CSOs should aim for when working with the local communities in African societies. For example, people are familiar with idioms like "a person is a person because of other people". This brings an element of tolerance and valuing another person within the community.⁵

The interviewee gave a similar local *Shona* idiom that they use in building peace, that is *kugara hunzwana* meaning "people can live together well if they understand each other"; this encourages cooperation within communities. For example, for a community to be called a community the people within it are supposed to be understanding and be tolerant to each other. This comes as an individual realises that

⁴ Interview with a member of civil society (CSOA), Harare, 7 November 2020.

⁵ Interview with CSOB, in Harare, 8 November 2020.

people are not able to live and survive in isolation. Tapping into local language is a realisation that every community has its own ways of starting and resolving conflicts through their own language. A peacebuilding practitioner⁶ concurred in an interview that, local language leads to easy understanding and appreciation of a peacebuilding campaign. Past peace interventions have shown that local peace languages leave lasting memories in people's lives in rural areas. Ubuntu is defined as a sense of responsibility to care for others who are in need (Maphosa/Keasley 2004). Funk (2012) postulates that: peace has a cultural dimension; every cultural community has its own vernacular language for conflict resolution and the use of it gives peace substance and legitimacy. It follows that, the CSOs peacebuilding approaches have to have the presence of the local language for the outcome to be appealing and durable. Lack of appeal and legitimacy explains conflict relapse.

Apart from spoken local languages, the CSOs have made use of art and images in local communities to sow peace messages in communities. An interviewee⁷ highlighted that in their training workshops they would make use of pictures and posters with images about which they would ask people to think and link with their day-to-day experiences. The posters would show the power of soft strength in the face of any situation. For example, one poster had a hard rock which was slowly being eroded by a stream of water. The water resembled soft strength and the hard rock the difficulties one could face in life. They argued that though soft strength might be slow in bringing change, it had a long-term positive effect that would eventually lead to the hurdles being washed away. Each picture or poster had a local theme promoting love, respect, tolerance and collective responsibility which are linked to IKS in peacebuilding.

While peacebuilding through IKS has its own merits towards cultivating sustainable peace, the model also has its flaws. An academic argued in an interview that, the CSOs need to be aware of some of the negative practices found in IKS which in a way contradict peacebuilding. This has been witnessed in some proverbs taught and come to be accepted by societies as normal yet they suffocate other people's rights. A peace activist⁸ gave an example of a *Shona* saying that, *kurwa rudo* loosely translated to 'fighting is love.' This local norm has resulted in societies in rural areas accepting or tolerating domestic violence which has mostly affected women and children. Although the local norm is part of the IKS, the CSOs need to find ways of deconstructing such norms that infringe the rights of women and children.

Key lessons that can be drawn from the use of IKS by CSOs in peacebuilding are summarised below:

- Simple, cheap and easy to follow, especially on the part of the local people who will be aware and familiar with their own ways of addressing an issue. It breeds context specific and relevant solutions to a problem. For example, in certain conflicts there are specific people who can resolve them such as the community elders. Equally

⁶ Interview with PeacebuilderB, in Harare 8 November 2020.

⁷ Interview with CSOC, in Harare, 9 November 2020.

⁸ Interview with PeacebuilderC, in Harare, 9 November 2020.

the community elders have the potential of abusing the local command they have to instigate or cause violence within their communities.

- It can strengthen or bind relationships between the people and the CSOs working in an environment. Once the bond is created, so is trust. In this way, local people will cooperate or have a “buy-in” on a programme brought in by the CSOs.
- Local turn or bottom-up initiatives work as an antidote to donor-dependent programmes or activities which in the long run have the effect of creating a dependency syndrome. Donor dependent programmes can be hijacked by professional CSOs who are driven by money.
- Working with the local promotes ownership of a programme. The local people can then be able to drive it along with their local means and knowledge. This is called self-sustaining peace (Maiese 2004).
- In addition, working with the local turn has an effect of strengthening public opinion on an issue. Once people have a common understanding of peace issues, it is easier to create peace constituencies or zones of peace that can counter any violent forces that may arise within a community.

7.6 Ways Forward

The CSOs need to begin by carrying out a thorough analysis of the needs and fears within an affected community. This minimises the chances of faulty assessment, plan and intervention. Sustainable change can be reached through collaboration among CSOs, local people and experts. Osamba (2001) notes that, in the context of emotional oneness in the community, emotional scars and wounded relationships are healed. Further, CSOs can build coalitions or networks to help address financial challenges. Members can pull resources together for sustainable interventions instead of competing for donor funding.

For the CSOs to engage successfully with the local people, they need to assume key roles that can enable a democratic way of working together with the people. The CSOs need to create an open and inclusive platform to incorporate the views of the people. They can do this by, fostering an atmosphere of trust, mutual respect, and shared aspiration in which everyone may fully and openly contribute to the achievement of common goals (TTM Associates 2017). At least the CSOs need to assume the role of facilitators or catalysts (Maiese 2004) in their peacebuilding programme. They should not assume that the local people have no useful input but rather should demonstrate their willingness to learn and work together on what they already know. Through facilitation, they become bridges to connect people with other stakeholders, using their local ways towards addressing a problem. Where they fail to facilitate a programme, they can also act as advisors who only make recommendations in consultation with local people rather than imposing pre-tailored ideas. By performing these roles, the local people and other stakeholders feel involved and that they own a programme that a CSO might have. It encourages collaboration. Collaborative processes incorporate diverse ideas from other stakeholders in the peacebuilding

process, bearing in mind that it must be grounded in the local input. In this way, a demand-side peacebuilding programme can be realised as opposed to a supply-side initiative.

Maiese (2004) posits that culture is a seedbed for the development of a peacebuilding model. Burton (1990, in Osamba 2001) argues that culture is a satisfier which makes it a critical part in conflict resolution. When working with the local inputs, the CSOs may also want to understand and learn the local culture, tradition or practice within a context. This should then be incorporated in their peacebuilding campaigns. For example, local idioms, language, folktales, symbol and sayings that have elements of peacebuilding. Again, chances are high that there will be buy-in from the local people. In some cases, where the CSOs have been denied access to a rural community can be explained in the sense that the CSOs program is seen by some chiefs as a threat to their beliefs, culture, and practices (Maiese 2004). Designing a peacebuilding programme rooted in local culture is like following pathways in ethnic wisdom (Augsburger 1992, in Osamba 2001). Donais (2012, p. 58) argues that the “State is about order, civil society is a producer, repository and distributor of social norms and practices that generate community”. It is the richness of local wisdom that makes a programme more appealing and effective in bringing change within communities.

Lastly, the CSO should not only involve local people during planning and implementation of an intervention. Rather, the democratic and all-inclusive process should be carried over to evaluation of a project. When evaluation is done with the people and there is feedback, they will know how to improve their peacebuilding exercise. If a CSO decides to vacate an area, the people can sustain the intervention. In some cases, a CSO can go further to publish their findings for the benefit of other CSOs or interested stakeholders who may want to carry out future similar exercises in the area through IKS. This creates continuity and sustainability of a programme. The emphasis on local turn or input is that CSOs cannot build peace alone but they build with others comprised of the local people, researchers and other experts in peacebuilding.

7.7 Conclusion

Building peace through IKS by CSOs is still alive in Zimbabwe. The chapter has noted that success stories have been recorded in the rural parts of the country where the CSOs have embraced IKS in building peace. Lasting memories and structures have been established as local people were the co-authors of the peace, thus enhancing legitimacy of a programme. Partial successes have been recorded in urban settings where the people have been exposed to modern peacebuilding approaches and in some cases the stability of an economic environment shapes the outcome of peace interventions by the CSOs. However, where IKS have been appropriately used, durable peace has been realised. The IKS which are grounded in bottom-up approaches are critical in promoting, resolving and transforming conflict by CSOs when they assume

a midwifery role. The IKS promote local ownership and generates legitimacy among the people in peacebuilding. Ownership and legitimacy are key in realising durable or sustainable peace.

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