

## Institutional Work Strategies of Social Organisation Managers in a Controlled but Non-regulated Field

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### Abstract

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This article is committed to understanding the current apparent institutional change or stability in the Ivorian field of social organisations<sup>2</sup>. Indeed, the steady state of the existing coercive institutional framework in the field might benefit from the “*silence*” of its various stakeholders. However, exploratory interviews conducted with managers of some social organisations in the Ivorian field somewhat reveal their dissatisfaction with this coercive institutional framework. Therefore, by integrating the Exit-Voice-Loyalty-Neglect (EVLN) Theory and the Neo-Institutional Theory, we explore the individual and/or collective political strategies of those managers, in obvious discontent with the coercive institutional framework regulating their organisations. To this end, through a qualitative study, we conducted semi-structured interviews with fifteen managers of social organisations operating in the Ivorian field. The results reveal five forms of political strategies used by those managers towards their coercive institutional framework: the states of *constructive voice*, *brutal neglect*, *tacit voice* and two forms of ambivalences (*constructive voice/brutal neglect*, *constructive voice/tacit voice*). These political strategies from managers resulted in various works of institutional creation which highlight the necessity of a coercive institutional “system change” in the field, hence a “change 2”.

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**Keywords:** Exit-Voice-Loyalty-Neglect (EVLN) Theory, Neo-Institutional Theory, Institutional Work, Institutional Change, Social Organisation

### 1. Introduction

At the core of the debates on the functioning of organisations are the relationships between institutions and their stakeholders (individuals, groups, organisations). More precisely, in a “holistic, methodological” posture (Walliser, 2003), institutional theorists reveal institutional pressures on stakeholders namely through coercive institutional pressures (juridical and political influences), normative (cultural influences) and mimetic (social influences) (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2009). Moreover, henceforth, the impact of human activity on these institutional sphere and their various forms is recognised by a class of organisational theorists (Lawrence, 1999; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Levy & Scully, 2007; Hatch & Cunliffe, 2009; Moatti, 2016). Hence, the acuity of human activity on these institutional variants is underlined by the EVLN<sup>3</sup> theory (Hirschman, 1974; Bajoit, 1988; Grima & Glaymann, 2012) and neo-institutional theories (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Ben Slimane & Leca, 2010). More specifically, according to the EVLN theory, when stakeholders are discontent with an interaction system, they individually and/or collectively react with defection (*Exit*), protest (*Voice*), *Loyalty*, *Neglect* or *Apathy* and *Cynicism* (Hirschman, 1974; Farrell, 1983; Bajoit, 1988; Grima & Glaymann, 2012). Nevertheless, these individual and/or collective reactions in a state of discontent with an interaction system are regularly revisited and consequently updated. In addition, authors such as Farrell (1983), Grima and Glaymann (2012) structure the diversity of individual and/or collective reactions in a state of discontent with an interaction system as passive reactions on the one hand, and active reactions on the other hand.

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<sup>2</sup>Neysen (2016).

<sup>3</sup>Exit-Voice- Loyalty-Neglect.

Passive reactions relate to diverse forms of withdrawal (physical, psychological) from the interaction system while active reactions create a dynamism and intentional activity physically and/or psychologically involving the individual (Farrell, 1983; Grima & Glaymann, 2012).

Another concern for neo-institutional theories is the active nature of individual and group reactions in an interaction system. Indeed, according to this school of theory, stakeholders or organisations in their social interactions tend to intentionally make actions aimed at creating, maintaining or disrupting present institutions (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Ben Slimane & Leca, 2010). In other words, they are potential initiators of an institutional work (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Ben Slimane & Leca, 2010): initiators of political strategies. To this end, literature identifies three categories of institutional work: the work of “*institutional creation*”, the work of “*institutional maintenance*” and the work of “*institutional disruption*” (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Ben Slimane & Leca, 2010). More precisely, the work of institutional creation concerns some market players implementing new practices, new routines and new standards (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Ben Slimane & Leca, 2010). Similarly, the work of institutional maintenance leads some market participants favoured by institutions to deploy strategies in order to ensure their existence (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Ben Slimane & Leca, 2010). Lastly, the work of institutional disruption refers to stakeholders who desire change, convincing or compelling other stakeholders to withdraw from existing institutions (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Ben Slimane & Leca, 2010).

In sum, following the section of the EVLN theory dealing with the active reactions of individuals and groups in a state of discontent, the neo-institutional theory subscribes to the potential activism of individuals and groups engaged in social interactions. Conversely, in the paradigm of the institutional work, the neo-institutional theory proceeds with observing collective reactions due to the plural and complex character of its phenomenon of interest (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Ben Slimane & Leca, 2010). The EVLN theory, on the other hand, is implicitly called upon in literature in cases where individual reactions are observed (Farrell, 1983; Bajoit<sup>4</sup>, 1988 ; Golden, 1992 ; Naus, Van Iterson & Roe, 2007 ; Grima & Glaymann, 2012 ; Ba & Alis, 2016) despite the theory’s potential of shedding light on collective reactions (Alpmann & Bitsch, 2016). Moreover, the EVLN theory is solicited in systems of work interaction (Farrell, 1983; Golden, 1992; Naus, Van Iterson & Roe, 2007; Grima & Glayman, 2012; Ba & Alis, 2016), consumption interaction (Ba & Alis, 2016) and unions’ interaction (Alpmann & Bitsch, 2015). As for the neo-institutional theory, it applies itself to describing the behaviours of stakeholders engaged in a social interaction system for the purpose of providing an understanding of the change in the system. Furthermore, the EVLN theory is essentially turned towards describing the behaviours of individuals in an interaction system (Bajoit, 1988).

The present research work rather strives to understand the change induced by the individual and/or collective, active behaviours of stakeholders in obvious discontent towards a coercive institution in the field of their organisations. For this reason, we resort to the EVLN theory (Hirschman, 1974; Bajoit, 1988; Grima & Glaymann, 2012) and the neo-institutional theory (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Ben Slimane & Leca, 2010). In so doing, we undertake both individual and collective analyses. Certainly, it might seem perilous to undertake individual analyses for the purpose of understanding stakeholders’ potential “institutional work” towards a coercive institutional framework defined at the national – hence, macro – scale; and this is even more so since great importance is given to the individual in such a perspective (Thévenet, 2017). Nevertheless, this posture seemed adequate for us to understand the apparent institutional change or stability in the Ivorian field of social organisations. Leastwise, from our viewpoint, this non-regulated coercive institutional field would assuredly bring about collective political strategies. In addition, such a field might predispose the intensification of political strategies from isolated stakeholders.

To be more precise, the institutional framework of social organisations in Cote d’Ivoire, revised more than half a century ago (Law No 60-315 of 21<sup>st</sup> September 1960) seems to benefit from the “*silence*” (Morrison & Milliken, 2000) of its stakeholders. One of the consequences of the current silence in the field is the apparent stationary state of its coercive institutional framework. In fact, from its enactment on 21<sup>st</sup> September 1960 until now, no provision of this coercive institutional framework has been in any way adjusted or modified.

In brief, for the time being, stakeholders in the Ivorian field of social organisations namely organisation managers, might apparently and collectively contribute to maintaining the coercive institutional framework to its stationary state; this is consistent with the institutional framework paradigm of the neo-institutional theory.

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<sup>4</sup>In the present case, the title of Bajoit (1988) is very explicit about its level of analysis: “*Exit, Voice, Loyalty ... and Apathy. Individual Reactions to Discontent.*”

Notwithstanding, exploratory, individual interviews done with social organisation managers of the field rather revealed their discontent with the coercive institutional framework, namely its apparently stationary state. Furthermore, apparently, such a stationary state could be a significant indicator of the framework's non-regulation. If applicable, is such a non-regulated field a conducive environment for both collective and individual political strategies? In sum, the major inquiry motivating this work is: "*What form(s) of institutional work might be initiated by those social organisation managers in a state of silence but at first glance discontent with their apparently stationary coercive institutional framework?*"

Hence, our main focus remains the active individual and/or collective reactions of managers leading to creating, maintaining and/or disrupting the apparently stationary, coercive institutional state of social organisations. To reach this well-defined objective, the present work is organised in three sections, namely: the methodology of data collection and processing (2), the presentation of results (3), the discussion of the results and the conclusion (4).

## **2. Methodology of Data Collection and Processing**

### **2.1. Target Population, Sampling Approaches and Retained Samples**

To remain coherent with the objective intended by the present work, the data collection was centred on the stakeholders potentially involved in the current institutional process of the target field: social organisation managers. Indeed, as managers of social organisations, they stand as main participants in the potential "institutional work" on the field. More specifically, according to Neysen (2016), "*social organisations*" refer to organisations setting the creation of social values as their driving force. As such, the author makes the distinction between four types of social organisations, namely: cooperatives, friendly societies, foundations and associations; associations, in turn, can be divided into philanthropic organisations and social enterprises. Hence, our field of interest in the current work is the social organisations of the Ivorian field. However, the real data collection was focused on foundations and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs); these organisations are regulated by the "*Law No 60-315 of 21<sup>st</sup> September 1960*" (Republic of Cote d'Ivoire, 1960). Ultimately, the data collection covered foundations and NGOs operating in the cities of Abidjan and Bouake due to their high social demands and the great number of this category of social organisations hosted by the cities. In this cluster made of those two cities, fifteen (15) social organisations were integrated in the data collection, with seven (07) social organisations in Abidjan and eight (08) in Bouake. More precisely, the units of analysis were made of fifteen (15) social organisations while the observation units were represented by the managers (at a rate of one manager per social organisation). The units of analysis were chosen on the basis of two criteria: "*diversification*" and "*saturation*" (Pires, 1997; Savoie-Zajc, 2007; Royer & Zarlowski, 2014). Hence, the study sample was diversified according to the two variables related to the observation units (manager's gender and seniority in the position) and the three variables related to the units of analysis (field of activity, number of workers, lifespan).

Furthermore, at the end of the interviews held in Bouake, we already noticed a strong redundancy of the information collected with the social organisation managers. The additional interviews held in Abidjan confirmed the tendency already observed after the data collection in Bouake: we therefore concluded the empirical saturation of data (Pires, 1997). In other words, by adopting the principles of diversification and saturation during the sampling, the size of the final sample was defined in an "iterative way". (Royer & Zarlowski, 2014).

**Table 1: Characteristics of the Sample of Social Organisations and their Managers**

	Year of Creation <sup>5</sup>	Number of Workers <sup>6</sup>	Fields of Activity	Manager's Gender	Manager's Title <sup>7</sup>	Seniority
<b>S.O. Z</b>	1998	13	Health, Education, Economic and Professional Integration, Charity	Male	Programme Coordinator	09 years
<b>S.O. N</b>	2011	33	Education, Leadership	Male	Senior Associate	08 years
<b>S.O. B</b>	1995	85	Health, Social Support	Male	Communication and Prevention Advisor	23 years
<b>S.O. T</b>	1996	35	Health, Education, Sustainable Development, Integration	Male	Executive Director	04 years
<b>S.O. K</b>	1999	46	Protection, Solidarity, Development, Health, Education	Male	Executive Director	19 years
<b>S.O. A</b>	2017	08	Sustainable Development, Environment	Male	President	01 year 06 months
<b>S.O. P</b>	2002	120	Peace Building and Safeguarding, Leadership	Male	Regional President	14 years
<b>S.O. Y</b>	1993	110	Health and Gender	Female	Executive Director	24 years
<b>S.O. X</b>	1997	308	Leadership, Entrepreneurship, S.O.s' Governance	Male	Executive Director	04 years
<b>S.O. W</b>	2013	21	Coaching in Entrepreneurship	Male	Founding President	05 years
<b>S.O. V</b>	2015	30	Health	Female	President	03 years
<b>S.O. H</b>	2017	07	Drug Users, Sexual and Reproductive Health	Male	President	01 year
<b>S.O. U</b>	1993	21	Art Education, Social Works	Male	Administrative and Financial Director	14 years
<b>S.O. S</b>	2003	09	Peace Building and Conflict Prevention	Female	Coordinator	05 years
<b>S.O. I</b>	2016	08	Bringing Well-Being to Vulnerable Persons	Male	President	02 years

Source: Survey data

## 2.2. Data Collection and Processing

The data were collected from an interview guide. The semi-structured interviews were conducted face-to-face. The dialogues were, in general terms, about the attitudes of the managers to the Law No 60-315 of 21st September 1960 and, specifically, on the managers' eventual political strategies about that law. The interviews, conducted from 9th May 2018 to 25th September 2018, were recorded with the help of a voice recorder.

These data, collected through the interviews and then transcribed, were processed through content analyses (Campenhoudt, Marquet & Quivy, 2017). These content analyses were done in two stages and as the data was collected. First, we started with the internal analyses of each additional interview. Next, we carried out cross-sectional analyses by adding each additional interview to the interviews already available. These cross-sectional analyses allowed us to distinguish types of political strategies for the social organisation managers of the Ivorian market. These types were established from the categories of political strategies in the literature, namely the categories of individual and/or collective reactions in a state of discontent by Grima and Glaymann (2012) and Bajoit (1988) as well the set integrated to the different forms of institutional work by Lawrence and Suddaby (2006). Simply, we carried out an a priori categorisation (Campenhoudt et al., 2017). Nevertheless, we continue to pay attention to the distant themes of predefined categories from the literature in order to foster the emergence of eventually new categories coming from the data.

<sup>5</sup>The year of creation, of the formal launch of activities on the Ivorian field, according to the manager.

<sup>6</sup>Real workers, including volunteers, according to the manager.

<sup>7</sup>The manager interviewed.

### 3. Presentation of Results

The analysis of the interviews conducted with fifteen social organisation managers operating on the Ivorian field reveals two main sub-groups: nine managers involved in an institutional work (DTIB02<sup>8</sup> ; DTIB04; DTIB05; DTIB06; DTIB07; DTIA01; DTIA03; DTIA05; DTIA06) and six managers who do not deploy any institutional work (DEIB01; DEIB03; DEIB08; DEIA02; DEIA04; DEIA07). In addition, four managers among those who do not deploy any institutional work are in a state of “cynicism” (DEIB01; DEIB08; DEIA02; DEIA07). Indeed, a certain unanimity is seen in this sub-group of managers about the necessity to refresh the Law No 60-315 of 21st September 1960 which, from their point of view, is “obsolete”, “outdated” and hence, now “just a law in its form only<sup>9</sup>”. However, they remain inactive (non-voice, brutal non-neglect) although being non-loyal (passive non-loyalty, active non-loyalty) and not contemplating defection tendencies either (non-exist). Also, in the same sub-group, two managers (DEIB03; DEIA04) display a state of passive loyalty.

As for the sub-group of managers doing an institutional work, five types of active reactions towards the coercive institutional framework (its content, processes and context) are seen, i.e.: states of constructive voice, brutal neglect, tacit voice and two forms of ambivalences (constructive voice/brutal neglect; constructive voice/tacit voice).

To be more precise, three managers in a state of constructive voice (DTIB06; DTIA01; DTIA06) they are in an approach of negotiations and creating frameworks of exchanges with public authorities and other social organisations. This is in order to adjust the coercive institutional framework regulating their organisations according to their expectations. This constructive voice institutional work on the part of managers is illustrated by this transcript of Manager “DTIB06”:

“Well, all we are doing ... our direct discussion partner ... here, for instance, I am in the case of the forest ... is SODEFOR<sup>10</sup> and the Ministry of Waters and Forests. The Ministry of Waters and Forests has never received us, even after we sent them mails. But ... on the other hand, the representative of SODEFOR, the one in charge of the Management Centre (...). The one in charge of SODEFOR’s Management Centre here, frankly speaking ... He is even the one who gave us these Certificates of Participations. Because he trained us. He is very open; so he is the one we plead with. (...) He is a little more open; so we make pleas. Truly, this is all we can do for the time being.”

The two following transcripts of Manager “DTIA01” are in the constructive voice category:

“We raised this particular problem to draw their [public authorities] attention. As of today, social media is my hobbyhorse (...). I even meet deputies, today is the 16th (...). I meet deputies. I lobby for people to present to the Assembly ... I have two deputies who are going to present that law to the Assembly, hopefully.”

“Well, I am not a specialist. It is true that I make pleas. But my organisation is not specialised in advocacy. I am only involved in advocacy now, because of this law. I am trying to see how to go about it with some elected representatives, how to meet them for someone to present that law to the Assembly.”

Manager “DTIA06” is in that same state of constructive voice. These two transcripts are an evidence of it:

“We plead with the Ministry for [Non-Governmental] Organisations to be granted with that status [of public utility].”

“Even when we meet the Ministry of Interior, we bring to their attention the necessity of specifically legislating on Non-Governmental Organisations. And that debate, which gave ... We handed the final discharge to the National Human Rights Commission [CNDHCI] in order to make a first version of the law. And we received that version; we added our input. And all the [Non-Governmental] Organisations received it, they will add their input and give the version back to CNDHCI. CNDHCI will in turn bring out a consensual version which will then follow the procedure to go the National Assembly for votes (...).”

<sup>8</sup>Identification code of each manager interviewed.

<sup>9</sup>Managers interviewed either systematically voice out this phrases or they specify that they just referring to the Law No 60-315, without knowing or seeking to know its content.

<sup>10</sup>Forestry Development Authority, state-owned enterprise in Cote d’Ivoire managed by the Ministry of Waters and Forests and the Ministry of Budget and Portfolio.

Consequently, the two managers in a state of “brutal neglect” (DTIB05; DTIA03) are in a state of resignation; they do not believe in the effectiveness and/or relevance of an eventual protest (voice). Hence, they go about their activities following their personal landmarks and expectations as social organisations stakeholders. This institutional work of managers in “brutal neglect” is perceived through these two transcripts from Manager “DTIB05”:

“We stay in our own lanes [public authorities and social organisations]. We are working, making sure not to cause problems to each other. So, we do not have any problem ... (...) But, in fact, it would be interesting for us to truly have interactions [public authorities and social organisations], for us to see each other often, to meet, for there to be gatherings. For instance, the prefecture with NGOs in order to know: what you did; we have read your reports (...).” “In fact, we honestly do not go there often [to public authorities]. We are not advocacy structures. We are not unions.”

The two following transcripts from Manager “DTIA03” also show the manager’s state of “brutal neglect”:

“The system... It is there, we do according to what it allows us. As for the rest, we do as others do.”

“I work, quietly. I do not bother anyone; I do not complain anywhere. If we talk, if I complain a little, if I see that there is not much to do, I go my way (...). If someone comes to me and tells me “this is how things are...”, at least I will have the time to gather some things and protect myself. Notwithstanding, I would be very glad if someone would really have an interest in NGOs.”

Moreover, the data collected highlight a form of active reaction in a state of discontent which is not perceived in our literature review (Hirschman, 1974; Farrell, 1983; Bajoit, 1988; Golden, 1992; Naus, Van Iterson & Roe, 2007; Grima & Glaymann, 2012; Alpmann & Bitsch, 2015; Ba & Alis, 2016). Therefore, we call it “tacit voice”. To be more specific, the two managers having the “tacit voice” character (DTIB04 ; DTIB07) initiate new processes following their personal landmarks and expectations as social organisation stakeholders, in coherence with other social standards (namely international); this is because they view the current coercive institutional framework as non-effective. Nevertheless, they neither start a conflict nor institute a dialogue framework with public authorities (“destructive non-voice”, “constructive non-voice”). Conversely, they “officially” introduce these new processes in compliance with their expectations as social organisation stakeholders, to those required by the current coercive institutional framework (source of their discontent). Thus, their new processes are implicitly validated by other stakeholders (including public authorities and some social organisations) without requiring their agreement beforehand.

The two following transcripts from Manager “DTIB04” can bring evidence to this “tacit voice” state:

“Up till now, there is no need for that [protest]. Because all the documents that we send our various partners are documents which, most times, are already validated by the government of Cote d’Ivoire, through its entities. But, the partner does not complain. Taking the specific example of the vision, nowhere in the Statutes are we bound to write our vision, but we have inserted it. (...) If, for instance, the partner told us that it was an obligation and the Government in turn asked us, here, that the vision must at all costs not be inserted, we would be obliged to go to the Government. But the Government has left us a free field: so you put the vision. They [the Government] only look at the parts they require. If the parts required are provided for, they do not care about all the surplus. So, we improved the law without having to go to the Government.”

“In a practical way, I take the case of the Article 18. In that Article 18 what needs to be provided for and what is the content of the Statutes and Rules of Procedure is all clearly and explicitly said. Because, it can be referred to as the standard that makes the association (...). The content of those Statutes is there. The obligation is that those contents must be found for the Government to accept the document. But once the content is found, we put what we see as important. The Government has a right of inspection, but they do not say anything. Meanwhile, it is what the sponsor is looking for. This is the reason why I said that we improved the law in an implicit way. We applied ourselves for it to be introduced. And you can see that in almost all Statutes and Rules of Procedure from now on, of the organisations of the civil society, you can see: vision, mission. While, in the law, we are not obliged to include: vision, mission. But the organisation of the civil society considers it as an obligation to include: vision, mission. So, that is how it is. This is the reason why I said we improved the law. Maybe, one day, the legislator will follow us.”

Additionally, the institutional work of some managers can be in the category of ambivalent states. More specifically, in this case, discontent stakeholders combine two forms of reactions: “constructive voice”/ “brutal neglect” (DTIB02; DTIA05); “constructive voice”/ “tacit voice” (DTIB07). More precisely, the two managers combining the states of “constructive voice/brutal neglect” (DTIB02; DTIA05) combine the realisation of activities following their personal landmarks of social organisation stakeholders as well as activities of creating exchanges and dialogues frameworks with public authorities and other social organisations in order to adjust the coercive institutional framework to their expectations. This combination of “constructive voice” and “brutal neglect” can be evidenced by those two transcripts of Manager “DTIB02”:

“The law, is outdated (...). It is obsolete because the standards written there are not applicable today. For instance, one of the standards in this law states that: we cannot ask for membership fees exceeding 10 000 francs [francs CFA for each member] during the year. (...) So, if in the past, in 1960, 10 000 francs seemed like a big amount, today, 10 000 francs are nothing. But the law keeps working on this basis. This means that legally (...) 90% of organisations in Cote d’Ivoire are violating the Law 60-315. Because we ask for much more. We ask for 1 000 francs each month [for each member]. 1 000 francs each month makes 12 000 francs each year. This means that we are at odds with that law.”

“I am in a network which was implemented after the LIANE<sup>11</sup> project. And in one of its activities, that LIANE project consisted in asking for this law to be reformed. So we strongly militated for the law to be reformed. This was our priority. Since 2013, we have been on that fight. And we have participated in developing a law proposal (...). Well, let us say that it is a bill, since it has already been sent to the government.”

The following two transcripts from Manager “DTIA05” also underline the combination of “constructive voice” and “brutal neglect” states:

“If not, we tried to implement the commercial side. But with the Mum’s mind set ... (...). Well, students coming must pay. We need money at least for it to be functioning, since we do not have any subvention. But for the time being, it does not really work with it.”

“We ask for support, as everyone does. (...) We send requests to the different Ministries. We see that we are still talking about it. This means that it is not only in writing. Even in media, we pay for it. This is some substantive work we do to at least draw people’s attention.”

As for the manager combining “constructive voice”/ “tacit voice” (DTIB07), he combines on the one hand, the creation of frameworks of exchanges and dialogues with public authorities and other social organisation in order to adjust the institutional framework to his expectations, and on the other hand, the “official” introduction of new processes, in compliance with the expectations of social organisation stakeholders, with the requirements of the current coercive institutional framework (source of his discontent). These four transcripts from Manager “DTIB07” are a proof of his ambivalence:

“I was saying that the law, as it was written from 1960, is very obsolete. It truly does not answer ... It is really obsolete. So with CERAP<sup>12</sup> we already started to try working on it; on a project of the European Union to really try and add amendments to some articles, even to some decisions taken.”

“Anyway, what we have tried to elaborate with CERAP is making proposals to the Government of Cote d’Ivoire: it is the law in its entirety, the law on association; it is about bringing it out of its current state.”

“We also with ComNat<sup>13</sup> and UNDP<sup>14</sup> ... We also exchanged about this matter. For instance, with UNDP, we had an issue at the level of the documents justifying expenditures. We benefited from big funds. But at the level of expenditures supporting documents, UNDP asked us for certain things according to the current law, according to our Statutes and Rules of Procedures, which are not in compliance with what UNDP requires. Yet, they funded us. So, we need to fit their supporting documents requirements about our reports and expenses, according to their context.

<sup>11</sup>The LIANE Project (Leadership and Initiatives from Non-States Actors) was initiated by the European Union in order to support Ivorian Civil Society Organisation (CSO) from December 2012 to November 2015.

<sup>12</sup>Research and Action Centre for Peace.

<sup>13</sup>National Commission of Fight against the Illicit Proliferation and Circulation of Small Arms and Light Weapons.

<sup>14</sup>United Nations Development Programme.

However, we are in Cote d'Ivoire; we have Statutes and Rules of Procedures validated by the Government of Cote d'Ivoire. So these Statutes and Rules of Procedures determine the way we should work.”

“It is the status quo (...). This means that we do not give the Government any feedback. When we have challenges ... Well, we make do with them. We are sometimes obliged to comply with what a sponsor says (...). And very often, they are the ones [public authorities] posing as fire-fighters. We were sometimes obliged to recourse to mails of the Prefect to unlock certain situations.”

**Table 2: Summary of the Individual and/or Collective Reactions of Social Organisation Managers towards the Coercive Institutional Frameworks and the Associated Work Strategies**

Types of Reactions to the Coercive Institutional Framework	Examples	Associated Institutional Work Strategies
Constructive Voice	<i>See transcripts of DTIB06, DTLA01, DTLA06</i>	Multilateral institutional creation by reform
Brutal Neglect	<i>See transcripts of DTIB05, DTLA03</i>	Unilateral institutional creation by juxtaposition
Tacit Voice	<i>See transcripts of DTIB04</i>	Unilateral institutional creation by superposition
Ambivalence		
○ Constructive voice / Brutal Neglect	<i>See transcripts of DTIB02, DTLA05</i>	Hybrid institutional creation
○ Constructive voice / Tacit voice	<i>See transcripts of DTIB07</i>	Hybrid institutional creation

Source: Survey Data

#### 4. Discussion of Results and Conclusion

The results of the present work find five forms of political strategies on the part of social organisation managers on the Ivorian field towards their coercive institutional framework: the states of “constructive voice”, “brutal neglect”, “tacit voice” and two forms of ambivalences (“constructive voice”/ “brutal neglect”; “constructive voice”/ “tacit voice”). These five forms of political strategies from these managers lead to five forms of institutional creation works: the “multilateral institutional creation by reform”, the “unilateral institutional creation by juxtaposition”, the “unilateral institutional creation by superposition” and the “two hybrid forms of institutional creation” (“multilateral institutional creation by reform”/ “unilateral institutional creation by juxtaposition”; “multilateral institutional creation by reform”/ “unilateral institutional creation by superposition”).

The present results reinforce the posture of Grima and Glaymann (2012) claiming the necessity of dividing into sub-categories the central categories of individual and/or collective reactions in a state of discontent. Moreover, these results tend to reveal two new trends of individual and/or collective reactions in a state of discontent, namely: on the one hand, the state of “tacit voice” which seems to be correlated with the non-regulation of social organisations’ Ivorian field, and on the other hand, the different forms of ambivalences (“constructive voice”/ “brutal neglect”; “constructive voice”/ “tacit voice”) which might result in the ineffectiveness of the exclusive presence of “constructive voice” on that field.

In addition, these results highlight the relevance of integrating the neo-institutional theory in the EVLN theory. In fact, to understand the change happening in a given field, such a posture makes room for analysing the different forces maintaining, disrupting and/or creating the present institutions both at the individual and collective scales. More specifically, the results of the present work outline five forms of institutional creation work: the multilateral institutional creation by reform, the unilateral institutional creation by juxtaposition, the unilateral institutional creation by superposition and the two forms of hybrid institutional creation (multilateral institutional creation by reform/ unilateral institutional creation by juxtaposition; multilateral institutional creation by reform/ unilateral institutional creation by superposition). Hence, the results of this work refine the institutional creation strategy initially identified by Lawrence and Suddaby (2006).

Consequently, the present results maintain the necessity to integrate, during such an analysis, the multiple operating institutional forces (Ben Slimane & Leca, 2010), namely in the current case: public authorities (institutional forces in each organisation of the field), managers (endogenous institutional forces in each organisation), etc. Indeed, taking into account the diverse potential initiators of institutional work on the Ivorian field of social organisations, namely the integration of public authorities, would shed another light on the diversity and/or precedence of the institutional work on the field. To be more precise, the present results highlight the degree of the institutional creation work of social organisation managers on the Ivorian field.

In spite of these political strategies on the part of social organisation managers on the Ivorian field, the coercive institutional framework is apparently in a stationary state: hence, in a state of institutional maintenance. In other words, the diverse forms of institutional creation work on the part of those social organisation managers create a change inside the system (“*change 1*”) and not a change of the system (“*change 2*”) (Autissier & al., 2018). Thus, despite their silent state, some social organisations managers initiate a type 1 change towards the current coercive institutional framework on their field. This is the reason why some authors such as Morrison and Milliken (2000) state that organisational silence is a factor inhibiting organisational change (type 2 change, as the authors seem to convey).

Obviously, considering these results, many “coercive” institutional frameworks cohabit on the Ivorian field of social organisations. On the one hand, we have the Law No 60-315 of 21<sup>st</sup> September 1960: the “regalian institutional framework”, and on the other hand, the institutional frameworks created and/or in the process of being created by some social organisation managers: the “operational institutional frameworks”. As a consequence, this questions the preponderant nature of the current, regalian institutional framework. Indeed, relying on the words of some social organisation managers, this regalian institutional framework turns out to be obsolete; hence, it progressively stands as an “institutional frameworks in its form only”. Thus, future works could be focused on the factors fostering the different trends of institutional creation works involving only one body, individual and/or collective (unilateral institutional creation work by juxtaposition; unilateral institutional creation work by superposition) on a given field.

On another note, the previous observations highlight the necessity of changing institutions on the Ivorian field of social organisations, namely at the initiative of the regulatory organ through a constructive dialogue among the diverse stakeholders of the field: managers, sponsors, public authorities, beneficiaries, experts. Regarding managers, they could boost and intensify their dialogue initiatives with the different stakeholders (namely public authorities) in order to define a new coercive institutional framework, regulated from then on. Doing so, they could act in compliance with the doctrine stating: “*it is through public speaking [“constructive voice”, as the author seems to be specifying] that organisations and institutions adapt and remain*” (Moatti, 2016, p.6). Besides, some managers’ individual and/or collective initiatives institutionalised in a unilateral pattern (unilateral institutional creation by juxtaposition, unilateral institutional creation by superposition and hybrid forms) tend to discredit managers in the judgement of other stakeholders in the field. Moreover, some of these individual and/or collective initiatives of institutional creations remain potential justifications given by competent authorities for the non-regulation of their field. In other terms, the non-regulation of this field could be likened to a strategic posture of competent authorities, following the example of the political strategies initiated by the managers of social organisations. In a nutshell, the current stationary state of the coercive institutional framework might simply be the realisation of a game balance undertaken by these two main stakeholders of social organisations’ Ivorian field.

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