

## **Intervention of NGOs for Sustainable Community Development in Ilorin-South Local Government Area of Kwara State**

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### **Abstract**

Sustainable community development of not new and it enhances the idea of serving the present need of community people and meeting the need of generation unborn in that same communities. The intervention of Non-governmental Organizations and their contributions cannot be over emphasised. That is why this paper is trying to examine the intervention of Non-governmental organizations for sustainable community development in Ilorin-South. The data collected from this study were quantified using descriptive statistic, mean and standard deviation for the research questions. The findings show that there are many private, social and religious owned NGOs in the local government area of study. The findings also revealed that the role of NGOs improves the sustainable community development projects in the area of study as well. The result also revealed that NGOs fund the sustainable community development projects and that there are many NGOs in Ilorin-South Local Government Area. It was also established that NGOs play an important roles in improving sustainable community development

projects that available in their communities for the betterment of their living. The paper recommended that NGOs should continue to intervene in community development services for the social, economic, welfare and development of peoples' communities. Also, NGOs should focus their interventions on activities that would enable them to reduce the marginalised and disadvantaged sectors of the communities to improve the circumstances of the communities' livelihood for sustainable community development in their communities.

**Keywords:** Intervention, NGOs, strategies, community development, sustainable community development projects

### **Introduction**

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) involve those organisations that are not owned and managed by the government, but a group of people whose aim is to achieve predetermined goals. A key distinction is between not for profit groups and for Profit Corporation the vast majority of non-governmental organizations are not for profit (Calvin, 2000 & Mbu, 2002). The purposes of non-governmental organizations cover the entire range of human interests and may be domestic or international in scope. Many non-governmental organizations are key sources of information for governments on issues such as human rights abuses and environmental degradation. Some non-governmental organizations perform quasi-governmental functions for ethnic groups that lack a state of their own.

Broadly speaking, non-governmental organization according to Omolewa, (1981) & Akintayo, (1995) include charitable organizations such as hospitals, museums, and orchestras, voluntary health agencies such as the American Cancer Society and American Heart Association, foundations or grant-making institutions such as the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; social welfare organization such as the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured people and the National Centre for Tobacco-free kids; and professional and trade organizations such as Chambers of Commerce and Business Leagues etc.

Calvin (2000) observed that many diverse types of bodies are now described as being non-governmental organizations. There is no generally accepted definition of a term carrying different connotations in different circumstances. Nevertheless, there are some fundamental features. Clearly, an NGO must be independent from the direct control of any government. In addition, there are three other generally accepted characteristics that exclude particular types of bodies from consideration. An NGO will not be constituted as a political party; it will be non-profit making and it will not be a criminal group, in particular it is non-violent. These characteristics apply in general usage, because they match the conditions for recognition by the United Nations. Calvin (2000) therefore defines non-governmental organizations as an independent voluntary association of people acting together on a continuous basis, for some common purposes, other than achieving government office, making money or illegal activities.

From the above definitions, one can conclude that non-governmental organizations include: Rotary Club International, Alumni Associations, Christian Association of Nigeria, Market Women Association and Community Development Association whose aim is to achieve a common purpose, other than achieving government office or making money illegally. The explosive emergence and proliferation of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) has been one of the most significant developments in the development of the sector in the past few decades. Since the late 1970s and early 1980s, numerous NGOs have merged as development actors and agents in both developed and developing countries but more especially in the later. Up till today, the pace and rate at which NGOs are growing in number and membership is remarkable. Today, NGOs are characterised by enormous diversity in terms of roles, functions, institutional capabilities, level of operation and organizational behaviour. The importance attached to NGOs in sustainable community development is illustrated by the practice among donor agencies to channel development funds to them and encourage their role in the socio-economic development process. For example, according to the report given by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation that make up the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) contribute more than US \$3.5 billion annually to NGOs (Elliot, 1999)

The NGO phenomenon has attracted and is still attracting wide discussions. The questions raised touch on a wide variety of issues including the nature of NGOs, their characteristics, strength, weaknesses, constraints and their contributions to development. These questions make it imperative that the NGO phenomenon be fully examined and analysed in order to throw up common issues that would not only form the basis for generalisations but might also inform public policy. Given the complexity, diversity and heterogeneity of NGOs, generalisations on their nature, role and approaches can only emerge if they are examined not only on a country to country basis, but also on individual basis. In Nigeria, NGOs are increasingly emerging as important force in the development process. For instance, in 1995, there were more than 1000 registered NGOs in the country (UNICEF, 2010). Though, UNICEF has done an inventorisation of the NGOs in the country while some of the NGOs themselves have published booklets outlining their mission and programme statements, not much is known about the operational activities of the individual NGOs. Hence there is need to promote an understanding of how the NGOs function and the contributions they make to development. Accordingly, this paper gives a descriptive account of the operations of some selected NGOs and how they contribute to developments in the country. This is important because, nowadays, the relevance of NGOs is mostly judged from the development work in which they are engaged.

In order to fully understand the nature and characteristics of NGOs, we need a working definition that will sufficiently address the diversity and complexity of the phenomenon. But most definitions are narrow in the sense that they leave out some relevant operational defining criteria. For instance, Kobia (1985) in Osuji, (1998) limits the definition of NGOs to “organisations that are not part of the government and are voluntary, non-profit-making and non-partisan”. The problem with this definition is that it does not include the profit making criterion.

Similarly, in its briefing paper, the Commonwealth used the term NGO to mean organisations, which manifest the following key characteristics:

1. **Formation:** They are formed voluntarily. There is nothing in the legal, statutory framework of any country, which requires them to be formed. This distinguishes NGOs from government and statutory agencies operating in democratic societies.
2. **Control:** They are independent in the sense that those who have voluntarily formed them (or to whom such people have delegated responsibility for control and management, through various possible means) control and manage them, albeit in ways which are defined in law in some way.
3. **Non-Profit:** They are not for personal private profit or gain.
4. The fourth defining characteristics concern the general purpose and objectives of NGOs and will serve to define the particular types of NGOs.

It is our view that, to be more realistic, definitions of NGOs should include the profit making criterion. This is because, as a result of dwindling funds, many NGOs in developing countries nowadays do not just perform service delivery functions but are more and more engaging in profit-oriented activities and enterprises in order to generate funds for their activities. Elliot, (1999) and Mbu, (2002) highlighted this point when he noted that, as their traditional sources (international aid funders) of funds diminish, NGOs in developing countries are increasingly engaging in government contracts and all sorts of commercial activities to remain in business. He cited the example of Chilean NGOs that have reported that over half of their income comes from the government. A related phenomenon is the burgeoning of what I call '*chop chop*' NGOs established and run by individuals not motivated by philanthropic and humanitarian reasons but by self-monetary interest. These 'brief case' carrying individuals solicit for funds locally and internationally in the name of poverty alleviation, empowerment and grassroots' development. In most cases they and members of their families alleviate their own pockets (pocket alleviation) from the funds they mobilise and garner instead of alleviating poverty in the community.

Therefore, the term Non-governmental Organisation (NGO) is used to designate a wide variety of groups and associations that are voluntary, non-profit or profit-oriented, functioning and engaging independently but within the law in relief, rehabilitation and development activities for the benefit of their clientele. This is similar to the World Bank's (1990) conceptualisation in which NGOs are defined as, those private, profit or non-profit organisations outside of government which are organised by organisations, communities or individuals to respond to basic needs not met by the government. Seen in this way, Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) is a more comprehensive term than Voluntary Association (VAS), Private Voluntary Organisations (PVOs) and other similar terminologies with which it is used conterminously. These terms only described particular types of NGOs.

In Nigeria, for example, the formation of voluntary associations such as age-grades, mutual aid societies etc. which help in various aspects of socio-economic and cultural life of their communities dates back to the traditional societies (Akande, (2016). The early missionaries contributed to the growth of voluntary organisations by encouraging and promoting the functions and activities of various types of church groups such as Women Guild, Christian Mothers' Organisations ostensibly for missionary interests NGOs can be categorised based on how they operate as follows:

1. **Community-Based Membership Organisations:** These organisations are typically composed of disadvantaged rural or urban people who come together to address common concerns. Their broad objective is community development and they intend to develop their communities to become better for them. They have common goals together and in most cases, they are indigene of their communities.
2. **Community-Based Non-Membership Organisations:** These organisations are typically formed by a small number of "enlightened community members who seek to improve the well-being of people in their communities". They comprise of small group of people that have intention to contribute their quotas to develop their communities. They are not indigenes and the good example is landlord association of an area.

3. **Umbrella or Network Organisations:** These NGOs are loose conglomerates of like-minded, community-based organisations that meet periodically to share information and experiences and to promote the interest of their members with government and other agencies. They may not be together on a spot but they are known for networking and dissemination of ideas and facts that will improve the betterment of the members and the communities at large.

4. **Service Providers to Community-Based Organisations:** These organisations are composed of highly educated or experienced persons who seek to provide technical or managerial advice and assistance to local organisations. Such NGOs often have a thematic focus e.g. credit management, health care, the environment, appropriate technology and so on, but can also seek to improve the institutional capacity of local organisations more generally. They always connect to community-based organisations to operate effectively.

5. **Non-Profit, Implementation/Consultant Agencies:** Such organisations have professional, well-paid staff (often former senior government or university staff) that seek among other things to conduct research on various development issues; promote and communicate concepts to the general public or to more specific audiences; implement, monitor and/or evaluate development projects either directly or suing external funds or on behalf of donors for a fee; conduct training programmes and organise workshops on various development themes; prepare in-house documents or conduct internal programme reviews development agencies.

In the case of Nigeria, the number of NGOs operating in the country is growing at a fast rate. Though their exact number is not known, it is hoped that the result of a recent survey sponsored by UNICEF, Lagos to identify and classify the NGOs in the country will give an idea of not only the number but also their operational fields. Be that as it may, the classification of the NGOs is based on the operating in the development field in the country and their roles and functions. This yields the following types:

- (a) **Relief and Welfare NGOs:** These are involved in relief activities of providing food, clothes, medicine, and shelter and so on, to victims of civil strife and natural disasters like flood, fire outbreak etc.
- (b) **Service NGOs:** The Organisations in this group deliver different types of services in such areas as agriculture of, health-care, family planning to their target populations. The aim to provide effective services to people whose needs and demands are otherwise not met by government bodies and agencies.
- (c) **Training and Technical Support NGOs:** included here are such organisations that provide training support services and technical assistance to NGOs to enhance their operational and management capacity and effectiveness.
- (d) **Funding NGOs:** These operate as channels through which foreign donors make funds available to NGOs to enable them undertake their development oriented activities.
- (e) **Networking NGOs:** As the name implies, these organisations encourage and facilitate combined and co-ordinated actions among NGOs. They also liaise with the government as well as with national and international NGOs to ensure intra-institutional collaboration.
- (f) **Development NGOs:** The organisations under this category are development oriented in their intervention activities and approach. They do not concern themselves with charity and welfare services but with activities aimed at empowering the people especially the marginalised poor and ensuring sustainable improvements in their socio-economic conditions

It is necessary to point out fact that types of NGOs outlined above are not mutually exclusive as they are cross-cutting in functions and roles. In other words, although some NGOs may focus more attention on specific type of activities, more of them are getting involved in mixed activity areas and they need to refocus their aims by intervening in sustainable community development projects that will benefits the community people. This is in line with Akinpelu, (1988), Akintayo, (1995)



& Akande, (2016) that NGOs should have community people in mind of their felt needs and look for ways of reducing their sufferings and they need not to be profit oriented but have community people in mind always.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the efforts of the different level of governments of the federation to provide sustainable community development projects in our communities, the result is not achievable. The problem of this study emanated from various inadequacies associated with community development projects that were not sustained, and not meeting the felt needs of community dwellers. It is at this backdrop that the researcher wishes to investigate the extent to which non-governmental organizations such as Alumni Associations, Christian Association of Nigerian, Town Union, Rotary Club and Market Women Association intervene and contribute to the sustainability of community development projects in Ilorin Metropolis.

### **Research Questions**

To guide this study, the following research questions were asked:

1. What is the extent to which NGOs fund community development projects in Ilorin-South Local Government Area of Kwara State?
2. What is the role of NGOs towards improving sustainable community development projects in Ilorin-South Local Government Area of Kwara State?
3. What are the strategies needed for improving the participation of NGO in funding community development projects in Ilorin-South Local Government Area of Kwara state?

### **Methodology**

This study is on the contribution of non-governmental organization towards improving community development projects in Ilorin-South Local Government Area of Kwara State. The population of the study comprises of 10 Community Based Organizations within the study area and 10 Non-governmental organizations, out of which five executives

each will be randomly selected from Community Based Organizations and five NGOs executive each to make a total of 100 samples for this study. To elicit information from the respondents, questionnaires were administered to the respondents.

The data collected from the respondents were quantified using descriptive statistic (frequency count and percentage) for demographic data, mean and standard deviation for the research question.

## **Results**

**Research Question 1:** What is the extent to which NGOs fund sustainable community development projects in Ilorin-South Local Government Area of Kwara State?

Table I below reveals the extent to which NGOs fund sustainable community development projects in Ilorin South Local Government, this is evident by the mean value of the items four (4) and five (5) above, which all have the mean value of 2.66, 2.67 respectively which are greater than 2.5. The overall mean of 2.54 also indicates that NGOs fund sustainable community development projects in Ilorin South Local Government. It can therefore, be deduced that Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) fund the sustainable community development projects.

**Research Question 2:** What is the role of NGOs towards improving sustainable community development projects in Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State?

**Table I:** Mean and Standard deviation Analysis showing the extent to which NGOs fund sustainable community development projects in Ilorin South Local Government.

S/N	ITEMS	$\bar{X}$	SD
1.	Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) use to fund community development projects in our communities.	2.44	.122
2.	Our communities use to receive financial assistance from local and national NGOs in our communities.	2.44	.149
3.	The funding of community development projects is adequate and evenly spread in our communities.	2.48	.159
4.	Funding of community development projects improves the financial status of community people.	2.66	.112
5.	Funding of community development projects is well handle in our communities.	2.67	.138
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>2.54</b>	

*Survey, 2017*

**Table 2:** Mean and Standard deviation Analysis showing the role of NGOs towards improving sustainable community development projects in Ilorin South Local Government.

S/N	ITEMS	$\bar{X}$	SD
1.	NGOs in Ilorin South L.G are more effective in contributing to community development projects in the state.	2.59	.016
2.	NGOs in Ilorin South L.G are profit oriented organizations	2.38	.033
3.	NGOs in Ilorin South L.G are providing social amenities in our communities.	2.73	.118
4.	Community development projects executed by NGOs are sustainable.	2.75	.158
5.	Community development projects in Ilorin South L.G are meeting the felt needs of beneficiaries.	2.30	.096
	Community development projects encourage community people to live toward their expectations.		
6.	The community development projects reduce the level of poverty and illiterate in the communities.	2.37	.143
7.		2.55	.114
	<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>2.52</b>	

*Survey, 2017*

**Table 3:** Mean and Standard deviation Analysis showing the strategies needed for improving the participation of NGOs in funding sustainable community development projects in Ilorin South Local Government

S/N	ITEMS	X	SD	Ranking
1.	Community development projects provided by NGOs improve the standard of living of the beneficiaries	2.51	1.096	4 <sup>th</sup>
2.	Community developers attended monthly meetings regularly for sustainable community development.	2.63	1.143	2 <sup>nd</sup>
3.	The beneficiaries were enlightened on how to sustained community development projects available in their communities.	2.67	1.138	1 <sup>st</sup>
4.	Community developers were educated to partner with NGOs to achieve sustainable community development in their communities.	2.60	1.146	3 <sup>rd</sup>
5.	NGOs were committed to see the feedback and result of sustainable community development projects provided	2.45	1.086	5 <sup>th</sup>

*Survey, 2017*

Table 2 above reveals role of NGOs towards improving sustainable community development projects in Ilorin South Local Government, this is evident by the mean value of the items one (1), three (3), four (4) and seven (7) above, which all have the mean value of 2.59, 2.73, 2.75 and 2.55 respectively are greater than 2.5. The overall mean of 2.52 also indicates that the NGOs play an important role in improving sustainable community development projects in Ilorin South Local Government. It can therefore, be deduced that NGOs play an important role in improving sustainable community development projects in Ilorin South Local Government.

**Research Question 3:** What are the strategies needed for improving the participation of NGO in funding sustainable community development projects in Ilorin-south Local Government Area of Kwara State?

Table 3 reveals the strategies needed for improving the participation of NGOs in funding sustainable community development projects in Ilorin-South Local Government, this is evident by the mean value of the items one (1) to five (5) which are greater than 2.5. The ranking also indicates the strategies the NGOs should employ in funding sustainable community development projects.

There has been a great deal of debate about the work of NGOs. This has yielded a number of perspectives which offer a context within which we can situate the role of NGOs. The findings of the study revealed that NGOs were funding sustainable community development projects in Ilorin-South L.G.A of Kwara State and that there are many NGOs available in Ilorin-South Local Government Area of Kwara State. It was established that NGOs play an important role in improving sustainable community development projects in Ilorin-South L.G.A of Kwara State. Strategies the NGOs employ in funding sustainable community development projects include enlightenment of beneficiaries on how to sustain those projects to commitment to see the feedbacks from those projects to be sustained. This is in line with Akinpelu (1988), Elliot (1999), Osuji (1998), Olawuni (2012) & Akande (2016).

## **Conclusion**

It is perhaps, because of this that many NGOs that started and functioned as philanthropic and welfarist social service outfits have broadened their purpose and functions to include development oriented activities (Mbu, (2002), Charles (2000) & Akande, (2016). NGOs were the one funding the community projects available in their communities. They are doing that in order to improve the livelihood of community people. Many NGOs that are available are social, religious and private owned. The roles of NGOs therefore improve the sustainability of community development projects in affected communities. Beneficiaries were enlightened on how to sustained community developments projects available in their communities because it is for their betterment.

## **Recommendation**

It was recommended that NGOs should not stop to intervene in community development projects because of their positive effects in the lives of beneficiaries and the communities at large. This will eventually allow the projects to be sustainable and they will serve this generation and in coming generations as well.

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