



LUND UNIVERSITY
Faculty of Social Sciences

Lund University
SIMT 29, Master's Thesis
Development Studies
Department of Political Sciences
Spring Term, 2010

**INTERNATIONAL NGOs AND STATEBUILDING
THE CASE OF HAITI, THE PHANTOM STATE**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CONAP	Haiti's National Coordination for Advocacy on Women's Rights
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
ENFOFANM	Women's info Network in Haiti
FOCAL	Canadian Foundation of the Americas
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRI	International Republican Institute
MINUSTAH	The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
NGO	Non-governmental organizations
OAS	Organization of American States
OECD/DAC	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development/ Development Assistance Committee
PAPDA	Plateforme Haitienne de Plaidoyer pour le Développement Alternative
SOFA	Haitian Women's Solidarity, <i>Solidarité Fanm Ayisyen</i>
UAPC	Program Support Unit for Canadian Cooperation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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ABSTRACT

In post-conflict states that are subject to international statebuilding such as in Haiti, the approach is to build a liberal democratic state that institutionalizes stability and peace through the reconstruction of government institutions. Current statebuilding practices focus on the narrow institutional dimensions of strengthening the state ignoring state-society relations. This study will examine international statebuilding through the lens of civil society, using a liberal conception that views the role of civil society as horizontal with the state in holding it accountable and responsiveness to the population's needs and demands. This study attempts to build a theoretical framework that can connect the impact of international support to civil society to the process of statebuilding. Using this framework to analyse the case of Haiti, the study posits that with many international NGOs supporting civil society in Haiti, they are indirectly weakening its role by blurring accountability channels with the state and creating upward accountability with its foreign donors rather than communities. This has weakened the state by widening the gap between state and society resulting in the "phantom" state; a state that is accountable to international institutions and lacks legitimacy in society.

Keywords: Haiti, civil society, international NGOs, statebuilding, post-conflict states, aid dependency

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Research Problem

International interventions into countries plagued by violent conflict, civil war and political instability have increasingly been the priority and concern of the international community since 9/11. The World Bank estimates that 600 million people live in countries affected by war and violent conflict today.¹ In the field of development and poverty reduction, this is a major challenge as poverty rates are alarming at “an average of 54 percent compared with to 22 percent for low-income countries”.² These countries are characterized mainly by their weak governing institutions and the impact of war, violence and instability are considerable challenges to further development and peace.³ The growing international response to countries affected by violent conflict has been a more recent approach of: *International Statebuilding*. This approach aims to institutionalize peace and stability through the reconstruction of government institutions that can provide basic physical, economic and social security to its citizens (Chandler 2006). As this approach is increasing intertwined with peacebuilding⁴, international actors increasingly aim at sustaining legitimate structures of governance through sustainable state-society relations, a fundamental component of peacebuilding (OECD 2009). As such, states must be meaningfully embedded and connected to society, moving away from “technical top-down formal conceptions of state formation and moving towards the social processes by which state and society are negotiated and mediated” (ibid). The OECD/DAC’s initial findings on statebuilding has defined it as; “an endogenous process to enhance capacity, institutions and legitimacy of the state driven by state-society relations” (OECD/DAC 2008). However, policies guiding international practices in this process have not consistently considered the impact of international

¹ The World Bank. Introduction to fragile and conflict affected countries. Website consulted August 2010. <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/PROJECTS/STRATEGIES/EXTLICUS/0,,menuPK:511784~pagePK:64171540~piPK:64171528~theSitePK:511778,00.html>

² The World Bank; ibid

³ The World Bank; ibid

⁴ According to Olivier Richmond, since the 1990s, the projects of peacebuilding and statebuilding have increasingly been integrated due to the support of humanitarian liberal internationalism (Richmond 2009).

engagements with non-state actors such as civil society actors and NGOs can have on the state itself and how this can alter the statebuilding process.

With this premise in mind, this study will examine international statebuilding rather through the lens of civil society to emphasize on how state and society are mediated as opposed to the institutional dimension of state formation. The liberal democratic conception of civil society will be used to further explore state-society relations in the case study of Haiti. Haiti has never experienced civil war but has experienced serious political violence and has been host to a large peacekeeping mission since 2004. The international response in Haiti is not built around a peace agreement nor a reconciliation process, but to reconstitute peace and stability through the liberal statebuilding approach. The UN mandate is to ensure that democratic state institutions are established, that these institutions provide physical security to the population, democratic elections, the rule of law, protection of human rights and increasing the authority of the Haitian state. As one scholar states, “the fact that the current international intervention is backed by no formal peace agreement underlines the extent to which liberal goals have been externally decreed rather than locally negotiated” (Donais 2009; 767).

In addition, international support to civil society in Haiti has mostly been financed through international NGOs. These international organizations have become the preferred implementers of bilateral aid since the mid-1990s. Most schools and clinics in Haiti were built by private sources, including NGOs. Agricultural projects and even roads are managed by NGOs. More NGOs per capita operate in Haiti, the highest in the Americas. According to recent articles on NGOs in Haiti, “there are some 3,000 NGOs in this country of 10 million people - that's roughly one NGO per 3,000 people”.⁵ “NGOs provide 70 percent of healthcare in rural areas and 80 percent of public services”.⁶ In a country where 60 percent of Haitians live in rural areas, the state has left its basic

⁵Global Policy Forum- All Africa.com (2010) <http://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/176-general/48707-why-haiti-should-beware-professional-do-gooders.html>, January 31, 2010 – Also see CSO Haiti website by UN special Special Envoy to Haiti; <http://csohaiti.org/>

⁶ Dupuy, Alex (2010). Social Science Research Council. <http://www.ssrc.org/features/pages/haiti-now-and-next/1338/1339/>

responsibility to this part of the population to NGOs.⁷ Public services have been created outside the formal state system by a variety of NGOs, creating unsustainable a parallel systems, which have in essence, weaken state capacity and its legitimacy to respond to the needs of its population. Therefore, the international statebuilding approach in Haiti is coupled with the international support to civil society and the growth of the NGO sector.

In light of the above, the aim of this study is to demonstrate the impact of international support to civil society in Haiti and how this affects the process of international statebuilding. Using a theoretical framework that attempts to connect international support to both civil society and the state, this study proposes a theoretical construct to explore how both state and civil society are accountable to international institutions and not to the citizens they both represent.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the above reflections, this research will explore the following theoretical and empirical questions;

- How is international support to civil society impacting the process of statebuilding?
- In the case of Haiti, how are international NGOs impacting civil society and its relations with the Haitian state? Is this support to civil society strengthen or weakening the state?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The theoretical purpose of this study is to build a theoretical framework that can expand our understanding of the connection and impact of international support to both civil society and statebuilding in the context of a post conflict or weak state. The empirical purpose is to use this framework to examine the impact of international NGOs on the role civil society and its relation to the state. This will help answer the research question whether international support to civil society is strengthening or weakening the state. The literature on the practice of international statebuilding in post-conflict states demonstrates a rather narrow picture focused on the institutional engineering of the state and their

⁷ Dupuy, Alex (2010). Social Science Research Council. <http://www.ssrc.org/features/pages/haiti-now-and-next/1338/1339/>

administrative efficiencies. In practice, there is not yet a clear link made between international support to state institutions and international support to institutions that reflect society, such as civil society. To make this link, the research will focus on the role of civil society in relation to the state and citizens in order to shed light on this phenomenon. In order to build theoretical constructs, the empirical data will be generated from the case study of Haiti and explore the link between international NGOs, civil society and international support to statebuilding.

Reforming and reconstructing the state has been part of Haitian politics for much of the 20th century (Dupuy 2010). Since 2004, Haiti is host to a large UN stabilisation mission, MINUSTAH, with a clear liberal statebuilding mandate. The UN mission is not only mandated to provide security to the population but also to support political and electoral processes, promoting the Rule of Law and protecting Human Rights (MINUSTAH). Haiti's weak state is defined by its perpetual political crisis rooted in its colonial past of slavery, class conflict and foreign interventions (Donais 2008, Fatton 2007). The case of Haiti was chosen for two interrelated reasons;

- 1) Historically, the Haitian state has deliberately excluded traditional forms of civil society such as “popular organisations”, being largely representative of how a large part of society is organised (Smith 2001, Fatton 2007). Haiti's conflict and inequalities are characterised by the state being disconnected from its population and the struggles of the excluded mass peasant population against a minority of rich elites. This elite class has captured state institutions in order to instrumentalize the state apparatus for its own economic and political interests (Herrmann 2007; 3 and Fatton 2007). As explained by Haitian expert Robert Fatton; ‘pattern of exclusion derived from the legacy of colonial slavery, has characterized Haiti's history since its very beginning. It generated a predatory state bent on extracting resources from the peasant majority for the benefit of a small ruling class (Fatton 2007; viii).
- 2) The Haitian state has been subject to international interventionism starting with the US occupation between 1915-1934. Since the 1970s, there have been high levels of aid dependency, and large development actors such as the OAS, the IMF and the

Inter-American Bank of Development (IDB) have all had been influential actors in domestic politics. The dominant approach of international interventions has been to address state weakness through a 'liberal state model' in building efficient and effective institutions and supporting democratic elections (Donais 2008). The state being the main interlocutor for international actors has indirectly supported a small number of elites and not accountable to the majority (Herrmann 2007; 5).

2. METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed throughout this research is a single-case study (George and Bennett 2007). An instrumental case study⁸ will be used to build theoretical propositions that can provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon at hand; international support to both statebuilding and civil society in post conflict states. This research will employ the case study and theory development approach. "Building theory from case studies is a research strategy that involves using one or more cases to create theoretical constructs, propositions and/or midrange theory from case-based, empirical evidence. Case studies are rich, empirical descriptions of particular instances of a phenomenon that are typically based on a variety of data sources" (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007; 25). "The theory-building process occurs via recursive cycling among the case data, emerging theory, and later, extant literature" (ibid; 27). Given the complexity of theory development, and the relationship between the empirical data and the capacity for theory building, case studies should be used in terms of 'building blocks' (Moses and Knutsen; 136). "The analyst studies a given case to generate a preliminary theoretical construct. Because this construct is based on a single case, it can do little more than hint at a more valid general model. This model can be confronted with other cases and eventually can be assembled liked building blocks into a stronger theoretical edifice" (ibid). A case study research should generally move from an empirical level to a level of general statements and some form of generalizations.

⁸ "The **instrumental case study** is done to provide a general understanding of a phenomenon using a particular case. The case chosen can be a typical case although an unusual case may help illustrate matters overlooked in a typical case because they are subtler there. Thus a good instrumental case does not depend on the researcher being able to defend its typicality though the researcher needs to provide a rationale for using a particular case" (Creswell 2007; 75).

The case study and theory development approach is thoroughly discussed in Alexander George and Andrew Bennett's book; *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. These authors list six different kinds of theory-building research objectives. This research design will utilize the "building block" approach that fits suitably the aim of further understanding the impact of international support to civil society and its relations with the state in weak or post conflict states. This approach is the study of "...particular types or subtypes of a phenomenon (that) identify common patterns or serve a particular kind of heuristic purpose. These studies can be component parts of larger contingent generalizations and typological theories" (George and Bennett 2007; 76).

The theoretical framework built for this research attempts to combine theories that helps theorize international support in both statebuilding and civil society and the impact on state-civil society relations. The case study of Haiti is used as empirical evidence to extract certain theoretical constructs related to international engagements on the state's capacity to be responsive to the demands and needs of its citizens. As part of civil society, NGOs are organizational actors that advocate for citizens and provide and improve services to communities (Lewis and Kanji 2009). Within this realm, the role of international NGO is varied in supporting civil society organisations in their roles. The overall framework is applied to international NGOs as influential actors in shaping state-civil society relations in a post conflict states. The empirical objective will be to examine the positive or negative impact of international NGO who are working with civil society organisations in Haiti and how this may affect the state's connection to society (an important element of statebuilding). This study looks at the dependable variable of civil society as a source of development for the state and society in Haiti and to further understand the impact of international NGOs, as an independent variable, in supporting civil society. Other factors are important to the international statebuilding agenda as such as technical knowledge, human resources and financial resources, lack of incentive and mechanisms of accountability for officials, general political instability, competing priorities within government, other influential actors such as IFIs or even large natural disasters. Epistemologically, these independent factors create an accumulation of

knowledge and information that is used to describe the phenomenon and how it affects statebuilding efforts in Haiti. The independent variable that will be examined in this study is international NGOs who are working with civil society actors in Haiti and how they influence state in its relation with the population. As suggested by George and Bennett, the process of analyzing the independent and prevailing variables takes a *process-tracing technique*, which attempts to draw links between possible causes and observed outcomes. This technique involves the examination of histories, archival documents, interview transcripts, and other sources of data to see where the causal process presents evidence (George and Bennett 2005; 13).

The design of this research is to demonstrate the impact of international support to civil society and the state. International NGOs are considered key international actors in supporting NGOs and civil society in post conflict states and therefore an important variable to consider in building state-civil society relations in the process of international statebuilding. A single-case study will provide a “thick” description of the phenomenon at hand and attempts to understand it within the context of Haiti. This exploratory form of research seeks to link the role of international NGOs in supporting civil society and the impact on international statebuilding. The analysis of the data will be used to inductively identify new variables in the impact of international engagements in statebuilding.

Through the case study of Haiti, the study “will assess *whether* and *how* the variable” of international NGOs and civil society matter to the outcome of international statebuilding in Haiti. (George and Bennett 2007; 25). This will add new insight in generating a theoretical proposition on the impact of international support to civil society and how this affects the statebuilding process in post-conflict states.

2.1 Sources of Data

Various sources of data have been consulted and analyzed during the formulation of the research. Secondary sources include academic journal articles, PhD theses, books, media publications, policy reports, journal articles pertaining to the subject. Primary sources include Government of Haiti and Government of Canada documents, personal notes, and key interviews with international NGOs working in Haiti. In order to illustrate some main

arguments in the analysis section, documentation related to two development projects from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) have also been consulted and analyzed to highlight main practices. Two authors were heavily relied upon to build the theoretical framework for this research, Oliver Richmond, researcher in peacebuilding theories and David Chandler, researcher in statebuilding theories. I have also relied on the research of Mark Schuller on the NGO system and its impacts in Haiti.

2.2 Research Interviews

As part of the data collection for the analysis of this case study, I conducted semi-structured interviews between May 17th and May 28th in Montreal, Canada with a variety of NGOs workers with large Canadian NGOs working in Haiti. Other interviews were conducted with Haitian nationals working in the Canadian Embassy, Haitian activists and the Director of one Haitian NGO. This allowed me to do qualitative research and collect rich and detailed information on various topics to help answer the research question of this study. Through the semi-structured interviews, I asked questions that covered fairly specific topics while remaining flexible in the interview process and gave leeway to the interviewees in their replies. The emphasis was to get the point of view and opinions of the interviewee based on their knowledge and experience of the issue at hand. These interviews stimulated discussions on how the “interviewee frames and understands issues and events many interviewees helped explaining and understanding events, patterns, and forms of behavior” (Seidman 2005: 314).

The first series of interviews were conducted in Port-au-Prince with various Haitian nationals working for international organisations for two weeks in July of 2009. The second series of interviews conducted in Canada, I developed a more detailed interview guide with questions related to the NGOs sector in Haiti and civil society in order to conduct interviews with specific organisations and informants who knew the context and history of Haiti very well. The various information provided by key participants complemented the literature review and helped understand the whole phenomenon of international engagement in both the state and civil society and the statebuilding process

in Haiti. This represented a purposive sample in which participants were chosen (Creswell 2007: 125-128).

Selection of interviewees was based on the following criteria: experience in working within the NGO community and with local and grassroots groups in Haiti, understanding of civil society in Haiti, familiar with central and local government authorities. The NGOs that have been contacted have worked in Haiti for more than twenty years and have large operational budget (\$20 million +) and are implementing large programmes in Haiti. The following Canadian NGOs are based out of Montreal and are reliable organisations since a large part of their funding is from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Canada is the second largest donor in Haiti, and they have been operating in the country for more than 10 years. These NGOs have a long history of solidarity with Haitian civil society, they support local partners including grassroots organisations. The organisations chosen include; Oxfam Québec (since 1989), Development and Peace (since 1970), Centre d'étude et de coopération international (CECI) (since 1974) Fondation Paul Gérin-Lajoie (1998). In July 2009, I also conducted interviews with four participants in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. These participants work closely with civil society organisations and local and international NGOs. The questionnaire used for those interviews differs from the questionnaire that is attached in annexe A.

The Interview Guide was organised into three general topics;

- 1) increasing number of NGOs in Haiti, how is this changing the role of civil society and the impact on their relations with the state
- 2) the regulation and coordination of international NGOs vis-à-vis the state and questions of accountability to their local partners in providing services
- 3) the rapport and relationship between NGO and the Haitian government (difference between central and local authorities)

2.3 Analysis and Transcription

All interviews were reviewed and transcribed. They were then analyzed focusing on an aspect that directly affected the progression of the work: recurring themes. Several recurring themes emerged from the interviews:

1. Civil society is not a homogenous entity. In Haiti, it is a term that have been transformed and even manipulated to fit western concepts of democracy, participation and good governance. Organizations that make up civil society are equally divided along political divisions and class in Haiti. Local NGOs do not only represent the needs of the poor, they are also closely linked to the political elites and the oligarchies of the country.
2. Smaller “popular organizations” in Haiti are part of Haitian culture, part of how the society is organized. International organization do not fully value their roles in society. INGOs act rather as intermediaries between donors and smaller local organizations, allowing access to foreign funding.
3. NGO collaboration with Haitian authorities has improved, at the same time there are certain inconsistencies and from most there is a negative image and attitude towards the Haitian government. International NGOs do not see themselves as part of the problem of state weakness. Rather, they justify their work in the ‘substitution of the state’ by strengthen civil society and capacity building of state.
4. There is a confirmation that there is a serious trust and confidence issue between the Haitian state and its population. Dialogue between popular organizations and the state have increased but this remains difficult and uncoordinated.

All above themes were cross-referenced for relevance with other literature and project documentation in order to development the analysis section of this study.

2.4 Limitations of research and sources

The selection of interviewees is limited to NGO workers who are employed with Canadian NGOs. This makes for more of a “Canadian” perspective on international work in Haiti. To make the study more robust, interviews would need to be conducted with government officials from various Haitian ministries to know their position on how international NGOs work with civil society organisations and the state and how this has changed over the years in Haiti. In addition, it would be interesting to speak to some communities who are working with international NGOs and their perspective as beneficiaries. Post earthquake Haiti has made it very difficult and complex to get to Haiti. The country is still in a humanitarian phase, with a very high number of international actors on the ground, making logistics complex and overwhelming. In addition, the Haitian government has lost approximately 18% of its public servants in the earthquake (Government of Haiti 2010), making the government even more limited in its resources and time.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW: INTERNATIONAL STATEBUILDING AND SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY

The literature review focuses around several themes: tensions between statebuilding and civil society, international support to civil society in conflict-affected states, and the role of NGOs and the state. Only articles and books that most influenced the direction of the research are discussed in the literature review.

3.1 What is international statebuilding?

According to an analysis by the OECD/DAC group on state fragility, the critical elements underpinning statebuilding is state society relations. The dimensions that define this state-society relation relate to 1) political processes where state and society can connect 2) the responsiveness of the state to fulfill its key functions and provide key services and 3) social expectations of what the state should do and the ability of the state to articulate those demands through state institutions. Following war or violent conflict, the major challenge is for the state to regain legitimacy and to be accountable to a broader society and its interests as opposed to a narrow elite (OECD/DAC 2009). However, this becomes complex when for the most part statebuilding is internationally led. In practice, the international community's approach to statebuilding following conflict has put much emphasis on rebuilding the institutional dimensions of government and the administrative capacity in order for a state to govern, transforming statebuilding into a very technical process (Call and Wyeth 2008; Paris 2008). Critics of this narrow approach such as David Chandler and Oliver Richmond have questioned the statebuilding approach as being simply a technical discourse ignoring the international politics and ideologies that lie behind it. Richmond states; "statebuilding is connected with neoliberalism and the liberal peacebuilding praxis which has emerged in recent years" (Richmond 2009; 146). According to David Chandler, there has been very little theoretical engagement with statebuilding as a policy framework and its impact. He observes that the impact is the phantom state; "The states created, which have international legal sovereignty but have ceded policy-making control to international institutions, are phantom states because their lack of self-government prevents them from being recognized or legitimized as embodying a collective expression of their societies"

(ibid; 44). In addition, he asks an important question about the international practices of statebuilding; “If the shifting focus to therapeutic and bureaucratic forms of empowerment and capacity-building is a result of the problems that western institutions have in establishing their own legitimacy, what is the cause of this?” These parts of Chandler’s theory will be used later in the theoretical framework of this study.

The mainstream discourse on statebuilding has emerged in response to growing international security concerns following 9/11. “Failed or fragile states”⁹ are now perceived as serious threats to world order, losing control over their territory harbouring terrorists and drugtracking posing threats in the western world (Fukuyama 2004; 93). International statebuilding of “failed” or “collapsed” states is based on rapid democratization and the absorbing of states into the free economic markets transforming post conflict states, its institutions and society along liberal democratic lines to prevent reoccurring violence (Call and Wyeth 2008; Rotberg 2003; Donais 2008). The large assumption being that once these democratic institutions are in place, they will be embraced and accepted by various actors in society (Roberts 2008). The transferability of liberal democratic norms to non-western contexts is contested, as it relies upon a “hubristic belief that once institutions are provided, populations will simultaneously adopt and benefit from them regardless of local characteristics, culture or priorities” (Richmond and Franks 2007; 30). Essentially, “statebuilding constitutes one dimension of contemporary peacebuilding practice and it involves the element of (re)construction of a social contract not only between the government and the governed themselves but requires the establishment of both vertical legitimacy – connecting citizens, society, institutions, and regimes – and horizontal legitimacy, which refers to mutual acceptance and tolerance at elite and mass levels” (Donais 2008).

Bringing international relations into the discussion of statebuilding is important in conceptualizing the phantom state because the literature has highly depoliticized the

⁹ The phenomenon of ‘weak states’ and ‘state failure’ has been an important issue in the development politics since the 1990s and even more so since 9/11 with an increase in concerns of international security.

discussions of state capacity-building and has reduced it to a narrow technical and functionalist framework.

3.2 Tensions between international support to statebuilding and civil society

In one of the few articles that discuss the emerging tensions between international support to civil society and statebuilding as a means to democratization, in post conflict situations, Mertus and Sajjad mainly argue that civil society has in fact failed the project of statebuilding. They discuss how a strong civil society and a large NGO sector have the potential to undermine state legitimacy and hinder “civic nationalism” and thus creating a weak state (ibid; 119). They believe that legitimacy of the state will not grow in post conflict states because of the large international presences that have in fact conflated local NGOs and “civil society”. Essentially, large amounts of aid to civil society organization for long periods has the potential in undermining their priorities and their good governance in favor of their donors. Essentially, civil society organizations feel driven by international NGOs and donor funding, civil society is being pulled into two directions; being responsive to the international community’s vision and priorities for a post conflict society and on the other hand to be representational to the needs and demands of the local constituencies. International support to civil society has filled this supposed “gap” between government institutions and the population with international institutions and international NGOs. These international organizations ultimately have increasing influence, financing and legitimacy outside the formal power structures (Mertus and Sajjad 2005).

Olivier Richmond’s Liberal Peace Framework helps to theorize civil society within the context of international statebuilding. His research on peacebuilding/statebuilding¹⁰ rests upon a critical view of the liberal peace theory that promoting democracy, the rule of law, human rights, free trade and development will build sustainable peace (Richmond 2006). In his 2009 book co-authored with Jason Franks, *Liberal Peace Transitions*, they explore the nature of liberal peace. He defines it as such;

¹⁰ Although peacebuilding focuses on the transition from war to peace, the concept and the practices of peacebuilding are in principle about supporting sustainable peace. (OECD/DAC 2009)

“the liberal peace is a discourse, framework and structure with a specific ontology and methodology. It provides a liberal epistemology of peace and its projected reform of governance entails a communicative strategy on which depends its viability and legitimacy with its recipients. This operates both at a social and a state level and cannot be achieved without significant resources. The allocation of those resources, the power to do so, and their control, has become the new site of power and domination in post-conflict societies” (ibid; 4).

This discourse is also used in international statebuilding as such; “Peace as governance in state building terms focuses on the institutions of state as the basis for the construction of liberal peace. For NGOs and agencies, it focuses on the governance of society. In terms of bottom-up peacebuilding, different actors contribute to the liberal peace model by installing forms of peace-as-governance associated with the regulation, control and protection of individuals and civil society. The balance of power, hegemony, institutionalism and constitutionalism and civil society is super-territorial and multilayer” (ibid; 6). As such Richmond and Franks define civil society and its use in statebuilding discourse. In his case study of Bosnia, Richmond found that the consequence of employing this western concept of civil society and trying to create a democratic space between the people and the political elites is competition and exclusion. As Richmond explains; “This generates competition for resources and creates a highly exclusive and specialized environment that probably excludes exactly the individuals and groups that it was designed to include, whilst erecting even more barriers to social inclusion” (ibid). This also points the inconsistencies and confusion between liberal statebuilding and the agendas and priorities of various internationals and domestic NGOs.

3.3 Civil society in post-conflict states

The role of civil society organizations in post-conflict states becomes quite diverse in substituting the basic role of public institutions in becoming providers of basic social services (World Bank 2005). In addition, actors of civil society can be highly fragmented and politically divided following conflict and instability (Belloni 2007). It is most often captured by elites creating a gap between the grassroots level and the national level. With many international NGOs interventions, many local organizations become highly aid dependent, uncoordinated and unregulated (Mertus and Sajjid 2005).

One major consequence of foreign assistance to civil society is aid dependency and in turn an “artificial civil society” is created. Local civil society organizations will cater to the donor agendas and priorities in order to secure funding and therefore not every NGO will be rooted in the social structure of the country or to grassroots organizations that they are suppose to represent (Boussard 2002; Van Rooy 1998; Pouligny 2005).

“Organisations with the same agenda as the donor community are not a problem per se, but they pose the question of the civil society’s authenticity. In many instances, these organizations cannot survive when donors withdraw” (Boussard 2002; 169). This debate on “artificial” or “manufactured” civil society has been well documented in post-conflict states such as in Cambodia, Bosnia and Afghanistan (Richmond 2007; Belloni 2007 and Howell and Lind 2009). Because of the external nature of statebuilding and peacebuilding in itself, western conception of civil society has created underlining challenges to the consolidation of post-conflict civil society and the distortion of the role of NGOs. In Bosnia, local NGOs have been characterized as representing a rather “virtual civil society” with little impact on political and social change (Belloni 2007). This has been attributed to the fact that their advocacy role has been hindered by the assertive role of international actors and that donor projects have in fact divided instead of uniting civil society organizations. Therefore, “limiting their role in changing domestic policies and advocating beyond political divisions” (ibid; 113). The case of Cambodia illustrates the lack of sustainability of the NGO community when civil society is highly dependent on the flood of external funding that accompanied the UNTAC mission. This has created “a ‘parallel’ society created by the presence and funding of the internationals, and mainly visible to international eyes.” (Richmond 2007; 39). In Afghanistan, NGOs are favored as service providers rather than agents of advocacy and democracy. This has created parallel systems that are again highly dependent on donor funding. This promotion of civil society has in fact promoted “a particular model of state–civil relations that prioritizes service delivery over the deliberative role of civil society” (Howell and Lind 2009; 718).

The growth of NGOs has become synonymous with a healthy civil society and a growing democracy. “In developing countries as well as in post-conflict societies, international reformers conflate civil society with NGOs and use this as a head count as a crude index

of the health of a civil society” (Mertus and Sajjad;121). However, NGOs remain limited and narrowly directed by funding sources and by the overall policy environment in which they operate. (Evans-Kent & Bleiker; 104) The challenge being, as Béatrice Pouligny has argued that “local NGOs, oriented primarily towards the outside worlds, may have difficulty finding their place as intermediaries at the community level; they are also often diverted by local political networks (which sometimes create them) into patronage channels” (ibid; 499). Advocacy NGOs in particular who are mandated to promote civic participation and general human rights norms (public interest) are more drawn to promoting the ‘popular’ causes at the expense of real public/community interests. NGOs receive funding for donor priorities as opposed to the needs of citizens and marginalised groups. (Evans-Kent & Bleiker 107) As Mertus and Sajjad have studied in the case of Bosnia, many NGOs lacked ties to any grassroots organisations and instead reproduced concerns of elites, “the priority given to NGOs may detract from other important voices such as official representatives and other community leaders who either have failed at attracting international support or who have chosen to not operate through an NGO” (ibid;123). In the same sense, Pouligny argues that outside funding and western conceptions of civil society can also reinforce the marginalization of certain parts of society and the lack of participation from some parts of society ultimately reduces the diversity of a society. (ibid; 499).

In sum, international support to civil society projects can alter existing relations between state and society. In fragmented societies the competition for resources by NGOs can contribute to “greater social fragmentation and create new hierarchies, with those supported by the international community on top and those that are not on the bottom” (ibid;125). Ultimately, it benefits a handful of political elites and the interests of foreign donors and end up lacking local ownership of aid projects. This leads to question the sustainability of NGOs as contributing actors in civil society.

3.4 NGOs and the State

John Clarke was one of the first authors to frame the relation between NGOs and the state. He suggested that “there are basically three different ways in which NGOs can

relate to the state: 1) complementing it, by filling gaps, providing services, 2) opposing it, either directly or by lobbying against it, together with local groups and in support of locals, and 3) reforming it, working with the grassroots, helping them raise concerns at state level and working with governments to improve policies. (Clark 1991; 75-76) (cited in Marcussen 1996; 418). But in the context of external statebuilding and peacebuilding by UN peacekeeping missions, the state and civil society are largely controlled and funded by a variety of international actors.

Two broad hypotheses are found in the NGO literature on the impact to the state. Henrik Marcussen has exposed them as such; “ 1) strengthening civil society will assist the state, as some vital, functional gaps in service delivery will be filled, and other shortcomings be substituted for. Provided the state is able to negotiate with civil society actors and administer this situation well. Ultimately, the state can profit from this by showing its ability to cope with shortages while retaining power and control”. (Hyden and Marcussen 1997:13). 2) The opposite hypothesis tends to see “successful grassroots developments and the provision of certain services, otherwise believed associated with state functions, as destabilising and undermining factors” (Fowler 1991:63). “To the extent that the community, supported from the outside through NGOs, is successful in mobilising local groups and forces, and is viewed as challenging state control and supremacy” (ibid). This could further erode an already fragile state legitimacy and according to this hypothesis, conflict between the state and civil society is inevitable (Marcussen 1996). But the problem with both hypotheses is that neither have been substantiated by empirical studies.

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: CONNECTING INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE IMPACT ON THE STATE

The literature review did not reveal one single theory to use in order to further explore the impact of international actors, such as NGOs, in the process of international statebuilding. Therefore, this study will build a theoretical framework to emphasize on the impact of international interventions in state-civil society relations and analyze the case of Haiti and the efforts of international NGOs in supporting domestic civil society. Since international statebuilding is based on the logic of building a liberal state, I have used the liberal democratic understanding of civil society and its relation to the state. This rather horizontal relationship between the state and civil society will be the theoretical foundation of the framework placing civil society as a democratic entity made up of actors that demand the accountability and responsiveness of the state to the population. In order to shed light on the complexities of international interventions in both supporting civil society and statebuilding, I will use two building blocks in my theoretical framework. First, taking Oliver Richmond's liberal peace framework to emphasize on the transformation of civil society and its institutions when there is international support and funding in the name of "peacebuilding", as such in Haiti. And second, taking David Chandler's theory of the "Phantom State" in order to examine the politics and practices used by international actors in statebuilding such as 'capacity building' to examine their impact on the state. Even though these scholars use different perspectives, Richmond uses peace and conflict theories where as Chandler uses more state theory, they both clearly demonstrates how external interventions in the name of statebuilding can skew the liberal democratic role of civil society and ultimately weaken the state by creating upward accountability channels to international actors ultimately changing state and society relations.

4.1 Liberal Foundations of Civil Society and its relation to the State

Understanding civil society and its relation to the state greatly depends on its theoretical underpinnings that rang from Hegel, de Tocqueville, Marx and Gramsci. While the literature on civil society is varied, the dominant stream of thought used in the practice of international development is the democratic liberal view. Alexis de Tocqueville laid the

foundations for this theory, believing in an arena of organized citizens that played the role of being the counterbalance between the state and the market (Lewis and Kanji 2009; 127). In his view, civic association, community spirit and independent associational life were the key to democratization as this would lead to greater inclusion of society in state affairs. In theory, a robust and diverse civil society should strengthen the state. It should provide the political space to moderate state power by challenging it, a counterbalance that allows the state to be accountable to its citizens and a civic space “that safeguards against the domination of society by the state” (Lewis and Kanji; 127). As described by Alexis de Tocqueville’s in *Democracy in America*; *‘freedom of association in political matters is not so dangerous to public tranquility as is supposed, and that possibly, after having agitated society for some time, it may in the end strengthen the state. In democratic countries political associations are, so to speak, the only powerful individual entities that aspire to the rule the state.’* (cited from Zunz and Kahan 2009; 189). Therefore, civil society has an important role in creating equilibrium with the state. It allows political participation and demands state accountability and transparency (Chandhoke 2002; 10).

As discussed by Lewis and Kanji, this liberal perspective of civil society has reached mainstream development under the auspice of “good governance”. The “good governance” emerging in the 1990s placed civil society as a source of civic responsibility and public virtue contributing to the public good (ibid; 128). “The liberal tradition emphasizes the socializing effects of association, which helps to build “better citizens”, based upon the idea of an interdependent organic relationship between market economy, state and civil society” (ibid). This logic has been adopted by donors and the World Bank during the 1990s and remains in their practices today (USAID 2009). A strong and vibrant civil society will ensure state accountability and responsiveness to the demands of citizens (Diamond 2001 and Chandhoke 1994). This would help to shift the balance of power between state and society more towards to later (Lewis and Kanji 2009).

The liberal theory of civil society has a fundamental assumption that a strong and vibrant civil society can help strengthen the state in insuring that citizens rights and demands are

heard by the government. This liberal notion of civil society's role will be used in this theoretical framework as the foundation of state-citizens relations.

4.2 Civil Society Building – Co-opting the international language by local elites

Based on the above liberal notions of civil society, this framework will examine the local co-optation of the language of liberal statebuilding. Through the process of building civil society by international actors, many local actors will claim to represent civil society and will adopt the international language in order to gain international support. Accordingly, when the structure and discourse of statebuilding operations is applied to a fragmented or divided society, international peacebuilding and statebuilding is more susceptible to local co-optation particularly when one group in society can adopt the language of the liberal peace used by the international community to gain credibility and legitimacy (Richmond 2009; 114). This situation of local cooptation has been researched and studied by Oliver Richmond and analyzed through his Liberal Peace Framework. Through this theoretical lens, there is a distinction between domestic civil society and the international liberal discourse surrounding the support to civil society. "Civil society, although presumed to be an indigenous socio-political organism, is paradoxically driven by the international community, who provide the political and social agendas derived from their own liberal perspectives and, more importantly, the finances" (ibid; 72). As stated by Franks and Richmond; "This indicates that liberal peace-building does not just consist of top-down international conditionality and local dependency, it also represents a contest (or at least a negotiation process) over the shape of the new entity and who controls it, state or otherwise, between local elites and international actors" (ibid; 82). This theory points to how liberal conceptions of peacebuilding can be 'co-opted' by those it is being applied to. Concepts of liberal peace, pluralism and civil society can be used by local elites to convince international actors in advancing their interests. "As a result, NGOs in this area are increasingly regarded as builders of a 'new elite' or a 'new sector' that draw funding from the internationals by speaking their language and playing their game" (ibid). Essentially, the allocation of resources to civil society becomes a new site of power and domination between faction groups. More importantly, civil society actors are now

accountable to their foreign partners as opposed to the citizens they represent and will no longer advocate to the state but again to foreign donors.

4.3 Impact of Statebuilding – The “Phantom State”

The last element of this theoretical framework is the “Phantom State”. David Chandler has coined this term as the result of regulative practices of international statebuilding. These practices are essentially evasive and prevent “the establishment of strong links between non-western states and their societies and resulting in the phenomenon of “phantom states” whose governing institutions may have extensive external resourcing but lack social or political legitimacy” (Chandler 2006; 9). Essentially, the phantom state has little legitimacy in the eyes of its populations and has more accountability mechanisms to international institutions than to its own citizens.

Some of the practices that lead to the phantom state are “statebuilding as social inclusion” (ibid;19). The practice of “capacity building” of the socially excluded is perceived to be above politics, moral and led by technical initiatives and administrative expertise. Using capacity building to support civil society actors can also be perceived as technical, when in fact it can be politically and value driven such as in statebuilding. This approach conceals the impacts related to dependency between northern and southern NGOs in addition to the gap that is created with citizens when local NGOs are more accountable to their foreign donors than the constituencies they serve. Capacity building of social institutions that represent marginalized groups can avoid some of the social and political responsibility that international actors hold, giving them the legitimacy to work with local community. In countries subject to statebuilding, Chandler has observed that this approach detracts from “ in fact the complex and interdependent nature of the problems alleged to cause social exclusion means that the focus is shifted away from a transformative social agenda to the problems facing a minority of the population with multiple problems and towards individualized or localized assistance” (ibid;20). Therefore, this top-down approach further creates dependency of civil society on northern NGOs and accountability to foreign donors.

In sum, these three parts of the theoretical framework are connected. Using two theoretical lenses to analyze the practices of international support to a liberal notion of civil society. The theoretical proposition is that international support to civil society is altering lines of accountability creating a rather vertical relation between international NGOs and domestic civil society. Top-down approaches such as “capacity-building” and the local cooptation of civil society by local elites are in fact weakening the role of civil society by further the gap with local communities. This impact on civil society is widening the gap between state and population and contributing to the “phantom state”, a state that has international support but little legitimacy in the eyes of its population. This framework will be applied to the case study of Haiti in order to demonstrate that international NGOs who are supporting civil society have the potential to skew and alter channels of accountability towards an upward accountability to international institutions and not horizontally to the state.

5. ANALYSIS

This thesis body is divided into three main sections. The first section examines the history of civil society in Haiti, how it first emerged following the Duvalier dictatorship and how it was transformed and ‘co-opted’ by local elites and supported by international actors in 2003. The second section discusses the practice of ‘capacity-building’ in its use in building civil society through international NGOs. The sub-sections discuss how this model leads to the financial and technical dependency of local NGOs on foreign donors and their priorities ultimately leading to difficult partnerships with the state. And the third section will examine how international NGOs are further entrenching the phantom state; a state that is capture by its international institutions and its foreign donors.

5.1 Transforming civil society in Haiti

The theoretical framework of this study will demonstrate how the concept of democratic civil society can be co-opted by groups of local elites in promoting their interests, entrenching their influence. First looking at the case of Haiti and the history of an emerging civil society in the earlier 1990s following the Duvalier regime.

5.1.1 Understanding civil society in Haiti

After the fall of the Duvalier dictatorship in 1986, a plethora of civic and community organizations in rural and urban areas exploded onto the public arena. The culture of “popular associations” blossomed in Haiti and filled a void left by the government and sought to communicate neighborhood and community demands for changes in government. As Peter Hallward explains; “resistance to the Duvalier’s predatory thugs grew steadily over the 1980s, nurtured by small, informal organizations – *organisations populaires* – which emerged to defend their communities and to help arrange some of the basic social services that the state was unwilling or unable to provide” (ibid; 15).

Between 1986 and the first elected government in 1991 under President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, civil society began to take shape, some with more developmental type objectives and other with more political directions, calling on human rights, land distribution and denouncing corruption (Human Rights Watch 1993). By the early 1990s, major social groupings had emerged and consolidated as voices and representatives of the poor majority, such as the media, women’s organizations, university organizations and peasant organizations that are still today considered part of the grassroots social movements in Haiti. These ‘popular organizations’ form elected committees that provide a wide range of community services ranging from trash management, adult education, roads construction and organizing agricultural support (Levin 1995; 425 and Anonymous source from Canadian Embassy; May 2010). The strength of civil society in Haiti is “the breadth and diversity outside the narrow realm of electoral politics” (Human Rights Watch 1993).

The post-Duvalier era also marked the popular empowerment of the subordinate class in Haiti (Fattouh 2007; 223). The poor masses systematically tried to erase all that was represented Duvalierism through *déchoukaj* (uprooting) and declared that they were no longer prepared to accept the current social order (ibid; 223). Between 1986-1988, Jean Bertrand Aristide, a dynamic priest from the slums of Cité Soleil, became the leading figure of the “tiz legliz” movement (little church movement) inspired by liberation theology; a message of social justice for the poor. Popular organizations and supporters of the ‘tiz legliz’ stood behind Aristide in order to defend themselves against paramilitary

assaults. From this social movement, Aristide formed the Lavalas movement and later a political party called, 'Fanm Lavalas' in 1995. This new chapter in Haiti's history marked the beginning of a political and social movement that was against *Duvalisme*. This movement challenged the traditional forms of power exercised by the state and its elites. Even after the fall of the Duvalier regime, many who supported and profited from his authoritarian regime remained in the system through economic and political ties. Haitian specialist Trouillot, has researched how the Duvalier apparatus persisted in politics and society, identifying two characteristics of control that would continue in Haitian politics; the use of violence by the state and the centralization of power at the executive level. (Trouillot 1990). This was at the heart of what Aristide tried to change when he was first elected President in 1990. By 1994, he had abolished the military and began his campaign against everything that represented the Duvalier regime. 'The Duvalierist state has its roots deep in the organization of Haitian society itself. Trouillot claiming that; "Similar regimes will inevitably succeed each other unless the relation between state and civil society is reformulated" (ibid; 228). "In Haiti, political consensus never permeated the entire society, both because of the age-old isolation of the peasantry and because of the merchant bourgeoisie's inability to become hegemonic" (Trouillot 1990 ;188). When Aristide took power through Haiti's first democratic elections in 1990, he challenged the three forces that are essential to Haitian political life; the army, the elite/bourgeoisie and foreign interests. (Mobekk 2001; 173).

According to Peter Hallward, the rise of the Lavalas movement and the Famni Lavalas party was also the beginning of a strong anti-Aristide opposition, backed by foreign money. The very strength of civil society in Haiti was used to form a 'democratic opposition' against the Aristide government. These facts are still controversial but one thing is for sure, civil society became a force that divided public opinion and civic organizations, it became a place of power struggles between pro and anti-Aristide partisans. Civil society became highly politicized and 2004 was the culminating point when Aristide lost control of the country and was forced to resign.

5.1.2 Co-opting civil society - Le 'Groupe 184'

As stated by Peter Hallward, “Few things are more urgently needed for a better understanding of contemporary Haitian politics than a detailed analysis of the precise economic and ideological role of the non-governmental organizations that now play such a big part in the administration of the country” (ibid; 177). His research exposes the challenges facing the NGO community in Haiti; “Rather than the army or state bureaucracies, NGOs now provide the main institutional and ideological mechanism for the reproduction of Haiti’s ruling class” (ibid; 181). The NGO sector in Haiti reflects the social and political cleavages in the country and currently serves to consolidate the power of the ruling class as opposed to challenging their hegemony. In an interview with a former candidate of the Senatorial elections in 2009; “the system of civil society and NGOs is an illusion of participation, because the system is continuously managed and lead by the dominant class in Haiti” (Interview with Rudy; July 2009).

As a case in point in Haiti’s current history was the creation of the ‘Groupe 184’ in the beginning of 2000s. This network of NGOs and members of the private sector completely rocked the foundation of what was to be known as civil society in Haiti and its use as a “democratic opposition” to the government in place under Aristide. In 2003, 184 civil society organizations, including the major human rights and women’s organizations, some student groups, unions, and business associations formed a coalition group, the “Groupe 184”, to call for Aristide’s resignation. This split civil society between the influential, foreign funded organizations and pro-Aristide groups, against the anti-Aristide groups who claimed that the G-184 represented mostly the interests of business and elite interests. While the group emphasized human rights violations under the Aristide regime, they were accused of not speaking out against massive human rights violations against Aristide supporters under the transitional government (2004-2006), once Aristide was ousted in 2004 (Hallward 2006). The configuration of this network was perceived by the international community as representing the variety of civil society actors in Haiti, legitimate and representative of Haitian society. As stated by Rights and Democracy, an independent body of the Canadian government for the promotion of Human Rights; “Representatives of various sectors of civil society have formed a group

known as the “Group of 184” in an effort to create a space for mediation between the political formations. Announcing their dismay at the irresponsible discourse emanating from both sides of the political spectrum, the members of this group agreed on a “new social contract” based on certain general principles” (Rights and Democracy 2004). However, what was mostly controversial about this group was its members and its spokesman. André Apaid, headed the Foundation, “Fondation Nouvelle Haiti” and for many Haitians he represented the business sector as the Apaid family owned in fact the largest textile companies in Haiti and was opposed to Aristide’s policy to increase the national minimum wage (Hallward 2006). The “Groupe 184” also included political parties such as ‘Convergence démocratique’. Rights and Democracy later states that; “Although some Group of 184 members are associated with the political opposition, the movement as a whole is perceived as being separate from it.” (Rights and Democracy; 2003). What is controversial to some is that many NGOs who were part of this group, were in fact funded by international NGOs and donors such as CIDA, USAID and the French government (Hallward 2006, Interview with Jean Saint-Vil, May 2010, Anonymous source at Canada Embassy, May 2010). This controversial group did not necessarily represent one voice in civil society, and they did not necessarily represent the majority of the populations discontent with the Aristide government. (Interview with Jean Saint-Vil 2010 and Hallward 2006). The group claimed to reconcile various political positions. However, many believe that this was not a pluralist voice of democracy and the interests that were represented were questionable (Interview with Chalmers 2010 and Saint-Vil 2010). According to Peter Hallward, once Aristide was re-elected in 2000, this was a clear threat to the dominant class that controls Haiti. The opposition needed other means to mobilize the international community against the Lavalas movement. NGOs became highly politicized and were targeted in “the recruitment of suitably “pluralist” representatives of the business sector and civil society, including members of internationally validated non-governmental organizations, which might be presented as a legitimate opposition to the government” (ibid; 75). Creating such a strong opposition to the government completely polarized the nation between pro and anti Aristide supporters. This widened the gap between rich and poor not only on a level of class, power and riches but also on an ideological level.

Women's groups were strong players in the "Groupe 184" and are perceived as being part of the grassroots movement in Haiti. According to Camille Chalmers and Jean Saint-Vil, leading organizations in the women's movement were "coopted" into the political campaign against Aristide. "Overlapping women's groups like SOFA, ENFOFANM and CONAP were all on the IRI/USAID/CIDA pay roll, and all were to play an important role in the disinformation campaign" (Hallward 2007; 101). In an interview with Camille Chalmers, executive director of a leading advocacy NGO in Haiti, PAPDA, Chalmers explains how he has reservations about the use of the term 'civil society' in Haitian politics and how it becomes a 'catch-all' term to understanding anything that is 'not' the state in Haiti (Interview with Chalmers, April 2010). This confusion or lack of understanding has led to a manipulation of the term, where some Haitian organisations have presented themselves as civil society actors, but are actually very closely linked to political state dynamics and who are funded internationally. However, on the local scene they are perceived as completely different and deemed actually legitimate and independent from the state. Chalmers believes that this has led to a certain manipulation and distortion of the role that civil society should play in Haiti. As he explains;

'This distortion of civil society is seen in Haiti's history and this is why I have reservations about civil society in Haiti. It is not accepted as a clear concept and it has been manipulated in various ways. An important event that has marked civil society in Haiti was the creation of the civil society network in 2002-2003 with the 'Group 184' that was ultimately dominated by the business community in Haiti. This group had a fundamental role in controlling the organisations in society and how to control the "social dynamics" emerging in Haiti. There was the contribution of the external domination, such as the United States. I believe this was an attempt to control the emerging social dynamics' (Chalmers; April 7, 2010).

Other authors have also commented on this control of social dynamics in Haiti under the name of 'civil society'. As Yasmie Shamie has observed; "a careful reading of Haitian history reveals that keeping certain sectors of civil society weak and disorganized was one way that the country's elite were able to prevent the establishment of democracy and to preserve a system of surplus extraction which enriched them while ensuring that the rest of the country remained improvised and politically marginalized" (Shamsie 2004; 1106). Again, the shift in foreign funding to various actors in civil society in the name of

developing a liberal civil society for democracy development contributed in changing the landscape of civil society (CIDA 2009, USAID 2009) It became a new site of power and social control. According to Shamsie, international donors and multilateral institutions supported mostly one political current in civil society in the 1990s to early 2000s. International aid went to a group in Haitian society who represented for the international community “agents of change” and “democratization”, continuing their long relationship with the elite class of Haiti. “Washington’s civil society assistance supported two processes simultaneously: developing a modernized Haitian elite while countering and neutralizing the impact of the growing number of popular organizations in civil society” (ibid; 1107).

Essentially, the alliances that formed between Haitian NGOs and international NGOs during the early 2000s was in fact the ‘local cooptation’ of international support to NGOs using of course the international language of liberal “civil society”. This corresponds to the theoretical framework of this study in how local cooptation of civil society can lead to the creation of a ‘new elite’, an NGO class that follows donor priorities. Many Haitian NGOs that took part in the “Groupe 184” and individuals members may have represented some grassroots movements that where against Aristide, but the main representatives were quite familiar with the international community and its positions. Today, the ‘Groupe 184’ no longer exists and yet many of these organizations still remain operational and are still being funded by the same donors.

5.2 ‘Capacity Building’ of Haiti - International NGOs and civil society

When international actors view building civil society as a technical task, such as organizational capacity of NGOs or service delivery, it can overlook the politics related to civil society, who it represents and the power relationships between actors.

Unwittingly, international support to local NGOs can also solidify the power of elite-based political institutions and create new power struggles within civil society, as seen in the first section of this study (Mertus and Sajjad 2005). The politics of “capacity-building” from the statebuilding process in Haiti have been adopted by international NGOs. In the same way that “capacity-building” of the socially excluded avoids a certain

social and political responsibility of international actors, the impact of international support to civil society in Haiti is the creation of a new “NGO class” which is fragmenting and dividing society civil actors. In addition, foreign aid is increasing dependency through top-down approaches rather than local engagement and accountability mechanisms linked to international NGOs rather than between citizens and the state.

Many actors in the international community feel that Haiti’s woes lie mostly in the state’s inability to govern, its lack of ‘capacity’ to implement its laws, public policies and regulations (IMF 2009, CIDA 2009, USAID 2009). The Haitian government has long struggled with corruption, weak rule of law, questionable electoral processes and violence, unfair land distribution, and lack of public education and health infrastructures. (Herrmann; 2007, Winters; 2008). As such, Timothy Donais’ analysis of international statebuilding in Haiti exposes the problem with capacity-building of state institutions and the underlining the liberal assumptions of this somewhat technical discourse in Haiti.

“While few would question the relevance of capacity-building efforts in the Haitian context, it is striking that state-building has been understood within the relatively narrow and technical confines of capacity-building. To a certain extent, this underlines the extent to which the main outlines of the liberal peace project have assumed a taken-for-granted quality. For in reality, capacity-building is not simply a value-neutral exercise in technical training and physical reconstruction, but an inherently political process” (Donais 2009; 767).

“Capacity-building” is simply not a technical affair; state design is value driven and represents a means to penetrating state institutions influencing how they function, who controls them and whom they will serve. Donais continues by stating; “In the case of Haiti, however, capacity-building is the means deployed in pursuit of a given set of liberal ends; indeed, the fact that the current international intervention is backed by no formal peace agreement underlines the extent to which liberal goals have been externally decreed rather than locally negotiated” (ibid). The discourse and practices of “capacity-building” has in fact given a lot of power to international actors and has somewhat

implicitly embedded both social and institutional engineering goals within the rhetoric of capacity-building.

As external actors try to “strengthen” state institutions in building a liberal state, international NGOs are for the most part mandated to work with civil society actors in building their capacities in being an oversight of public institutions and to promote civic participation and a liberal democratic civil society (example of USAID program; 2009). Like the state, civil society is described as weak, divided, not sufficiently organized to mobilize the population and unable to promote civic participation (Winters 2008; 300). Therefore, many local NGOs have become subject to ‘capacity building’ and ‘technical assistance’ by the donor community (Interview with Bucher, Gérin-Lajoie and Turmine 2010). In response, international NGOs have also subscribed to the politics of statebuilding in Haiti and have centered their activities on ‘capacity-building’ of their local partners. As one project officer from the Canadian NGO ‘Development and Peace’ explains; “we support the grassroots organizations in their organizational capacity in order for them to analyze their situation and identify their needs. When people live in these types of conditions, you can not only concentrate on in providing basic needs, its about accompanying these organizations in their analysis of their needs and to help with their long-term vision to fulfill their needs”. (Interview Bucher; May 2010). This large Canadian NGO supports civil society actors such as peasant organisations, women and youth organizations, those who are considered the most excluded in Haitian society but also the most organized in providing basic services to their communities (Smith 2001). This same discourse of ‘capacity-building’ used by international NGOs has in fact lead to a cycle of financial, technical and even psychological dependency.

5.2.1 Proliferation of NGOs and aid dependency

Large amounts of foreign aid delivered to post-conflict states, have contributed to the proliferation of international NGOs, as they become the implementing agents for donors (Schuller 2007a). In addition, cycles of dependency emerge from foreign donors deciding and controlling agendas of local NGOs through project cycles, funding patterns and western accountability models (Mertus and Sajjad 2005). It is now estimated that 3,000

international NGOs work in Haiti and over 10,000 in local organisations are active. With a population of only 9 million, Haiti is now known to have the highest NGO rate per capita (Global Policy Forum 2010). Legitimacy and visibility of the Haitian state is being ‘choked’ by the sheer number of international NGOs currently working in Haiti.

In a doctoral research by Alix Cantave’s, the proliferation of NGOs in Haiti occurred after the fall of the Duvalier Regime, due in large part by the renewed political openness in the Haitian political system following 30 years of dictatorship and an increase in foreign aid challenged directly through northern NGOs. He argues that international and large NGOs in Haiti are primary foreign aid contractors and are not necessary locally grounded or participatory. NGOs are poorly regulated and virtually unaccountable for to any Haitian institutions. In all, NGOs in Haiti are perceived as an extension of the international community and do not have long-term interest in the development of the country and changing structural causes of poverty in Haiti. (Cantave 2006; Pierre-Étienne 1997; Schuller; 2007) The interviews conducted for this study have also revealed that NGO proliferation in Haiti is also caused by; 1) an increase in American sponsored NGOs – church based NGOs 2) private funds from the Haitian diaspora 3) private funding from small charitable initiatives from various countries and 4) an increase in foreign aid to NGOs by-passing the state. Robert McGuire was the first to coin the term ‘Republic of NGOs’ to describe the proliferation of the NGO sector in Haiti. This was also to describe how there also lacked coordination and accountability amongst donors and implementers (NGOs). McGuire stipulates that; “The Haitian private sector and, to a lesser extent, national NGOs and grassroots groups also received support. Donors sought out local collaborators, both as a substitute for inefficient and corrupt government channels and to influence their program priorities” (ibid; 21). According to his working paper, in the early 1990s, there were already over a thousand NGOs working in Haiti and an array of local grassroots groups looking for foreign support were emerging implementing small scale projects that did not bring any sustainable change in the ordinary lives of Haitians. In addition, “international NGOs were often affiliated with Haiti’s economic, political, and religious elites, often employing Haitians from the country’s leading families” (ibid).

In the 1990s, with a political crisis unfolding, many donors felt that their aid dollars would be better spent through NGO channels. This practice continues in the aid system today in Haiti and has contributed to the proliferation of NGOs and the weakness of the Haitian state. As explained by Yasmine Shamsie, in order to continue supporting “democracy”, the international community and donors alike, shifted their aid and began to channel more aid through NGOs, leaving the government with few resources and little legitimacy” (ibid; 543). Foreign aid channelled through NGOs has systematically weakened and decapitated the state by ‘robbing states of policy autonomy’¹¹ (Reimann 2005; 47). Since the approach of most international NGOs in Haiti is to strengthen the role of civil society through capacity building and foreign financing, this has irrevocably lead to questions of dependence and power relations in the relationship between international NGOs and their local partners. As exposed in Sauveur Pierre Étienne’s thesis on NGOs in Haiti, he points to the relation of dependence that characterize the North-South relations in the field of development that are reproduced in the relations between northern NGOs and Haitian NGOs. He states; “we can affirm that Haitian NGOs, not being able to survive without financing from foreign organizations, will try to choose partners that meet their ideological criteria” (Pierre-Étienne 1997; 182). He also gives examples of Haitian NGOs created by northern NGOs initiatives. He considers them as simply extensions of foreign NGOs that support them, questioning the entirety of their independence.

Mark Schuller argues in his doctoral research on NGOs in Haiti that NGOs provide legitimacy to globalization. They represent an alternative delivery mechanism for development replacing the state, which has been fragmented by neoliberal policies. “International NGOs act as ‘gap-filler’, they are intermediaries, a buffer between elites and impoverished masses and can present institutional barriers against local participation and priority setting” (Schuller 2007a). Essentially, donor decision-making is subcontracted to northern NGOs. With the overwhelming amounts of international NGOs in Haitian civil society, for Schuller Haitian civil society has become a foreign

¹¹ Recent Critics of NGOs is well summarized by Kim D. Reimann –see bibliography.

promotion of civil society as opposed to something rooted in Haitian society. This is because access to funds must go through international NGOs, if not smaller local NGOs have difficulties accessing knowledge of the international aid system. This has also creates what Schuller calls the phenomenon of the “NGO class”. “In Haiti, there is a popular conception of a *klas ONG* (NGO class). This is a play on the term *klas politik*, the self-named “political class,” as well as recognition of NGOs’ increasing centrality. The NGO class is not quite “for itself” but also not quite engaged in false consciousness; here however, the NGO class may be a class “for itself,” sharing common interests with their benefactors, without whom this class could not exist” (Schuller 2009 ;92). As such, this is a donor-dependant class of NGOs, they represent rather the ideologies and priorities of their donors. This NGO class has lost for the most part its links with the grassroots movement in Haiti.

5.2.2 NGO collaboration with Haitian authorities

Interviews conducted for this study seem to indicate however that some practices are slowly changing in how NGOs work with the Haitian government and vice versa. Most interviewees had noticed the shift in the discourse since presidential elections in 2006 and an increase in the collaboration between NGOs and Haitian authorities. “There seem to be recognition from both government officials and citizens that civil society and the state need to communicate and work together” (Interview with anonymous source at Canadian Embassy; May 2010).

The reality in Haiti is that international NGOs are providing for more than 70% of basic services in the country, such as sanitary infrastructure, primary education and health services. Therefore, the role between state and NGOs are blurred and coordination is not done in a formal matter. Coordination is an important leadership role by government officials in order to gain a strategic vision of international efforts under their mandate. As one interview indicated, the shift in how NGOs and donors are collaborating with Haitian authorities as opposed to their substitution is having interesting results in increasing the visibility of Haitian officials. It is developing the role of local and municipal authorities to coordinate, being responsive to the needs of their communities

and therefore creating more sustainability in term of maintaining initiatives once international NGOs have ended their projects (Interview with Anonymous source from Canadian Embassy, May 2010). To illustrate this shift in collaboration, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has developed a comprehensive Center for Local Initiatives (CGF) in support of community projects with smaller NGOs and “popular organizations”. Essentially, the CGF gives access to funds up to \$500,000 for small to medium community projects. One of these initiatives is “Bati Lavie” (build life), with a mandate to reduce poverty in the shantytowns of Cité Soleil (outskirts of Port-au-Prince) and the city of Gonaives that suffered political violence when Aristide was ousted in 2004. With 13 active projects in 2008-2009, the projects essentially aim to increase access to basic services such as rehabilitation of sanitary infrastructure, educational services and urban agriculture and to create local employment in the community.

What is particular about the structure of this fund is its direct funding to local community organizations that do not necessarily pass by the intermediary of an international NGOs. This fund also has a good monitoring structure by using local staff from these communities to do follow-ups and has been successful in involving local municipalities and department level authorities in the choice of these sub projects and major decision-making. In the 2008-2009 annual report for Bati Lavi, the conclusion was made that the initiative had increased the visibility of the local authorities at the national and local level through these community projects. The Haitian Minister of External Planning and the Mayor of both Cité Soleil and Gonaives were actively involved in the start-up of the projects, in addition to having the Mayors involved in the monitoring of projects and insuring their input in the choice of areas of interventions (CGF 2009; 12). In 2009-2010, the annual report also indicated that the municipal authorities from Cité Soleil and Gonaives were again actively involved in the execution of the projects, in addition to the choice of projects. In one sub-project to build walkways in Cité Soleil, local authorities insured that garbage collection was maintained and provided for the project. More so, the CGF provided basic materials and equipment to the regional department for authorities to increase their coordination capacities. This allowed authorities at the regional level to take on their leadership role in their respective sectors and avoid duplication of efforts

and overlap in the choices of sites of various NGOs working in the region. This minimized their losses and allowed department authorities to promote the complementariness of the various interventions (CGF 2010; 29). The report states that an overall coordination by local authorities increased the exchanges between partners and help the government develop common strategies in the sector of agriculture and community employment (ibid). As explained by one interviewee who worked with community organizations for more than twenty years, “There has definitely been a beginning or realisation of this notion that the state is responsible for its population. Popular groups are now more aware and more educated about the state’s responsibilities. Community organisations are able to raise their voices and claim to the fact that local authorities have a role to play in how they organise themselves” (Interview with anonymous source, Canadian Embassy, May 2010).

As this project demonstrates, with some improvements in Haiti between NGOs and state collaboration, this has the potential to increase the visibility and responsiveness of the state to civil society organizations. Individual initiatives by NGOs can be successful but on a larger scale there has essentially been an ideological backlash of their role and the practices used to support civil society. In the end, “the rise of the NGOs as the agents of development to deliver services and promote democracy par excellence might have been achieved at the cost of the legitimacy of the state” (White 1999; 308).

5.3 The ‘Phantom’ state in Haiti; widening the gap between state-society

Through the lens of the theoretical framework, states that are subject to the international practices of statebuilding experience blurred sovereignty lines between domestic and international actors (Chandler 2006). In Haiti, the state has become the administrative body of international actors, national and international systems become so intertwined that responsibility becomes blurred and issues of accountability are contested. International NGOs are further entrenching this phenomenon as the Haitian state “lacks the formal capacity to formulate and implement public policy independently from the assistance of international institutions” (Chandler 2006). This dilemma between national and international actors also applies to the work of international NGOs. These

international organizations contribute to the phantom state as they weaken both the state and local organizations with more visibility, legitimacy and essentially accountability mechanisms to international institutions rather than to the population.

5.3.1 Understanding the Haitian state – a state “divorced” from the nation

Historically, the Haitian state can be defined as a “phantom state”. Since its independence in 1804, Haiti was built around a nation, an outward looking state subject to international pressures mostly from western powers such as the US. (Trouillot 1990; Fatton 2006). The weakness of the Haitian state runs deep, going back to colonial times of a slave economy (Levin 1997). Following its triumphant independence from France in 1804 as the first black republic to formally abolish slavery, state-society relations in Haiti were scarred with one of mutual mistrust and complete disconnection. As researched by a Haitian institution; “when the state developed a form of internal colonization of its own citizens. At the same time, it was creating an external image, and forming contacts with the outside world instead of with the local population, even less with the rural world” (Karl Lévêque Cultural Institution 2006; 21). It was not until 1825 that France recognized Haitian independence, with the condition of 150 million francs as indemnity for the loss of France’s most profitable colony (Schuller 2007; 71). In order to pay for the cost of its military and its new debt, the Haitian government was forced to accept a loan from a private French bank that would require 80 percent of the state’s revenue. (ibid). In order to service the debt, “the Haitian state implemented an indirect tax on the peasantry, taxing in large part the coffee industry, a crop grown by smallholding Haitian farmers” (Trouillot 1990:62). This was the beginning of the oppression of Haitian state against its nation, against its peasant population.

With the US occupation of Haiti between 1914-1934 and the rise of the Duvalier dictatorship, the new elites supported a centralized state that further pushed the rural majority towards political marginalization. The Haitian state became a “predatory state” where the majority of peasants knew the state mainly through local tax collectors and the rural militia called the “tontons matous”. These were the rural militia incorporated into the army structure that controlled and oppressed the population and played a leading role

in pacifying the rural populations (Levin 1995). These important historical events have marked the relations between society and the state in Haiti, in addition to the rivalries within the elite class. The Haitian state, controlled mainly by elites has traditionally and historically excluded the rural population from political society and denied their participation in all types of decision-making that would affect their lives. (Herrmann 2007; Fatton 2006). This includes access to land, agricultural reforms and access to education in Creole (Trouillot 1990). Even today, a small minority of 1% of the population controls more than 40% of national resources and has maintained a state system that essentially ignores the majority of the peasant population to support a small rich elite and international organizations that support them (Trouillot 1990).

Sophie Herrmann describes very well the weakness of the Haitian state through three dimensions; the relationship between state and its social institutions (rural), government and society (endogenous); the interaction between the international level and the state, such as international interventions and global economy (exogenous); and the historical dimension of these processes (ibid; 52). What is interesting however between these endogenous and exogenous factors, is that the historical dimensions of state weakness in African states evolved rather from colonialism and not based on pre-existing local and indigenous societies (ibid). In Haiti, slaves were imported from Africa. Even more so, exogenous factors have continued to weaken the state through various forms. “Therefore, endogenous factors as identified in the literature on state weakness apply only partly to the Haitian case, while exogenous factors can be said to play a role in exacerbating factors that make the state effective for some and weak for others that don’t participate and benefit from the state institutions” (ibid;52). Therefore, state weakness in Haiti is mainly characterized by the fact that institutions are not accountable to the majority of the population but rather to the ruling elite, which instrumentalizes these institutions. This has led to socio-economic cleavages and foreign interventions have exacerbated the situation of state and society who are already at odds. This lack of legitimacy of the state and social cohesion in Haiti is at the heart of the country’s social and political conflicts and the “divorce” of the Haitian state from its nation (Interview with Chalmers; May 2010). Without being sensitive to these historical factors of existing state weakness in

Haiti, international NGOs continue to entrench the “phantom state”, a state lacking legitimacy in the eyes of its population.

5.3.2 Accountability, legitimacy and visibility of international NGOs

The legitimacy of international NGOs ultimately “rests on their claims to being closer to the people in partnership with their national partners ; they are “local” (Fisher 1997:454). Yet, the accountability of international NGOs is mainly to their donors, foreign donors. In Haiti, international “NGOs are either implicitly or explicitly challenging the state’s capacity to govern in its competition for financing and resources from foreign donors” (Schuller 2007a). This duality has an impact on the legitimacy and visibility of the state and to whom national officials are truly accountable to.

The population’s perception of international NGOs is that they have money, power, influence and means to give them what they need to survive, whether it’s the state or NGOs, as long as they get what they need (Interview with Josué; July 2009 and Saint-Vil; May 2010). In some ways, NGOs have set themselves up as an authority in the eyes of the people. In a recent public opinion poll funded by Oxfam, Haitians of all classes were surveyed about humanitarian actions carried out after the January 12 earthquake. Overall, “42.6% of those who participated in the survey thought that the Haitian government’s response was not efficient. Only 13.3% were favorable or very favorable to the government’s intervention” (Yves Pierre March 2010; 22). However, “the majority of participants (71.3%) thought highly of the interventions made by foreign governments, foreign armies, and international NGOs” (ibid). As for local NGOs it is stated; “the assistance from local NGOs, the high percentage of ‘no answer’ (40.8%), probably reflects their low participation in the emergency response” (ibid). It is to be noted that those opinions reflect Haitians’ perceptions post-earthquake and these opinions could change at any moment depending on how events evolve. But as stated in the conclusion of the study, “ the results of the survey finally point out the lack of trust in the State-citizen relations” (ibid; 24). Even though this is post-earthquake Haiti, it demonstrates the struggles of state legitimacy and power over international actors. This was also highlighted in an interview with Jean Saint-Vil, a militant for Haiti Action Canada

Network who has lived and worked in Haiti throughout the 1990s; “on one level, Haitians have more confidence in NGOs because these organisations have the means to provide to the population. The state does not have these means. For example, before the 2004 coup d’état, the state had a national budget of \$300 million. Therefore, first and foremost the Haitian government does not have the financial capacity to actually provide to its population” (Interview with Jean Saint-Vil May 2010). In addition, many international consultants from NGOs are hired to work within the central ministries, as Jean Saint-Vil experienced while working for the Ministry of Environment in 1997. He witnessed many international consultants openly questioning the legitimacy of the Minister and in effect exercised personal influence in policy making and capacity building. In his opinion, “international institutions and their staff have a lot of power, and they are aware of their power. In addition, the population can see this and sense the power and influence that these institutions have, it is part of the population’s perception of legitimacy” (ibid).

States gain legitimacy from both international actors and from domestic actors. “In the domestic realm, legitimacy derives from a belief among the state’s people that public institutions possess rightful authority to govern. This is the essence of legitimacy” (Paris 2006;15) Legitimacy is a subjective quality that essentially comes down to the perceptions of a society and its citizens about the state and its formal institutions. As defined by Bruce Gilley, “a state is more legitimate the more that it is treated by its citizens as rightfully holding and exercising political power” (ibid; 48). “It takes the state and how it holds and exercises political power as the relevant object” (ibid). Pierre Englebert shares this view and argues that; “a state is deemed legitimate when it has evolved endogenously to local social relations of power and authority or when, having originally been imported, it is then absorbed by such pre-existing endogenous institutions” (Englebert; 72). This latter approach to legitimacy is important in order for post-conflict states to reduce its fragility (Bellina 2009).

Therefore, questions of visibility of the state are also important in contributing to state legitimacy in the eyes of the Haitian population. The visibility between foreign donors, NGOs and government officials is always delicate question and ultimately boils down to

political visibility and who takes credits for development initiatives. As discussed with Jean Saint-Vil; “ for example, all infrastructure projects will have donor ‘stickers’ plastered all over project material. This results in a lack of visibility of the government. Ultimately it looks like the government is absent. Sometimes Haitian officials will have a ‘laissez-faire’ attitude and then people have the perception that the state is simply doing nothing, and that all the money spent comes from internationals. But what is happening is that people are complaisant in reproducing this reality” (Jean Saint-Vil May 2010). In the end, this sends a clear message to the population and communicates to them that international organisations are providing services and that they are in charge and legitimate actors. As studied by Mark Schuller, NGOs become alternatives to the state in implementing development projects and services. His study suggest that problems lies in; “private, often foreign NGOs are not beholden to the same logic of public, civic responsibility. If an NGO engaged in a government task, like trash cleanup, the results were never sustainable; they became dependent on the decision of foreign donors, not responsive to the will of the people as citizens” (Schuller 2007). This leads to an important criticism of the aid system and ultimately how NGOs work within this system; the system of accountability.

The literature on NGOs and civil society, especially in post-conflict societies, points to the need to rethink practices of “mutual accountability” between donors and recipients of external funding. Western accountability models based on results and performance creates a direct line to international donors, these systems of accountability divert attention away from local constituents (Mertus and Sajjad 2005). “Channels of accountability are privileged with the relation with donors leading to NGOs losing their legitimacy and local base with grassroots organizations” (ibid; 564). Mertus and Sajjad, have identified two dimensions of accountability that become skewed “horizontal (decision-making in government) and vertical (citizens control the government)”. For the state, this ultimately leads to; “the advocacy role of civil society is better exercised by pressuring international civil servants rather than local political leaders” (ibid;123). Not only are local NGOs accountable to international NGOs in the foreign aid they receive, but many government officials also become accountable to the donors in their

responsibilities to the projects and programs executed by various international agencies. When asked the question during research interviews on issues of accountability, many NGO workers responded quickly with an emphasis on accountability to their local partners. However, many also felt that accountability lines to their donors were equally important because these were the sources of their funding. Various lines of accountability is time consuming and makes it difficult to truly knowing the realities of recipients in local communities and at the same time showing 'results' to donors. As one NGO director stated; "I think that our strength is to be accountable to our local partner, to the local authorities. I think that is what you are talking about, its a technical thing. I think its normal to have to make reports and be accountable to your partners. But in the end, our accountability I think is to the Canadian taxpayer. Accountability is about the Canadian public, it is also a technical thing and we must do it and we have to do it right" (Interview with Gérin-Lajoie; May 2010). Because this is viewed as a technical aspect, the system of accountability ultimately does not encourage true partnership and mutual accountability in north-south relationships. It is rather a one-way accountability, south to north.

To illustrate the issue of "accountability" in Haiti and the channels of accountability in the aid system, this part examines an Oxfam-Québec project in Haiti on environmental management and community development. This five-year project with a budget of \$10 million (CDN) ended in June 2010. It was evaluated by CIDA in December 2009 in order to help with further programming in agricultural. This was a cross boarder project between Dominican Republic and Haiti aimed at rehabilitating the Artibonite watershed region. Its objective was; "to improving the livelihoods of the surrounding populations living in the boarder area" (i.e. increase revenue, and stimulate local economy, food security, etc) (CIDA 2009; 3). Areas of interventions were through 1) agricultural production system 2) the infrastructure to support this production system 3) environmental conservation 4) environmental education. This project was executed through nine sub projects all managed under the umbrella of Oxfam-Québec. These nine sub projects are executed and monitored by four different NGOs, two international NGOs and two local NGOs. According to the evaluation, in total these sub-projects still had 85% of available budget not yet disbursed for the portion in Haiti and 75% for the portion

in Dominican Republic (ibid; 10). The evaluation concluded that one major problem in the execution of the project was the structure of the project and the modes of operation. The fundamental problem was the delegated responsibilities at three levels; CIDA's accountability was delegated to Oxfam-Québec who is responsible for the results of the project and the proper use of funds; Oxfam-Québec's accountability is then partly delegated to local NGOs for the execution of these sub-projects; local NGOs than work with other local partners or local businesses to realize some of their particular activities in the communities. Ultimately, this chain of accountability is common with international NGOs and how they operate; this leaves the recipients and the communities involved, as passive recipients who do not benefit from any accountability mechanisms. In addition, according to the evaluation there was very little hands on involvement from government officials, only monitoring officers. This environmental project with an important component of 'local development' has not put the accountability in the hands of the communities even though the goal is to improve the livelihoods of surrounding population living close to the broader. This important conclusion of the evaluation demonstrated how many intermediaries and delegated accountability in the structure of the project was an obstacle to executing the sub-projects, as most of the available budget was not yet disbursed and not responding to the needs of communities.

This section attempts to demonstrate that when legitimacy and visibility of international NGOs comes at the expense of the state while also creating upward accountability to foreign donors and not communities, international NGOs can weaken the role of civil society. In sum, the approaches used by international NGOs to support a domestic civil society have contributed to entrenching an already "phantom" state. During one interview with a long time NGO worker in Haiti, in his opinion "the Haitian state is a 'pseudo state' that has the basic institutions but is not able to perform its core functions" (Interview with Côté, May 2010). He concluded the interview stating that; "after the earthquake the state was completely surpassed and its not for nothing that the Haitians handed part of their sovereignty to the Interim Commission for the Reconstruction of Haiti" (ibid).

6. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that current international support to a liberal sense of civil society is in fact hindering the statebuilding process in Haiti and essentially contributing to the “phantom” state. By using the case study of Haiti to build theoretical constructs in the framework, the study reveals that international NGOs who mostly support local NGOs are in fact weakening the role of civil society against state domination by being more accountable to its foreign partners than its domestic constituency. In addition, foreign financing can indirectly weaken the role of civil society by creating dependency, social fragmentation and altering channels of accountability through top-down approaches of capacity building. By applying a theoretical framework that emphasizes on the impact of international engagements on state-civil society relations, this research has contributed a new proposition on the tensions that exist in the approaches to international statebuilding and international support to civil society. By using two different theoretical lenses to analysis a liberal democratic civil society in a post-conflict context, this sheds light on both international statebuilding and civil society as less binary but in fact highly interrelated.

Following the original question of this research: How is international support to civil society impacting the process of statebuilding? In the case of Haiti, do international NGOs strengthen or weaken the state through their support to civil society? In summary, this study has found several key findings:

1. International support to civil society is supporting a liberal concept of “civil society” in its relation to the state. The assumption is that civil society can strengthen the state in the process of democratization. However, the notion of civil society can be transformed and even manipulated in the interest of local actors who hold power and influence and can ‘speak’ the language of the donor community. In the case of Haiti, the popular notion of civil society was used to help discredit the Aristide government, essentially fragmenting Haitian society and helped justify an international peacekeeping mission with a strong liberal statebuilding mandate. Therefore, foreign support to civil society has the potential to indirectly destabilize and challenge an already weak state.
2. International NGOs have an important role to play in supporting local NGOs, but can unwittingly weaken the role of civil society by creating aid dependency and

- using approaches such as capacity building that legitimize top-down approaches. Without stronger collaboration with government authorities and their leadership, the mere presence of too many NGOs can in fact weaken the state by shifting visibility and legitimacy to the former in providing important services to the population.
3. In the case of Haiti, both the state and civil society actors are no longer accountable to the population. Rather, the use of international NGOs in delivering aid is creating foreign accountability mechanisms rather than domestic. Both state officials and representatives of civil society are accountable to their international donors. The Haitian state therefore continues to be “phantom state”.

Empirically, the study has answered the research’s theoretical question by building a theoretical framework that demonstrates international support to civil society is challenging its counter hegemonic role in relation to the state and blurring lines of accountability creating a rather vertical relation between international NGOs and domestic civil society. These approaches have weakened the role of civil society by widening the gap with local communities. This impact on civil society is also widening the gap between state and population by contributing to the “phantom state”, a state that has international support but little legitimacy in the eyes of its population. The use of international NGOs as implementers for foreign donors has had its consequences on the state and its citizens. As discussed above, financial and technical dependency of both the state and civil society creates a system that does not encourage the majority of Haitians in society to demand their rights as citizens. Even though large international institutions, such as the OECD/DAC, formulate policies that define key dimensions of statebuilding, there are equally dimensions of international interventions in the reconstruction of state that need to be taken into consideration.

In Haiti, the “popular organisation” culture is the foundation of Haitian civil society. Haitian expert Robert Fatton states; “Implanted in the deep culture of Haiti, these *gwoupmans* embody the basis of a homegrown version of democracy” (Fatton 2007; 222). The concept of a liberal and democratic civil society is at times misleading. It has removed its cultural meanings in various non-western contexts. In the western conception of this term, it is viewed generally as a positive and progressive entity, capable of representing the will of the people. But in countries that are political unstable and divided, it is a term that can be manipulated and used by the local elites or other groups

trying to gain power. A case in point is the creation of "Le Groupe 184" in Haiti, this network managed to co-opt international support for elites priorities in Haiti in the name of civil society. In addition, the use of international NGOs as intermediaries has important consequences in 'statebuilding' process. International NGOs do not always have firm roots in local civil society, often creating parallel systems, and therefore do not increase the dialogue between state-citizens. International NGOs are ultimately accountable to donors and their agendas and their foreign policies. They are mainly donor driven and do not correspond to local government priorities. In addition, these international organisations have enough influence and budget that they become intertwined with the state. NGO are part of the aid system, they are intimately linked with governance issues of the state. As they work to support civil society; the "internationalization of national civil society creates gaps with local communities who are recipients" (Mertus and Sajjad 447).

Since the January 12th earthquake, Haiti has entered into a new phase of its history. With a new Interim Commission and World Bank Fund on the reconstruction of Haiti, Haitian leaders are now managing a whole new set of international actors, influence and large amounts of foreign aid. With so much devastation caused by the earthquake and a government that lost 18% of its civil servants, international NGOs are now essential in the humanitarian relief and reconstruction of this country. A recent joint paper for international NGO platforms from Canada, the US, Europe and Latin American countries outlines principles and recommendations for international NGOs to follow in the reconstruction efforts in Haiti. This declaration is the first of its kind for international NGOs in Haiti. Recognizing that these are important problems to be addressed in the country, international NGOs are committed to; better accountability mechanisms to the populations with whom they work and to local governments; increased collaboration and coordination with Haitian civil society and aligning efforts to the priorities of the government of Haiti; using a rights-based approach to ensure human rights are protected in humanitarian relief; and enhancing local capacity by prioritizing capacity strengthening of Haitian civil society (Concorde Europe 2010). This will be an important step to how international NGOs work in Haiti. However, changing an entire aid system

that supports international NGOs is a challenge. When asked about post-disaster efforts in Haiti and new opportunities, one of Haiti's well-known activists Camille Chalmers answered; "I think this marks unfortunately an opportunity, because things are moving and the state of Haiti is being put in question. This is why it is ever important for civil society groups to deliver a coherent and clear message of the will of the population in Haiti" (Interview with Chalmers April 2010).

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Interview with Camille Chalmers, Director of PAPDA – Plateforme Haitienne de Plaidoyer pour le Développement Alternative, Ottawa, April 2010

Interview with Debra Bucher, Programme Officer for Haiti, Développement et Paix-Development and Peace, Montréal, May 2010

Interview with Marion Turmine, Director of Internationals Projects, Oxfam-Québec, Montréal, May 2010

Interview with François Gérin-Lajoie, Executive Director of the Foundation Paul Gérin-Lajoie, Montréal, May 2010

Interview with Gérard Côté, Director of the Haiti Program, Center for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI), Montréal, May 2010

Interview with Anonymous source, former director of the Canadian local funds with the Canadian Embassy, Montreal, May 2010

Interview with Jean Saint-Vil, Activist with Canada Haiti Action Network, Ottawa, May 2010

ANNEXE A – INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview Guide and Questions

The topic to be explored is international NGOs relations with civil society organisations and how they collaborate with the state. The goal is to explore the interviewee's knowledge, perceptions and opinions on the importance of Haitian civil society where there is a lack of services, representation and legitimacy from government authorities.

To start, tell me a bit about your work experience in Haiti. More precisely, your work with local NGOs or civil society groups with whom you have collaborated)

1. Selon votre expérience, est-ce que vous aviez remarqué une augmentation du nombres d'ONG local en Haiti? Depuis 2004? Est-ce que vous croyez que c'est un indice d'une société civile qui est forte et plus organisé en Haiti? *(Based on your experience, has there been an increase in the number of local NGOs working in Haiti? Since 2006? Is this an indication of a stronger and more organised civil society in Haiti?)*
2. Considérant que 60-70% des Haitiens vivent en milieu rurale, quel est le rôle des groupes de base (grassroots) et des ONGs locales dans les communautés rurales en Haiti? *(Considering that 70% of Haitians live in rural areas, what do you think*

is the role of the grassroots organisations and local NGOs in rural communities in Haiti?)

3. Quels sont les rapports entre les ONGs locales et les autorités locales ? Est-ce qu'il y a un rapprochement entre ces acteurs ? *(What is the rapport between the local NGOs and the local authorities? Is there an increased interaction between these actors?)*

Second, the topic to be explored is how international NGOs support local partners and their role as service providers. I want to explore questions of representation vis-à-vis its local partners and issues of coordination and accountability as service providers' vis-à-vis state authorities.

4. Étant donné que 70 à 80% des services de base sont fournis en grande partie par des ONGs internationaux en Haiti, est-ce qu'il y a une substitution de l'état dans la prestation de service à la population? *(Considering that 70% to 80% of basic services are mostly provided by international NGOs in Haiti, do you think this is a substitution of the state in providing services to the population?)*
5. Avec près de 3,000 ONG qui travaillent en Haiti, pensez-vous qu'il y a un manque de coordination et de réglementation des ONGs en haiti ? Quels sont les conséquences vous croyez de ce manque de contrôle ? *(With approximately 3,000 NGOs working in Haiti, do you think there is a lack of coordination and regulation of NGOs in Haiti?)*
6. Dans le cadre de vos projets, à qui êtes-vous redevable? (rendre des comptes) Comment est-ce que vous trouvez un équilibre entre les priorités des bailleurs, des partenaires locales et ceux du gouvernement Haitien?*(As part of your projects, to whom are you accountable to? How do you find a balance between the priorities of donors, your local partners and those of the Haitian government?)*

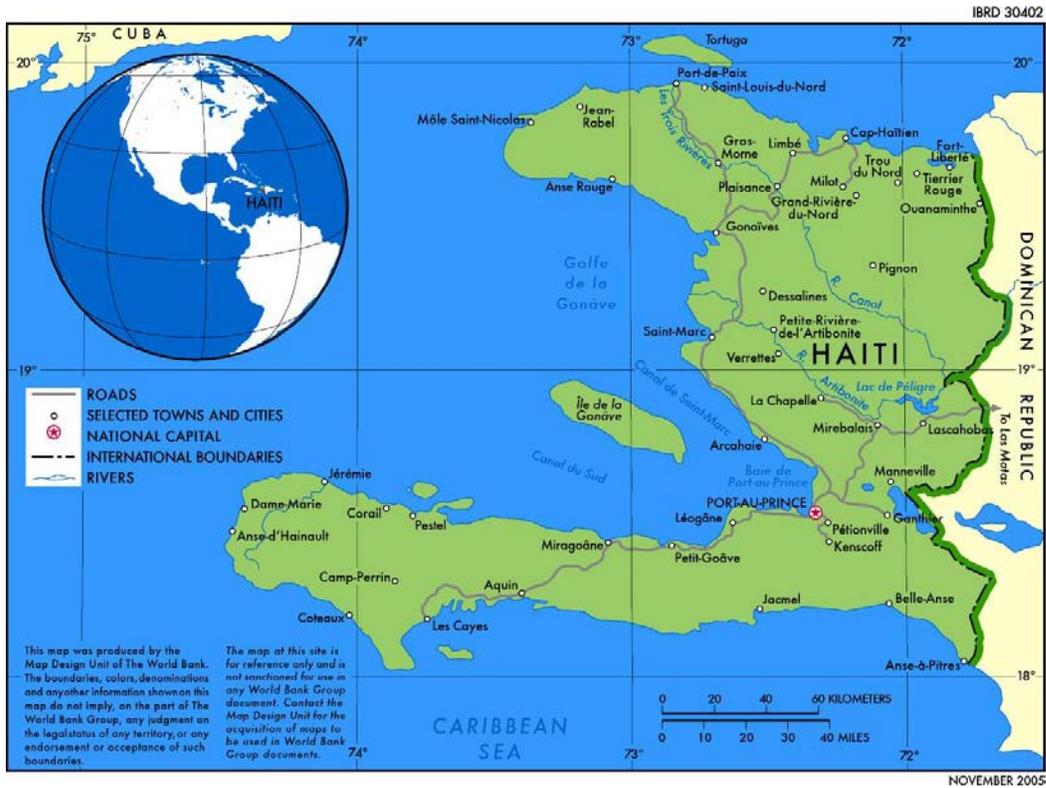
Third, the topic to be explored is the type of relation and rapport that international NGOs have with local and central authorities in the context of their projects. What types of mechanisms are in place to consult the government in decision making and what influence do NGOs have on government policies and its decision-making.

7. Dans le cadre de vos projets, quel genre de partenariat aviez-vous avec le gouvernement Haitien ? Est-ce que les autorités locales sont incluent dans la prise de décision de la gestion des projets? (*As part of your projects, how do you work with the Haitian government? What type of partnership do you have? Are local authorities included in the decision making of the project management?*)
8. Pouviez-vous me décrire la relation entre les ONG internationaux et le gouvernement haitian actuellement ? quels sont les avantages et les désavantages de travailler avec le gouvernement haitien? (*Can you describe the relationship between international NGOs and the Haitian government currently?*)
9. Quel est la perception des autorités locales de votre organisation et de votre travaille? (*What is the perception of the local authorities of your organisation and your work?*)
10. Comment est-ce que vous croyez que vos projets augmentent la connexion/interactions entre les populations et les autorités? (*How do you think your projects increases the interaction between the local population and the local authorities?*)

Post-séisme (Post earthquake)

Est-ce que vous sentiez que le gouvernement est plus present ou moins present depuis le 12 janvier? (*Do you feel that the government is more or less present since the 12 of January earthquake ?*)

ANNEXE B – MAP OF HAITI



Source : World Bank

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/LACEXT/HAITIEXTN/0,,contentMDK:22251393~pagePK:1497618~piPK:217854~theSitePK:338165,00.html>