

CIVIL SOCIETY AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN THE TERRITORY OF FARADJE IN THE PROVINCE OF HAUT-UÉLÉ"

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<https://doi.org/10.37602/IJREHC.2026.7211>

ABSTRACT

This article examines the influence of civil society on local governance in Faradje, a context marked by security, socio-economic, and institutional challenges. Civil society promotes transparency, accountability, and citizen participation, particularly in the areas of education, health, and social cohesion. However, its effectiveness is constrained by both external factors (unfavorable socio-political environment, political interference, instrumentalization, complexity of advocacy) and internal factors (insufficient financial, human, and logistical resources, members' poverty, and weak internal governance). The study, based on a sample of 50 respondents and combining qualitative and quantitative approaches, demonstrates that these constraints limit the mobilization capacity and influence of citizen organizations. Internal divisions and institutional constraints further strengthen the power of political-administrative actors. The article concludes that enhancing financial autonomy, professionalization, sound internal governance, and logistical support is essential to restore civil society's effectiveness and improve local governance in Faradje.

Keywords: Civil society, Local governance, Advocacy, Accountability.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In territorial governance, civil society is considered as a strategic mediator between the State and the population, contributing to social regulation, citizen control and local normative production. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, this function is legally anchored in the Constitution of 18 February 2006, which guarantees freedom of association and recognizes collaboration between the public authorities and citizen organizations engaged in development. In addition, Organic Law No. 10/011 of 18 May 2010 organizes the decentralised territorial entities as spaces for the coordination and control of public action, thus providing civil society with an institutional framework for intervention in local governance.

From this perspective, organizational plurality is perceived as an institutional asset likely to strengthen the capacity for collective influence, provided that the structures act in complementarity and synergy. The analyses of Augustin Loada and Ornella Moderan³ insist on the fact that the diversity of actors can consolidate local governance when social, symbolic and organizational resources are pooled. However, when plurality turns into competition, it can

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³ Loada A., and Moderan O., The Role of Civil Society in Security Sector Reform and Governance, ACFO, Toolkit for Security Sector Reform and Governance in West Africa, 2015

have the opposite effect: fragmentation, leadership rivalries, and weakening of power of influence.

The Territory of Faradje illustrates this tension between organizational pluralism and governing efficiency. Until 2019, Civil Society/Forces Vives was the only structured platform for citizen demands. The mobilizations of 2019, in particular the dead city days decreed from October 3 to 4 against the ministerial moratorium on the eviction of the inhabitants of Sambia, were massively attended⁴, demonstrating a strong cohesion and a significant capacity to put pressure on the authorities. Similarly, in July 2023, a large-scale mobilization in Haut-Uélé led to a national government mission to Isiro, attesting to the political impact of citizen actions.

Since 2019, the successive emergence of the New Congolese Civil Society, the Congolese Civil Society, the Civil Society Dynamics and the Congolese People's Civil Society has profoundly reconfigured the local organizational landscape. While this diversification reflects democratic pluralism, it has been accompanied by strategic differences and public dissension. The example of the dead cities days of July 7 and 8, 2025, decreed in Faradje by some platforms but disavowed by others, illustrates a manifest fragmentation. The lack of collective support led to weak popular support, accentuated internal divisions and, ultimately, strengthened the position of the provincial government. In the Territory of Faradje, can we talk about the controversy around the holding of the Ordinary General Assembly of the Civil Society/Forces Vives on February 24, 2026, the recommendations of which are contested by some local civil societies who would consider themselves to be excluded from the process when the initiative would have been collective.

At the same time, structural challenges persist in Faradje Territory: insecurity linked to nomadic Mbororo herders, controversial mining, land and customary conflicts, tensions with the Garamba National Park, difficult cohabitation with Kibali Gold Mine, administrative harassment, deterioration of infrastructure and dysfunctional public services. Despite the increase in advocacy and protest actions, these problems remain structurally anchored, revealing a lack of real impact on local public policies.

The most salient problems are the nomadic Mbororo herders who threaten, kill, attack the population, ravage the peasants' fields, even steal the natives' cows, and the Chinese mining that does not respect the rights of the local community. This exploitation causes the destruction of the environment. Administrative harassment (erection of multiple barriers by the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Congolese National Police, the General Directorate of Migration, etc.), the deterioration of roads, bridges, infrastructures of general interest, the unfulfilled promises of the provincial government, the dysfunction of public services, conflicts of all kinds (customary, land, family, professional), etc., are the challenges that civil society is unable to face.

This article is based on the observation that, if since 2001, there has been only one civil society called the Forces Vives civil society that has channelled citizens' demands; the Territory of Faradje has recorded new ones since 2019. With the new dynamic, it is becoming difficult to

⁴ Talaguma, P., "Contestation of the governance of Garamba National Park by civil society organizations: analysis and challenges", IJRDO - Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research. 2023.: <https://doi.org/10.53555/sshr.v9i2.5523>, p41, accessed 24/01/2026.

work alone on far-reaching issues that require the expertise and collaboration of all civil societies.

The multiplicity of civil society organizations in Faradje Territory has not solved the problem of local governance. The killing of the population by Mbororo herders, illegal foreign artisanal miners, rural harassment, arbitrary arrests, poor road conditions, land conflicts, etc., are all evils that continue to sow desolation among the population in the said territory.

This observation led to the following question: Why does civil society struggle to positively influence the local governance of the Faradje territory?

As a hypothesis, this study considers that civil society would struggle to positively influence the local governance of the Faradje territory because of exogenous and endogenous factors.

The objective of this research is to analyze the justifying causes of the ineffectiveness of civil society in positively influencing the local governance of the Faradje territory.

The present research makes use of neo-institutionalism theory, which argues that behaviour cannot be understood without reference to institutional rules, institutions are not neutral: they distribute power, institutional trajectories are marked by a dependence on the path, and institutional reforms are difficult due to structural inertia.

This theory has been supported by Talcott Parsons' structural-functionalist method, insofar as it allows us to understand local governance as a structured social system composed of interdependent elements performing specific functions.

For data collection, this study used documentary techniques, disengaged direct observation, structured interviewing, and purposive non-probability sampling using snowballs.

As the study population is large, this study took a sample of 50 respondents. The distribution was as follows: 5 former and new company managers, 5 members of chambers of commerce, 5 representatives of religious denominations, 5 public officials, 10 members of civil society organizations, 5 representatives of mining cooperatives, 5 chiefs or leaders of the local community, 5 members of political parties and 5 former members of the provincial government and honorary provincial deputies.

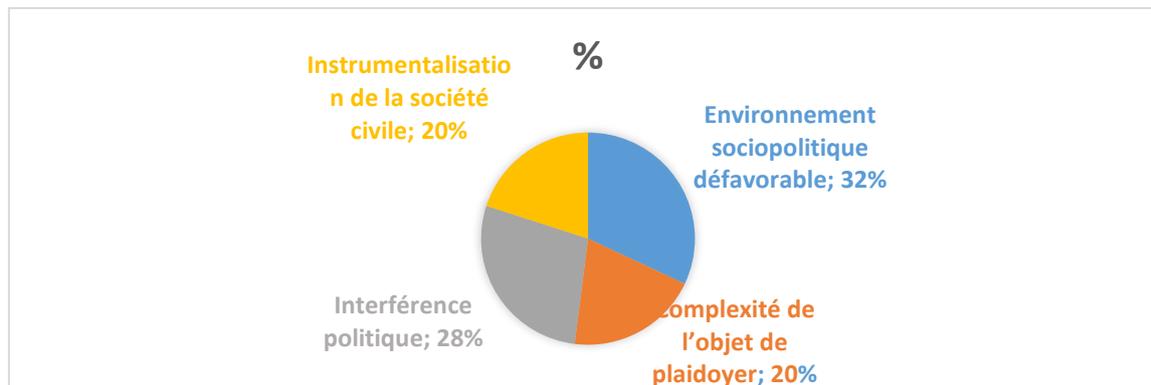
As for data processing, this article used qualitative and quantitative content analysis.

2.0 DATA PRESENTATION

2.1 Exogenous factors

Several exogenous factors explain the ineffectiveness of civil society in the Faradje Territory in local governance. This study identified the following factors: the unfavourable socio-political environment (1), the complexity of the subject of advocacy (2), political interference (3), and the instrumentalisation of civil society (4). Below is the figure that analyzes the respondents' points of view on this subject.

Figure 1: respondents' opinion on the exogenous factors of civil society ineffectiveness



It appears from this figure that 32% of our respondents indicated that the unfavorable socio-political environment is one of the exogenous factors contributing to the ineffectiveness of civil society in the local governance of the Faradje Territory. 28% identified political interference, while 20% highlighted the instrumentalization of civil society by political actors, and finally, another 20% declared the complexity of the subject of advocacy.

2.1.1 The unfavourable socio-political environment

The participation of civil society in local governance is a fundamental lever for the effective implementation of public initiatives. However, when the political and administrative authorities maintain conflictual relations with citizens' organizations; they perceive their actions as a threat to their power. In this case, advocacy, constructive proposals and information provided do not receive satisfactory responses. As a result, civil society resorts to public demonstrations, confrontation or opposition in order to express its disagreement, which accentuates the breakdown of the institutional dialogue. The needs brought to the attention of the authorities are therefore marginalized, compromising collaboration and the implementation of development projects.

Collaboration becomes even more difficult when civil society is not involved in the planning, implementation and monitoring phases of projects. The letter from the coordination of civil society addressed to his superiors testifies to this. On February 6, 2020, described as a "day of disappointment" in the Logo-Doka Chiefdom, several meetings having been postponed, the actors considered that everything had been done to ensure that they were not received by the president and the members of the Local Development Committee (CLD). They also noted the existence of rumours that there was no development plan and that the projects under implementation had been undertaken without taking into account priorities and the general interest, suggesting chaotic management. They also expressed reservations about the behaviour of the CLD in the event of a possible audit.

In light of these elements, the socio-political context in which civil society operates is characterized by practices such as intimidation, demonization, accusations of corruption or political agendas, personalization of demands, internal manipulation, death threats, arbitrary arrest, and discouraging speech. It is in this context that civil society sent a letter on August 9, 2023 to the Administrator of the Territory of Faradje to inform him of the organization of a peaceful march to denounce the physical attacks allegedly suffered by civil society actors and

the media. Unfortunately, this demonstration did not take place, because it was stifled by the political and administrative authorities.

2.1.2 Political interference

Political interference is a factor that can alter the dynamics of local governance and weaken the action of civil society. In an institutional environment marked by competition for power and control of public resources, citizen denunciations are not only perceived as mechanisms of accountability, but also as instruments influencing political balances. Criticism of the authorities thus affects their legitimacy, provokes arrests, and even leads to their replacement or a loss of credibility with the citizens.

From this point of view, the local public space becomes a field of symbolic and strategic confrontation. Several categories of actors are involved: the political opposition, the as-yet-undeclared candidate candidates, as well as individuals driven by personal interests or local rivalries. On the one hand, these actors instrumentalize citizens' demands in order to weaken the authorities in place and strengthen their own positioning. On the other hand, the incriminated authorities seek to preserve their power and image by mobilizing their networks of allies, activating mechanisms of influence, and even using public financial resources to consolidate their support.

In this configuration, civil society is caught up in a logic of political polarization. Its normative autonomy and neutrality are compromised, either by partisan recuperation or by direct or indirect pressure. Political interference then manifests itself in the manipulation of discourses, the personalization of criticisms, the moral disqualification of associative actors or the dissemination of counter-narratives aimed at discrediting denunciations. As a result, the substantive issue of governance tends to be overshadowed by confrontations that focus on people rather than public policy.

By way of illustration, an advocacy letter relating to the state of road infrastructure in Faradje territory points out that, had it not been for the intervention of the mining company Kibali Gold Mines for the rehabilitation of the Durba-Aru Road through the south of the territory, as well as the rehabilitation of the Zoro-Kitamba axis by the Social Fund of the Republic, the territory would have remained completely landlocked. No rehabilitation has reportedly been carried out on the Nzopi-Faradje-Aba axis. It is also suggested that the Provincial Government is tending to isolate Faradje. However, in a context of political interference, such assertions can be interpreted not only as a criticism of public management, but also as a position that can be exploited by competing political actors.

In addition, political interference has had several perverse effects: the fragmentation of civic space, the loss of trust between the rulers and the governed, the weakening of consultation mechanisms and the reduction of effective citizen participation. It has also accentuated the culture of suspicion, where every initiative for citizen control is assimilated to a partisan manoeuvre. As a result, local governance is trapped in a logic of permanent confrontation, to the detriment of a collaborative approach oriented towards the resolution of public problems.

Political interference is not limited to a simple rivalry between actors; it is a major explanatory factor for the institutional blockages observed at the local level. By diverting attention from

structural issues to personalized confrontations, it contributes to the maintenance of the dysfunctions denounced and perpetuates the suffering of the populations, deprived of transparent, participatory management oriented towards the general interest.

2.1.3 The complexity of the subject matter of advocacy

The complexity of the subject matter of advocacy is a determining factor in the effectiveness of civil society action. Some legitimate demands made by the population go beyond the scope of local authorities, and are directly at the national or supranational level. This is particularly the case with the presence of nomadic Mbororo herders in the provinces of Haut-Uélé and Bas-Uélé. Issues related to the aggression of the Democratic Republic of Congo by neighboring countries. These issues are part of security, diplomatic and geopolitical dynamics that go far beyond the margins of intervention of local authorities.

Although the population that is the victim of these acts expresses its concerns to civil society, it faces objective structural limitations. It uses its traditional advocacy mechanisms: administrative correspondence, memoranda, press conferences, peaceful marches, but the lack of a proportionate response from the competent decision-making level reduces the concrete impact of its efforts. Therefore, the persistence of the problems denounced is not the result of a lack of commitment, but of a gap between the level of demands and the real decision-making centre.

This situation has a significant side effect: a crisis of confidence. Faced with the absence of visible changes, part of the population interprets the apparent ineffectiveness of advocacy as a form of compromise, corruption or connivance with the authorities. This phenomenon of suspicion weakens the social legitimacy of civil society and reduces its capacity for mobilization.

Complexity also manifests itself at the local level when the grievances denounced directly involve certain agents invested with a parcel of public authority. In this case, the problem is no longer just a lack of institutional competence, but a dysfunction of the security and justice system. The example reported in Abinva, in the province of Haut-Uélé, highlights recurrent practices of rapid release of alleged bandits arrested and taken to the Congolese National Police (PNC), who resume their activities in the same neighborhoods a few days after their arrest.

Such situations reflect a weakening of the criminal justice chain and a failure in the effective application of legal standards. When perpetrators of criminal acts are released quickly while others are kept in detention for less serious offences for a long time, there is a perception of unfairness and the instrumentalization of justice. This asymmetry in the processing of cases consolidates the idea of a protection network within local security structures.

The population is gradually losing confidence in the security forces and in the judicial mechanisms, which weakens the citizen cooperation that is essential in the fight against insecurity. Civil society, although active in denouncing these practices, is then confronted with an institutional system where sanction mechanisms do not produce lasting deterrent effects.

2.1.4 Instrumentalization of civil society

The instrumentalization of civil society is a recurrent mechanism in contexts where the relationship between political power, economic interests and civic space is marked by logics of influence. The State and certain economic operators sometimes create or directly support organizations claiming to be part of civil society, by providing them with the financial and logistical means necessary for their operation. These structures, commonly referred to as "civil society of the state" or "civil society of a commercial or mining enterprise", are associated with institutional opportunities, official consultations and decision-making spaces.

As a result, in the name of the principle of associative diversity, the State and certain private actors favour organisations deemed conciliatory, while marginalising those perceived as critical or independent. This differentiation creates an informal hierarchy within the civic space and weakens the principle of equality between organizations.

In this perspective, Rachid Othmani⁵ points out that civil society organizations can be instrumentalized in dynamics aimed either at reducing the regulatory role of the state in the social and economic spheres, or at consolidating the influence of certain networks of power. In addition, the existence of significant funding encourages the creation of associations under the aegis of former public officials or businessmen close to the decision-making centres, in order to benefit from the "civil society" label and the financial advantages associated with it. Thus, the very content of the expression "civil society", already polysemic by nature, varies according to the strategic interests of the actors who claim it.

As a result, this instrumentalization has deleterious effects on the internal cohesion of the associative fabric. It promotes organizational individualism, competition for access to resources, and the manipulation of actors against each other. The implicit objective remains the neutralization of critical voices and the fragmentation of citizen actions, allowing the authorities or economic interests concerned to act without any real structured counter-power.

This dynamic of internal destabilization discourages initiatives oriented towards the defense of the general interest and weakens the collective capacity for advocacy. It replaces the legitimate concerns of the population with internal rivalries centred on access to material or symbolic advantages.

It is in this logic that a former civil society coordinator recalled the responsibility of associative actors, insisting on the apolitical nature of civil society and on the persistent challenges to be met. In particular, he mentioned individualism, internal manipulation and the dynamics of marginalization of the Faradje territory as major obstacles to the effectiveness of citizen action⁶.

The instrumentalization of civil society is not limited to a simple control strategy; it constitutes a structuring process that alters the very nature of associative commitment. By transforming the civic space into a field of competition and influence, it compromises the essential function

⁵ Rachid Othmani: "Civil Society: Birth and Emergence", In International Journal of Innovation and Applied Studies, Vol. 24 No. 2, Sep. 2018

⁶ Tamaru Kamba Matthieu, History and evolution of civil society in the territory of Faradje (2001-2020), Faradje, 28/05/2022, p 6

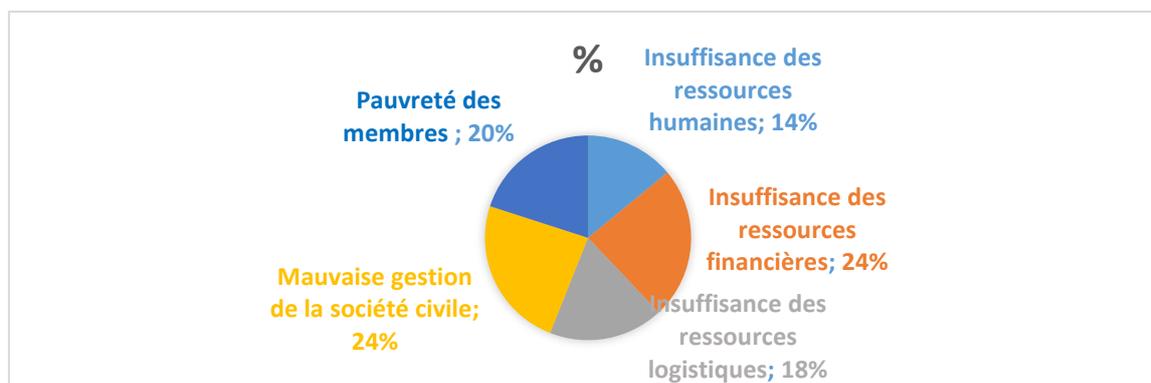
of civil society as an autonomous actor of social regulation, citizen monitoring and promotion of the general interest.

Exogenous factors are amplified by endogenous factors that we will analyze in the following lines.

2.2 Endogenous factors

The inadequacy of human, financial and logistical resources, the poverty of members, and the poor management of civil society are endogenous factors that weaken the participation of civil society in the Faradje Territory in its participation in local governance. Below are the opinions expressed by our respondents on these endogenous factors.

Figure 2: respondents' opinion on the endogenous factors weakening civil society's participation in local governance



The analysis of this figure 2 shows that 24% of our respondents identified the lack of financial resources as one of the endogenous factors that make the role of society in the local governance of the Faradje Territory ineffective; Another 24 per cent highlighted the mismanagement of civil society; 20% reported member poverty; 18% indicated the lack of logistical resources and finally, 14% reported the lack of human resources.

2.2.1 Insufficient financial resources

In principle, the financial resources of civil society organizations come from membership fees, donations, bequests, subsidies as well as self-financing activities. It also happens that some organizations benefit, for a specific period of time and in a specific area, from the support of technical and financial partners. This scheme corresponds to the normative model of associative financing based on the diversification of resources and functional autonomy.

However, in practice, membership fees are often irregular and insufficient. This structural weakness frequently forces managers to mobilize their own resources to ensure the minimum functioning of the organization: purchase of communication units, transportation costs, fuel, accommodation, catering during missions, production of reports and drafting of advocacy letters.

Reading the annual report of the Sub-Coordination of Civil Society/Forces Vives of Tadu highlights several major constraints: lack of operating costs, lack of means of transport, low contribution rate of staff members and components, as well as a lack of knowledge by some members of their roles, rights and obligations, due to a lack of capacity building.

In addition, attempts to mobilize resources from local economic components, particularly chambers of commerce, are often met with mixed responses. For example, a request for financial assistance to participate in the Provincial Ordinary General Assembly was not successful. In accordance with the letter of the Provincial Coordination of Civil Society/Forces Vives (Ref. FER/SCFV/BC-HU/027/2021 of October 25, 2021), the payment of transport was recommended and each coordination was to contribute 50,000 FC for the restoration, with an appeal for the support of the Federation of Enterprises of Congo, the National Federation of Artisans, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises of Congo and the Territorial Sub-Coordinations. In the absence of effective support, the Coordinator and the First Deputy Coordinator have personally borne all the costs of representing the Territory at this Assembly.

This dependence on the personal resources of managers generates several systemic effects. First, it creates internal inequality between managers according to their individual financial capacities. Second, it weakens institutional sustainability by making the organization's survival depend on private commitments rather than on structured collective mechanisms. Third, it exposes the organization to increased risks of capture or compromise.

In a context of prolonged financial vulnerability, some malleable officials are tempted to accept material or financial benefits in order to compensate for their personal expenses incurred in the operation of the structure. This phenomenon is not only an individual failure, but a systemic constraint linked to the lack of transparent and sustainable financing mechanisms.

2.2.2 Poverty of members

Members of civil society can show a real willingness to commit themselves to the proper functioning of their structure; However, they remain severely limited by the weakness of their economic resources. Due to socio-economic precariousness, members of civil society are constantly torn between meeting their basic needs, in particular: catering, health care, transport, housing, children's schooling and the promotion of the general interest through membership fees and active participation in collective activities. Thus, voluntary commitment, which requires minimum availability, time and resources, becomes difficult to sustain in the long term.

Indeed, the tension between individual survival and collective commitment is a major structural constraint in low-income environments. When the associative action does not provide sufficient remuneration or compensation for the costs incurred, the actors are forced to arbitrate in favour of their vital priorities. This situation reduces the regularity of participation, weakens the continuity of advocacy actions and limits the professionalization of the organization.

Moreover, the prevailing poverty feeds a climate of permanent suspicion. Civil society actors operate in a social environment where rumours circulate persistently about possible financial benefits related to their functions. Even in the absence of evidence, these perceptions can affect the credibility of association leaders.

The example of 2011 clearly illustrates this dynamic. Rumours that the civil society leadership team would benefit greatly from funding from international NGOs, including COOPI and DRC⁷, led to the formation of an internal pressure group. This challenge, based on unverified perceptions, led to the resignation of the President of civil society, followed by that of the entire leadership team. This case highlights the destabilizing impact of rumours in a context where financial transparency and institutional communication mechanisms are not sufficiently formalised.

The combination of economic precariousness and social suspicion weakens the internal cohesion of civil society organizations. It promotes discouragement, abandonment of responsibilities and organizational instability. In the long term, this dynamic weakens the ability of civil society to fully play its role of citizen monitoring, social mediation and promotion of the general interest⁸.

2.2.3 Insufficient logistical resources

The majority of civil society organizations operate without formal infrastructure or stable institutional anchoring. The absence of fixed addresses or operational offices, a phenomenon often referred to as "civil society briefcase", reflects a marked structural precariousness. In addition, there is a lack of basic means of operation, including office supplies, administrative equipment and communication tools. The means of transport are also a major obstacle, even though the needs of the population are multiple, geographically dispersed and require a regular presence of citizen representatives on the ground.

As a result, only organizations with external financial support are able to maintain a minimum of logistical stability. The others are confronted with significant operational constraints that limit their ability to act. In practice, some officials personally assume the costs related to day-to-day operations. However, when these individual resources are lacking, advocacy with decision-makers slows down or even is abandoned due to a lack of adequate logistical means. This situation compromises institutional continuity and weakens the capacity for effective representation of collective interests.

2.2.4 Insufficient human resources

Civil society partners, whether from the public or private sector, generally have abundant and qualified human resources, with diversified expertise in their areas of intervention. As soon as a problem arises and is the subject of citizen demands, these partners quickly mobilise all the skills necessary to respond to it, sometimes by making additional recruitments in order to preserve the institutional image of their organisation.

Local civil society suffers from a significant skills deficit. The few available managers must simultaneously respond to all the requests of the population, even though the complexity of the

⁷ COOPI, is an Italian international non-governmental organization of international solidarity founded in 1965 in Milan. It works in the humanitarian and development fields in several countries in Africa, Latin America and the Middle East, including the DRC.

⁸ Tamaru Kamba Matthieu, Op cit., p 4

issues ideally requires specialized structures. In practice, civil society should be organized into thematic entities capable of dealing with specific issues. These areas can be grouped as follows:

- Human rights, civic and voter education;
- Prevention, management and peaceful resolution of conflicts, peace and dialogue;
- Gender, women, children, youth and vulnerable groups;
- Natural resources, environmental protection and sustainable development;
- Agriculture, agribusiness, entrepreneurship, fisheries and livestock;
- Infrastructure, land use planning, housing and sanitation;
- Education and learned society;
- Health and hygiene;
- Cultural groups, sports, arts and crafts;
- Community or identity associations.

The report on the activities of civil society/Forces Vives reveals a notable lack of specialized structures in Faradje. Several key sectors of local life remain without organizations capable of responding to specific needs. It is becoming urgent to identify the priority needs of the community and to promote the creation of appropriate thematic associations in order to strengthen the coverage and responsiveness of civil society⁹.

The training of managers is another critical point. In many cases, individuals improvise as coordinators without prior experience or appropriate training. This lack of professionalization leads to structural amateurism that limits the effectiveness of advocacy actions. It is difficult to design and succeed in advocacy without human resources that can perform several key functions:

- analyse the real concerns of the population;
- identify relevant decision-makers and actors;
- formulate problems precisely;
- propose realistic solutions adapted to the context;
- anticipate and understand the strategies of institutional or financial partners;
- ensure regular monitoring of the actions carried out;
- and initiate new citizen actions according to the results observed¹⁰.

2.2.5 Poor governance of civil society

There is a structural tension within civil society, marked on the one hand by the vulnerability of organizations from their creation, and on the other hand by poor management of associative diversity.

Regarding vulnerability, it should be remembered that the legal procedures for the creation and official recognition of citizens' organizations are often restrictive. They impose administrative and documentary requirements that many organizations, particularly those located in rural

⁹ Adrupiako Mambako Léonard, "Contribution of civil society to the development of the Faradje territory", In Conference for the Development of Faradje, Faradje, April 7, 2021

¹⁰ Adrupiako Mambako Léonard, Capacity Building for Civil Society Actors for Effective Advocacy, Training of Civil Society Actors, Faradje, May 28-29, 2022.

areas, struggle to meet. From the outset, members can be highly motivated and committed, but when goals – whether personal or collective – are not achieved quickly, disaffection gradually sets in. The members withdraw one by one and, as a result, the organization may disappear, thus reducing the continuity of citizen initiatives in the territory concerned.

As far as the management of diversity is concerned, the freedom of association, guaranteed by democracy, leads to a proliferation of organisations with various profiles. Two trends generally emerge: on the one hand, working in synergy to pool efforts and share experience; on the other hand, to promote the autonomy and independence of each structure in order to enhance its specificity. In principle, these two trends are complementary, provided that collective action has a visible impact on local governance.

However, the practice reveals a more conflictual reality. Inter-organizational tensions manifest themselves in leadership conflicts, backbiting, and sometimes betrayal between associative actors. This dynamic ultimately benefits public and private policymakers, who may ignore the real problems of the population as long as civil society is fragmented and busy resolving its internal differences.

Another major problem lies in the internal governance of the organizations themselves. In many cases, civil society structures reproduce the same failings that are blamed on the state and the private sector. We observe practices such as financial opacity, "filling" – i.e. the production of fictitious receipts or expenses to cover personal uses – and sometimes embezzlement. The statutes and rules of procedure, which should ensure term limits, transparency, the regular holding of general assemblies and internal democracy, are frequently violated by those responsible for applying them.

3.0 DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The analysis of the data reveals a predominance of exogenous factors, of which the unfavourable socio-political environment (32%) and political interference (28%) alone account for 60% of the responses. This result confirms the neo-institutionalist hypothesis developed by Douglass North¹¹, according to which the performance of organizations depends fundamentally on formal and informal institutional constraints. When the rules of the political game are unstable or hostile, intermediary organizations see their ability to influence structurally reduced. The weight of 32% given to the socio-political environment suggests that the contextual variable is the main determinant of the inefficiency observed at Faradje.

Political interference (28%) corroborates Jean-François Bayart's analyses of the logic of appropriation of public spaces by political elites in sub-Saharan Africa. When civil society becomes an instrument in power struggles, it loses its normative neutrality and social legitimacy. The shift in the debate from structural claims to partisan rivalries, observed in this study, empirically confirms this thesis. Thus, the 28% recorded reflects an excessive politicization that weakens the function of citizen mediation.

¹¹ North, D. C., *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. Paris: Éditions de Boeck Supérieur, 2011.

The complexity of the subject matter of advocacy (20%) refers to the issue of decision-making competence and multi-level governance. Claims related to the Mbororo or cross-border mining go beyond the strictly local framework, which creates a gap between community expectations and the effective power of the territorial authorities. This mismatch can be interpreted in the light of Talcott Parsons' systemic approach¹²: when a subsystem (local civil society) tries to act on functions at a higher level of the political system, it comes up against a structural limit that compromises its effectiveness.

Institutional instrumentalization (20%) also confirms the analyses of Patrick Quantin¹³, for whom organizational proliferation does not guarantee democratic consolidation if it is accompanied by fragmentation and capture by state or economic interests. The creation of "parallel civil societies" is a mechanism for the strategic dilution of protest.

With regard to endogenous factors, the data show that insufficient financial resources (24 per cent) and poor internal governance (24 per cent) jointly occupy the top spot, accounting for 48 per cent of responses. This result is in line with Lester M. Salamon's work¹⁴ on the structural vulnerability of non-profit organizations in low-resource contexts. Financial dependence and lack of fiscal autonomy expose structures to the risk of corruption and institutional capture. The fact that 24% of respondents explicitly point to poor internal governance reveals a credibility crisis that weakens advocacy capacity.

The poverty of the members (20%) and the lack of logistics (18%) reflect a material constraint that limits volunteer commitment and territorial presence. These results are in line with Pierre Rosanvallon's reflection¹⁵, according to which the legitimacy of intermediary bodies is based on their ability to embody the general interest in the long term. However, socio-economic precariousness reduces militant availability and weakens organizational continuity.

Finally, the deficit in human resources (14%), although quantitatively lower, is a decisive qualitative factor. The lack of technical expertise undermines the strategic formulation of advocacy, confirming the idea that effective local governance requires specialized skills and minimal professionalization of actors.

In short, the discussion highlights a cumulative interaction between external structural constraints (60% for the first two exogenous variables) and internal organizational fragilities (48% for the first two endogenous variables). The ineffectiveness of civil society in Faradje is therefore not exclusively due to the political context or solely to its own shortcomings, but to a systemic entanglement in which the constraining institutional environment and internal vulnerabilities reinforce each other.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The study of exogenous and endogenous factors highlights that the ineffectiveness of civil society in the Faradje Territory is the result of a complex interaction between external

¹² Parsons, T. The social system. Paris, Éditions Dunod, 1991.

¹³ Quantin, P., La société civile ou les paradoxes de l'engagement social, Paris, Éditions La Découverte, 2009.

¹⁴ Salamon, L., et al., Defining the Non-Profit Sector: A Comparative Analysis, Paris, Editions Economica, 1997.

¹⁵ Rosanvallon, P., La légitimité démocratique. Impartiality, Reflexivity, Proximity, Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 2008.

constraints and internal fragilities. The main exogenous obstacles include an unfavourable socio-political environment and political interference, which distract civil society from its role as a citizen mediator and undermine its legitimacy. On the endogenous side, insufficient financial resources and poor internal governance limit the capacity to act and compromise the credibility of organizations. The poverty of the members, the logistical deficit and the lack of expertise accentuate this phenomenon.

These results show that the effectiveness of civil society depends as much on adapting to a complex institutional and political environment as on the consolidation of its own internal structures. To strengthen its role in local governance, it is imperative to promote financial autonomy, transparent governance, professionalization of actors and better cooperation with local authorities, management of the socio-political environment and logistical and infrastructural support. This integrated approach would transform the identified obstacles into levers for action for a more influential and sustainable civil society in Faradje.

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