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The Non-Profit Sector in Kenya

Size, Scope and Financing

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Preface

The Institute for Development Studies (IDS), University of Nairobi, has been engaged in a study to document the size, structure and scope of the Non-Profit Sector in Kenya. The project was undertaken under the auspices of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Non-Profit Sector Project of the Centre for Civil Society Studies (CCSS) at the Johns Hopkins University. This was carried out with funding from the Ford Foundation, East African Regional Office, and the Aga Khan Foundation.

Although findings of the study have been disseminated through several forums and publications, the IDS, with the assistance of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), has found it worthwhile to produce a publication to inform the general public, policy makers, donors, development practitioners and other stakeholders about the structure, scope, size and financing of the sector in Kenya. The IDS hopes that this will serve as an important reference point for studies on the sector in Kenya. These findings, thus, provide an important entry point to a full understanding of the sector in Kenya, and further form an important base document for others wishing to study the sector.

In Kenya, the last four decades have witnessed significant changes in the development space. The state occupied much of the development space in the 1960s and 1970s; the state was the main engine of development. Public enterprises led in providing social development. This changed from the early 1980s in tandem with declining capacity of the state to support social development. Introduction of Structural Adjustment Programmes further weakened the developmental state. Subsequent rolling back of the state under neo-liberal policies occasioned a proliferation of organised voluntary

non-profit organisations. Private non-profit organisations such as NGOs and Self-Help Community Based Groups, among others, evolved to assist in the delivery of social services.

Despite this growth in number and activities, the non-profit sector has remained dimly understood. The sector has remained invisible to policy makers, the media and academics in Kenya. Interestingly, not even practitioners of development have a full understanding of the sectors' size and scope. On the whole, there have been no systematic studies on the capabilities of the sector or even on the basic features of the sector. Furthermore, there is not much knowledge about the sector's contribution to the national development process. It is this gap that has all along pushed the IDS to study and contribute knowledge in this area.

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Finally, the IDS would like to specially thank two scholars who have been involved in coordinating this project and producing this publication – Dr Karuti Kanyinga and Prof. Winnie Mitullah. Without their efforts, it would have been difficult to reach the end. To many others who contributed in many ways, we say '*asante sana*'.

Professor Mohamud Jama

Director, Institute for Development Studies