UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

INSTITUTE OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

\\THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF PLAN INTERNATIONAL THARAKA CONSTITUENCY )\

By

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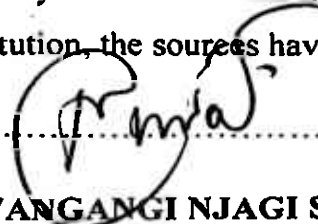
# DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this is my original work and has never been presented in any other institution, the sources have been well acknowledged.

Sign................................   Date...28/11/2015

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**R50/67737/2013**

This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as university supervisor.

Sign................................   Date...28/11/2015

**DR. EMMANUEL KISIANGANI**

## DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my wife Damaris Ndinda, for believing in me and always offering me moral support. My parents too have always taught me that knowledge from books refines one's way of life.

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| NGOs | Non-Governmental Organizations |
| PBOs | Public Benefits Organizations |
| UN | United Nations |
| SAPs | Structural Adjustment Programs |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization |
| CIDA | Canadian International Development Agency |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| ODA | Official Development Assistance |
| PIW | Public Interest Watch |
| CARE | Cooperation of American Relief Everywhere |
| FGM | Female Genital Mutilation |
| VSLA | Village Saving and Loans Association |
| CSOs | Civil Society Organizations |
| MNCs | Multinational Corporations |
| ECOSOC | Economic and Social Council |
| BINGOs | Business International NGOs |
| ENGOs | Environmental NGOs |
| RINGOs | Religious International NGOs |
| INGOs | International NGOs |
| QUANGOs | Quasi-Nongovernmental Organizations |
| GONGs | Government Operated NGOs |
| MFIs | Microfinance Institutions |
| CSOs | Civil Society Organizations |
| SAPRI | Structural Adjustment Participatory Review Initiative |

# ABSTRACT

The global stage has witnessed controversy about the role of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in community development. Their actions have come under much scrutiny and their role as promoters of good causes in the society called into question on several accounts. Sharp focus has been on the NGOs performances, actual effectiveness, accountability issues, autonomy, commercialization and ideological inclinations during the course of their work. The purpose of this study was to investigate whether or not NGOs are functionally important in promoting human progress and community development at the grass root level. The specific objectives included: To assess whether or not NGOs are accountable, transparent and adequately represent the development aspiration of the community they target and to investigate whether or not NGOs over reliance on donor funding compromises the choice of the projects at expense of the target communities thus compromising their autonomy in service delivery. This research used two theories as its guiding principle; participatory theory and Neo-liberalism theory. This study assessed the following hypotheses: NGOs contribute to human progress/development in social-economic terms and the more accountable, transparent and consultative NGOs, the more their projects contribute positively to changing the lives of people. Primary data was collected through interviews and observations. Secondary data was collected through evaluation of some reports of the projects plan international Kenya, books, journals, articles, newspapers, and research reports. Internet, too, played key role as the source of secondary data. Primary data was collected using questionnaires which was administered to respondents who included Plan International project officials and key representatives of communities especially in Tharaka Nithi. Observation method was also be used in study the on-going projects. From the findings, due to the fact that NGOs are undercapitalized, they are very susceptible to donor pressure with their financial survival putting them at mission drift and assuming service responsibilities which may not be in the long term interest of the organization or the community. The study concluded that improvement in plan international issues mentioned in the study given the increasing call for and the enforcement of participation in NGO (plan international) activities, whereby communities play a role and also, a sustainable aspect being added to most NGO projects. The study recommends that if NGOs declare to represent their target groups, there should be a close relationship with these groups, including feedback and participation. Donors should be involved completely in Goals empowerment and participation which will lead to accountability.

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1.0 Introduction and Background

The global stage has witnessed controversy about the role of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in community development. Their actions have come under much scrutiny and their role as promoters of good causes in the society called into question on several accounts. Sharp focus has been on the NGOs performances, actual effectiveness, accountability issues, autonomy, commercialization and ideological inclinations during the course of their work. There are those who argue that the modern NGOs of twenty first century are mere elite lobbyists and trustee organizations located in city capitals with little touch with the communities they seek to develop. Whether it's in Africa, Asia or America this debate is intense on the role the NGOs play in community development.[1] Most NGOs operate in the developing world where most states have limited finances, are riddled with poor governance and corruption, and have failed to lead the development agenda for all of their citizens.[2] Within this context,those who propagate neoliberalism school of thought which believes that states are, or at least should be, concerned first and foremost with absolute gains rather than relative gains to other states argue strongly that there is a need to reduce government spending in order to enhance the role of the private sector in development. Since 1970s, NGOs have became crucial non-state actors in bridging the gap between citizens' needs and the limited government services. Indeed,provision of social services is seen to be key to community development; a strategy that empowers people at the grassroots level through people-centered approach. The United Nations defines community development as the process by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of government authorities to improve the

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[1] Vittorio, (1985); "Non-governmental organizations and development" in Finance and Development Vol. 22(3)

[2] Assokou, S.A., (2014), *Issues of Accountability in the NGO Sector*. Vol. 30 No. 3, pp. 569-587.

economic,social and cultural conditions of communities,to intergrate these communities into life of the nation and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress.[3]

According to Adebayo, the increased involvement of NGOs development work has led some observers and scholars to argue that there is a paradigm shift in politics, development and international relations theory.[4] The view is that NGOs are positive and progressive entities with idealistic light to the global society. The scholars view NGOs as development actors and main service providers in an area where government is unable to fulfill its traditional role. The ideological ascendency of neo-liberalism was accompanied by the rise of structural adjustment in aid policies, reductions in public expenditure, and the withdrawal of state-provided services. Within this radical reform, the market replaced the state at the center of development strategies and poverty lost its position as an explicit concern, given beliefs in the trickle-down effects of economic growth. Continued donor distrust and frustrations with states generated and fuelled interest in NGOs as desirable alternatives, viewing them favorably for their representation of beneficiaries and their role as innovators of new technologies and ways of working with the poor. A new aid regime had evolved in the 2000s era. It promises to move towards greater consultation between donors and recipients and a greater focus on poverty and responsibility for the nation-state and more participation of people the projects targets. In 1970s, the developing countries in Africa faced unprecedented pressure in their external accounts after global crisis. In some areas like sub-Saharan Africa, rapid population growth, adverse weather conditions such as drought and mismanagement of economy due to the political instability and corruption became major contributory factors for economic deterioration. NGOs were then taunted as the situation saviors. Today, however, critics argue that NGOs have not salvaged the problem much as they too are in self-seeking missions disguising as champions of rural development.[5]

Kenya with over 4,000 registered NGOs has deregistration close to 15 NGOs on the basis of threats to national security to justify tougher restrictions. Kenya authorities argue that

[3] Aydın, Z. (2013), "The World Bank and The Transformation of Turkish Agriculture" in Atilla Eralp et al. The Political and Socioeconomic Transformation of Turkey , Praeger Publishers, London.
[4] Adebayo, A. (2009).The Role of NGOs in Poverty Alleviation: A Poverty Alleviation in Nigeria,Selected Papers for the 1997 Annual Conference ofthe Nigeria Economic Society. Pp.397-414
[5] Ibid p.1,pp.67

these Organizations are in furtherance of other interests including funding terrorism and are not pursuing development agenda. In this year which is 2015, Russia, Egypt, Azerbaijan, South Sudan, and Cambodia. among many others, have been criticized by human rights watch for cracking down on civil society and other activists accusing NGOs of being nations' security threat and not development partners. Such allegations by states are indeed serious and beg the question, "Are NGOs functionally important in bettering lives or are they the cause of peoples' problems disguised as development moral carriers?"

The proposal will be assessing whether or not NGOs contribute to community development both socially and economically and whether they are accountable and transparent enough to grassroots people in the causes. The study will also explore whether NGOs overreliance on external funding compromises service delivery to the communities.

## 1.1 Statement of the Research Problem

The study investigates whether or not NGOs are functionally important in community development and their contributors to human progress at the grassroot level. It will also assess their level of accountability and transparency in the projects they execute in rural areas and assess whether their roles in community development are informed by their source of funds which compromises the quality of their service delivery. There has been heightened debate on NGOs squandering millions of dollars acquired in the name of the public through shoddy accounting and questionable contracting procedures. Others are alleged to be furthering their own interests and the interests of donors and doing little to change lives of the communities the funding was sought for. In Kenya, some NGOs were forced to close shops in year 2014 as a result of these allegations.

## 1.2 Objectives of the Research

## 1.2.1 Main / Overall Objective

The main objective was to investigate whether or not NGOs are functionally important in promoting human progress and community development at the grass root level.

## 1.2.2 Other Objectives

i. To assess whether or not NGOs are accountable, transparent and adequately represent the development aspiration of the community they target

ii. To investigate whether or not NGOs over reliance on donor funding compromises the choice of the projects at expense of the target communities thus compromising their autonomy in service delivery.

## 1.3 Justifications of the Study

In spite of the recognition and attention that NGOs have received lately including huge donor finding, there is little literature on their role and actual contribution to community development in Kenya. It is for this reason that this study seeks to bring forth empirical evidence on NGOs activities in their bid to uplift the lives of the grassroots people. By virtue of the fact that poverty still bites hard in communities where these NGOs are operating yet they are seen as "People-centered" agents of development and human progress, raises questions about their utility and thus the urgent need to interrogate their activities. An assessment of whether or not the projects they institute respond to the needs of the people and whether solutions are imposed to the people will be given primacy in this research.

## 1.3.1 Academic Justifications

My interest in the role of NGOs in community development has been stimulated by increased global debate that NGOs are busy pursuing their own selfish interest and doing little to change lives of the people they seek funding on their behalf. There is need to briefly establish whether poor and downtrodden members in Kenya are being used by NGOs as a channel to obtain donor funding using their plight. The research will further seek answers on impartiality, transparency and accountability of both actors i.e. NGOs and donors in bid to protect swindling of funds meant to develop targeted communities.

## 1.3.2 Policy Justifications

In the wake of many law makers, members of public and other stakeholders in several countries like Russia, Egypt, Azerbaijan, South Sudan, China, Singapore, Cambodia and

Kenya have instituted national debates in public domain and their parliaments on the role the NGOs plays in their states. This research may come in handy in offering insights to regulate civil society organizations in order to improve their effectiveness and accountability in course of their service delivery based on empirical data. This will lead in sealing loopholes that are used by self-benefit organizations branding themselves as public benefit organizations. In Kenya, the President assented into law PBO ACT 2013. The PBO ACT 2013 is a new ACT to provide for the formations, operations and growth of Public Benefits Organizations (PBOs); to establish a regulatory and institutional framework within which Public Benefits Organizations can conduct their affairs and for such other connected purposes. However, Civil Society Organizations are lobbying for the review of the Act. This research could be cited as a reference in offering insights for Act review.

## 1.4 Literature Review

Relevant literature will be reviewed to know what other scholars have argued and also look for literature gaps. Relevant literature reviewed is on the concept of NGOs, evolution of NGOs, NGOs and community Development, NGOs accountability and transparency, NGOs in Africa, Kenya and Tharaka and also literature on Plan International.

## 1.4.1 Concept of NGO

The philosophy behind NGOs is based on altruism, charity, efficiency, diversity, pluralism, people's participation, cooperation and institutional autonomy. In the Tim brood head book "Bridges of Hope; Canadian Voluntary Agencies and Third World" he asserts that NGOs base their activities on the principle of altruism, because they care for wellbeing of others and respond to the needs of other people without imposing solutions to them. They are autonomist, distinctive and independent from states. They believe in the concept of "bottom - up". NGOs mobilize resources in cost effective fashion. According to Stiglitz, NGOs break patterns of dependency by helping people to help

themselves and by strengthening peoples' institutions.[6] There have been varied definitions of NGOs both narrow and broad. Narrow definition refers to a specific type of organization working in the field of development, one that works with people to help them improve their social and economic situation and prospects. In general within the international context, the UN has conceptualized and preferred the usage of 'NGO' as follows: Any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group that is organized on a local, national and international level. Task oriented and driven by people with a common interest, NGOs perform a variety of service and humanitarian functions, bring citizen concerns to governments, advocate and monitor policies and encourage political participation through provision of information. Some are organized around the specific issues, such as human rights, environment and health. They provide analysis and expertise serve as early warning mechanisms, help monitor and implement international agreement.'[7]

World Bank defines NGO as the groups and institutions that are entirely or largely independent of governmental and characterized primarily by humanitarian or cooperative, rather than commercial objectives.[8] It was failures of state-led development advances throughout the 1970s and 1980s that fuelled interest in NGOs as a development alternative. These was occasioned by Britton woods institutions interventions that was offering innovative and people-centered approaches to service delivery focused on NGOs and private institutions interventions on advocacy and empowerment. While NGOs and their position within the development sector have risen dramatically, the taxonomy of NGOs remains problematic. Emerging from long-term traditions of philanthropy and self-help, NGOs vary widely in origin and levels of formality which a times creates doubts on their professionalism and accountability. Some definitions of 'NGO' have been suggested by legal status, economic and/or financial considerations, functional areas, and their organizational features – that NGOs are both non-state and self-governing. Frequently, too, NGOs have been classified by what they are not (neither government, nor profit-driven organizations), rather than what they are, highlighting their differences to and

[6] Stiglitz, Joseph (2008): Non- Governmental organizations: *The Private Uses of Public Interests: Incentives and Institutions and Institutions.* The Journal of Economic Perspective 12.2: 2-32.
[7] UN Charter
[8] The World Bank's Operational Directive on NGOs (No.14 70 August 1970) defined the the term of 'NGOs' as (Cited in Korten,1991:21):

distance from the state and private sectors, who have yet to meet the interests of poor and disadvantaged groups.

The growth of NGOs over the past two decades has given them an increasingly important role and has led them to form a distinctive sector within civil society. Most of the sociologists define NGOs as organisations which possess four defining characteristics which enable them to be distinguished from other organisations in civil society. These are; voluntary, dependent, not-for profit, self-serving. When we look at it globally it can be explained that, the explosion of NGOs has been happening in the context of a world which has been over the past few decades, characterized by rapid, complex and often unpredictable political, institutional, environmental, demographic, social and economic changes, which show no sign of ending. The past decade in particular has seen dramatic changes at global level that have been a fundamental impact on societies everywhere. In 1970s and 1980s, developing countries faced unprecedented pressure in their external accounts after this consecutive international economic crisis.[9]Additionally, some areas like sub-Saharan Africa, rapid population growth, adverse weather conditions such as drought and mismanagement of economy due to the political instability and corruption became major contributory factors for economic deterioration. The African leadership believed that the private sector was too backward and that government had to play the dominant role. This belief translated into the socialist approach to development in which all aspects of economic development were primarily government-driven.

The central recommendation of the report of the World Bank was for governments to refrain from intervention in their economies and liberate market forces by freeing foreign trade and currency exchange from controls.[10] The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and Western donors developed and advocated precondition for structural adjustment loans and sectorial adjustment loans, commonly referred to as Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), which emphasized macroeconomic stabilization, privatization and free market development. SAPs were anchored on the tenets of neoliberalism which is an approach to economic and social studies in which control of

[9] World Bank. (1996a). The World Bank's Partnership with Nongovernmental Organizations. Washington D. C: Participation and NGO Group, Poverty and Social Policy Department/The World Bank
[10] WORLD BANK's Berg Report (1981) *Towards Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa*

economic factors is shifted from the public sector to the private sector. Drawing upon principles of neoclassical economics. neoliberalism suggests that governments reduce deficit spending, limit subsidies, reform tax law to broaden the tax base, remove fixed exchange rates, open up markets to trade by limiting protectionism, privatize state-run businesses, allow private property and back deregulation.[11]

The downsizing of the public sector institutions and massive privatizations led to net job losses; the budget restrictions compromised of social service delivery on communities at the grassroots level and human capital development. Most importantly, SAPs failed to yield the envisaged growth outcomes as the annual economic growth for Africa over the 1990s averaged only 2.1 per cent.[12] This led to impoverishing people at the villages due to minimal government spending where interventions were highly needed. SAPs have been ineffective and insufficient to offset the damages caused.[13] As the 1990s approached, there were increasing calls from NGOs for "adjustment with a human face", which implied paying more attention to the social dimension of development, the role of the state in the process and it's in this loophole that the NGOs came to seal. The philosophy behind NGOs is based on altruism, charity, efficiency, diversity, pluralism, people's participation, cooperation and institutional autonomy. In the Tim brood head book "Bridges of Hope; Canadian Voluntary Agencies and Third World" he asserts that NGOs base their activities on the principle of altruism, because they care for well – being of others and respond to the needs of other people without imposing solutions to them. They are autonomist, distinctive and independent from states. They believe in the concept of "bottom – up" NGOs. NGOs mobilize resources in cost-effective fashion. They break patterns of dependency by helping people to help themselves and by strengthening peoples' institutions.

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[11] Faith J.(2009). Operation mechanisms of NGOs; enhancing NGO operations in Africa. *Kabianga University, Master's Thesis.*
[12] Economic commission for Africa
[13] Mukundi H. (2007). How-the-imf-world-bank-and-structural-adjustment-programsap-destroyed-africa. Connecticut. pg. 16

## 1.4.2 Evolution of NGOs

NGOs have diverse and myriad origins; they are heterogeneous in nature with differing characteristics and activities. This makes the actual definition of NGOs elusive. Many NGO presents a situation of confusion and universe with varying entities with some ambiguity. However, there is consensus among scholars on the emergence and formation of NGOs. Alan argues that emergence of and formation of NGOs is a clear manifestation of misrepresentation of interests and objectives of a group within a state in political and governance system. [14] A paper by freedom from hunger campaign (FFHO) and food and Agriculture organization (FAO) submitted in Rome in 1985 asserted that; ............ an NGO emanates and operates in solid, dynamic and historical situations. Its existence is related to certain social drives and demands of the civil society which cascades political, social and cultural viewpoints. Simon holds that African NGOs propped up as survival entities. Simon argues that it's only through NGOs that survival for existence could be guaranteed and crucial changes in conditions of living could be improved. During the 1990s, the labor conditions were harsh and exploitation of scarce resources was high. These views are testimonies that NGOs a times could be an answer to social, economic, political and other problems bedeviling the society. In Europe and North America NGOs had those roots from the Christian tradition and way of life. Majority linked to missionary activities closely fed to religions and philanthropic movements aimed at helping victims of war in Europe at that time. Their core mandate was relief and welfare. This was the pressing need at that time. [15]

After Europe regained composure and recuperated from pangs of war, these NGOs extended this relief and welfare to the third world countries, Africa included. Relief and welfare organizations majored in individual needs like floods, famine, war and providing shelter and health services. These organizations were short-lived since they provided short-term benefits. [16] Sustainability of the project was put into spot light. They were

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[14] Allan mash. (2011). *Way forward; NGO and donor funding.* Macmillan, pp.161-176.
[15] Riisgaard, L. (2009). Global value chains, labor organization and private social standards: Lessons from East African cut flower industries. *World Development, 37*(2), 326-340.
[16] Uphoff, N. (2003). Grassroots organizations and NGOs in rural development: Opportunities with diminishing states and expanding markets. *World Development, 21*(4), 607-622.

criticized as attacking the symptoms of the problem rather than addressing the root cause of the problem. In 1960s and 1970s, seculars NGOs emerged with the vision of providing long-term solutions to the problems of the various groups. They aimed at long-term community development strategies with the message of self-reliance of the locals. Examples of OXFAM and Techno serve are ideal. In this period, the number of secular NGOs in Europe and North America has grown substantially. Reports on 1981 census on NGOs in the industrialized organization for economic cooperation and different (OECD) countries showed that there were over 1,702 NGOs, USA had 428, Canada 149, France 119, Britain III, West Germany 90, and Sweden 84 (Berg, 1987:4) These NGOs were conveyor belt to channel assistance to over 20,000 other NGOs in the south. Currently, the number has tripled. NGOs took more shape and presence after $2^{nd}$ world and it's when they institutionalized themselves and heightened international development agenda and gradual shift of vision from charity (relief and welfare) to local self-reliance initiatives. However, critics argue that the vision shift during 1980s and 1990s was rhetorical as their activities and programs remained largely unchanged.

## 1.4.3 Community development

NGOs have been universally accepted as viable channels of development in rural areas of the Third World Countries.[17] States were not very successful agents of the social economic change. African governments have demonstrated scanty capacity to raise rural standards of living with little resources being channeled to communities. It is this short comings of the states that made them cede ground to NGOs on issues of social economic transformation of rural villages of Africa. [18]Goran Hyden, Masoni, Bratton streeten and other scholars have a congruence point in that NGOs have a comparative advantage over governments when it comes to serving the communities at the rural areas.[19] They assert that NGOs provides effective and efficient mechanism and options on achieving micro-economic and social-political aspirations of the grassroots communities than the states.

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[17] Oda L. (2009). *Common property resources: ecology and community-based sustainable development.* Belhaven Press.

[18] Boit G. (2004). *Support systems and community mental health: Lectures on concept development.* Behavioral Publications.

[19] Friedmann, J. (1992). *Empowerment: the politics of alternative development.* Blackwell.

These scholars sums up that the states are majorly concerned with macro-economic aspect of the whole nation while NGOs believes small-is-beautiful and hence they lay emphasis on micro-development strategies. However, it should be noted that states are the primary actors and can break NGOs. States have coercive power and political clout and the survival of any NGO in any state largely depends in the conducive environment that is offered by the host governments.[20]

The macro approach of the states hinders their touch to the grassroots people. NGOs are closer to people at community level and poor sectors of the society. Staffs of the NGOs are transferred to the local area where projects are and they interact with locals and ultimately develops affinity and closer relationships with people. Philanthropic factors rather than monetary gains are the rallying call to the NGOs and staff. High red tape tendencies associated with states are minimal on NGOs and activities are flexible and change with little intervention and mistakes are rectified with ease. These minimizes wastages of the resources and quick ways of getting feedback without undue delays and therefore projects are able to completely much quickly compared to those champions by states. [21]NGOs' independence and autonomy motivates them to deliver results. NGOs have the ability and the preparedness to experiment orthodox ideas and practices. They have the capacity and ability to bring out succinctly the rural realities and through application of experience acquire faster learning. [22]

The literature of NGOs is also rich in sustainable development and is defined as the development strategy that manages resources so that they provide for the need of today while ensuring resources are available for tomorrows needs (ICVA, 1988:2) Therefore, sustainable development is characterized by durability, self-supporting and long-lasting projects. Sustainable development requires maximum utilization of appropriate and locally available resources, notes ICVA policy documents. Human and mental resources

[20] Mary A. (2013). *Children's participation: The theory and practice of involving young citizens in community development and environmental care*. Routledge.
[21] Getz, D. (1995). Collaboration theory and community tourism planning. *Annals of tourism research*, *22*(1), 186-204.
[22] Pawar, M. S., & Cox, D. R. (Eds.). (2011). *Social development: Critical themes and perspectives*. Routledge.

used as ingredient for sustainable development must be in consonance with the needs and the values of the locals.

NGOs philosophy is anchored on believe that their projects gives lasting benefits to people because procurement of lasting benefits is the essence of sustainability. NGOs are perceived to have insights on the needs of the communities; this has captured psyche of the scholars. Larry Minear argues that NGOs wherever they are share a common root; democratization of the development process. [23]NGOs place the decision making process and the development agenda to the target communities. They assert NGOs are practitioners of the development concept since they emphasize on people involvement in the decision making in the projects that are being done on their own behalf. Some authors have given local participation a critical look. Judith Tendler has assembled critical mass of proof that participation is not necessarily green light card to successful projects. Citing cases in Korea, India, Upper Volta and El Salvador, she argues elite' participation is crucial at times at expense of locals whose majority are interested on satisfaction of the immediate needs. Those scholars of the idea "Popular participation and development" asserts that participation carries along many fruits. Participation builds self-reliance by building abilities of the locals. It donates experience and skills to manage the projects. They help in capacity building for organizations, sharpens locals to know the importance of cost-benefit analysis when doing business and effectiveness as a source of success. A United Nation Cum NGO workshop on September 1987 on 'debt adjustment and the needs of the poor' sponsored by CIDA, ILO, UNICEF, World Bank and World Food Programme emphasized that NGOs must support the effort of the poor to empower themselves. [24]

### 1.4.4 NGOs Accountability, Transparency and Criticism

NGOs in Africa do not really want to eradicate poverty and institutionalize democracy in Africa, but intend to keep Africans poor and needy in order to justify their own existence. In fact, they have never been intending to achieve these goals but have always

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[23] Ibid p.10, p.34
[24] Wheeler, D., Rechtman, R., Fabig, H., & Boele, R. (2011). Shell, Nigeria and the Ogoni. A study in unsustainable development: III. Analysis and implications of Royal Dutch/Shell group strategy. *Sustainable Development, 9*(4), 177.

worked towards maintaining the status quo and benefiting rich, often foreign, elite instead of helping local people, Amutabi asserts emphatically. The idea of accountability is far and wide with organizations and individuals being put on toes to account for resources they manage. The Merriam Webster dictionary defines accountability as "the quality of being accountable, an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to accept to account for one's actions". Recently NGOs have been called to be accountable and transparent to those they serve.

Scholars like Edward and Zadek have suggested that NGOs should demonstrate accountability and lead by example.[25] Goetz and Jenkins emphasize on placing check and balances on the authority of the mighty and powerful so that ordinary people can receive the intended benefits and to avert subversion which affects governance. NGOs accountability and transparency leads to communities' enjoyment of wider right and enables deeper entrenchment of democracy. Service provision is the fastest growing in the international NGO work due to enormous funding this organizations are receiving from official development assistance (ODA) since1980s has increased by 1,800% . NGOs have been questioned on basis whether intended beneficiaries are better off after completion of the projects and whether the NGOs are transparent and accountable to the communities they execute these projects on their behalf. Highly charged debates on neo liberal activities of NGOs with some scholars saying the NGOs activities are misinformed good intentions that are paving way to hell while others are of the opinions that staffs of these NGOs are self.-seekers who are on daily basis making communities lords of property.

A key flipside of the NGOs from western capitals working in the overseas is that they impose this interests and agenda on the people. By virtue they are 100% founded by foreigners is a worry to the host governments. .In Kenya substantial capital and operational budget of the NGOs are met from external donors. Huge by external funding of these NGOs makes they have immense political, cultural and economic influence.

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[25] Edward and Zadek D., (Eds.), (2006), *Beyond the Magic Bullet. NGO Performance and Accountability in the Post-Cold War World*, Connecticut, Kumarian Press

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Others are concerned over the ever rising member of "Briefcase NGOs". Due to over reliance on external funding, Edward and David Hulme puts NGOs into the worry of antagonizing their funders and put their livelihood in jeopardy. This has led the communities they serve to see them as being less independent and illegitimate in their case. Keen interests paid by NGOs to the donor whims undermines the needs of the beneficiaries NGOs are accused of emphasizing on the quantifiable out puts which are short-term rather than looking at systematic change just in the bid to satisfy their funders.

Tax exemption NGOs receive doesn't augur well with some people. Public interest watch (PIW) lambasts that NGOs are grabbing huge sum of money meant for public that doesn't belong to them in the name of the tax exemption. For many organizations there are large problems and challenges to disclose their information, finances and organization governance structure thus posing a huge stumbling block towards accountability and transparency. For example in Philippines over 100 NGOs were asked about dealings on finances and only 10 responded. Finances are not the only thing NGOs withhold, to publish systematic and externally audited accounts of their non-financial performance is a problem. Governance in some NGOs is a one-man-show with senior managers having complete autonomy to decide strategy, salaries and operation. However Wyatt asserts that there is need to separate management of NGOs and governance as a basic cornerstone of development. Transparency of the engagement on the activities of the NGOs is key. If engagement with NGOs is submerged in secret then accountability is a mirage and will ultimately be undermined. NGOs are being criticized and their philosophical justification of NGOs in general questioned. Scholars have begun to doubt them, like Paul Streeten wonders whether NGOs projects lives up to what they claim to have achieved. [26]In Kenya, the year 2014 there was crackdown on several NGOs on the belief that some are threat to national security and are of decoy used in funding AlShabaab's and youth radicalization. This led to parliament into initiating a security bill which is currently subject to courtroom battles.

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[26] Streeten, B. (2008). Democratizing Development: NGOs and the State, *Development in Practice*, 2, 3, p.151-162

## 1.4.5 NGOs in Africa

According to Stiglitz indigenous African NGOs roots can be traced from inspirations of the NGOs from the Europe and North America (West). Others are locally induced or inspired by the African need which shows that the concept of NGOs is not new to the people of Africa. [27] NGOs are voluntary in nature and are as a result of agitation to address a common need of people to accomplish certain ends as a communal entity. African people are known to live communally historically for purposes of attaining their own development and preserve culture. In the pre-colonial days in Africa, people were fighting for the rights to liberty land and against white domination communally. Division of labour was evident. There were role for men, women and children and were distinct. Africans lived in the ambience of doing things together and collectively this made NGOs easily emerge. They were communal self-help organizations with reciprocal exchange of the resources. Mostly they had clan and family ties. These entities though not fully pledged voluntary NGOs, they share some behaviors and similarities. We can therefore term them as fetus for African NGOs we witness at modern times.

In 1960s and 1970s, majority of states in Africa got independence and supported various producer cooperatives, peasant associations and various community based self-help groups. Many missionary and religious groups set their foot in Africa at that period working in collaboration with above organizations. Church played a key role in providing health and education to poor families e.g. catholic and protestant churches. Fowler suggest that there are over 3,000 NGOs from Europe and America operating in the developing countries including Africa among them 1,800 one from west Europe and Japan 6000 from U.S and 220 from Canada. Ng'ethe notes NGOs in African have speedily grown in size and members. [28] He suggests there are over 10,000 NGOs operating in Africa The reason why it's hard to know the actual number of NGOs in Africa is that some governments have no effective NGOs monitoring tools and also this

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[27] Ibid
[28] Nge'the, D. (2006) "Bridging the gap?: the parallel universes of the non-profit and non-governmental organisation research traditions and the changing context of voluntary action", *Public Management Review*, Vol. 5 Issue 3, pp. 325–344

NGOs some don't register formally with relevant bodies in the government. This poses challenge of knowing exact numbers. [29]

NGOs have grown in Africa due to various agencies losing trust in the run-away mismanagement in African government.[30] These NGOs are now being perceived as agents of development and are receiving direct funding. This has encouraged many to start NGOs to receive the money. Ng'ethe and Fowler have noted separately that NGOs receive over US $ 1.5 B from foreign agencies. European Economic Community offers over US $ 700 Billion via NGOs and a whooping a $ 1 B goes to NGOs with operations in Africa Canada in 1984 set funds only for Africa which led to flooding of Canadian NGOs in the African soil. In 1988 there were over 300 Canadian NGOs in Africa whose primary objective was international development. Samuel captures this mood more precisely ..." It has become necessary to form NGOs to get money that must be given out without delay ... I certainly believe any group that registers NGO can find funds for its operation somewhere in the west",. [31]This contention elucidates the multitude of the NGOs being witnessed in Africa. International council for of voluntary agencies (ICVA) have internalized activities of NGOs. This international recognition has topped up impetus of NGOs have made them gain cover on even multilateral agencies like IMF and World Bank. This elevation of NGOs status in the global area in sectors of community development has created fertile ground for them to grow and diversify their activities in Africa. [32]

## 1.4.6 NGOs in Kenya

Kenya is one of the African countries leading in NGOs estimated to be over 3,000 with several registered self-help groups mostly women groups. Like everywhere NGOs in Kenya are not homogeneous they vary in size operations, origin, values and

[29] Dean, H. (2011). 10 The Ethics of Social Development. *Social development: Critical themes and perspectives.*
[30] Ibid p.15
[31] Samuel K. (2010). Issues of Accountability in the NGO Sector. *International research on financial organizations.* Vol. 30 No. 3, pp. 569-587
[32] Lisa M. (2015). 'Foreign assistance, international norms, and NGO development: lessons from the Russian Campaign', *International Organization* 59(2): 419-449

characteristics.[33] The harambee spirit in Kenya places historical importance of Africans attitude of doing things together which made it easy for emergence of self-voluntary association and also the influx of many international NGOs into the country. Therefore, we can say with certain terms that NGOs in Kenya are not culturally foreign they are built on the communal traditional of self-help; a culture that brought conducive environment for NGOs to thrive in.[34] NGOs in Kenya are involved in Myriad activities, prior to independence during colonialism they were involved in charity work and evangelical work, at this time voluntary NGOs were very few and those who were there pre-occupied with religious and charity interests. The floods of 1960s opened flood gates for relief organizations. By early 1970s, Kenya had over 125 NGOs both indigenous and foreign NGOs e.g. CARE (Cooperation of American Relief Everywhere). The present picture painted by NGOs with operations in Kenya is that most of them have keen eye on development of the communities and among them is plan international Kenya. Relief is no longer an area of interest. NGOs currently have permeated all sectors of the economy in Kenya and their activities spanning countrywide.

## 1.4.7 NGOs in Tharaka

Tharaka community is part of the larger Meru community. Ameru people are bounds with the culture of the "Communalism" The phrase "ngwantaniro" which means co-operation is the spirit which is in the hearts of majority of locals. Among the Tharaka people clans are very important part of their way of life. People inhabit places and settle as clans. This cooperation spirit see members of a clan come together and mobilize all other clan members to come into assist a member in dire need of something and whoever fails to come into rescue of their member gets the wrath of clan members. Such self-help clan voluntary organizations were referred to us "gutethania" which means assisting one another."[35] It could be construed that this groups represent altruism, voluntarism and cooperation which are the pillars under which NGOs are anchored globally. Tharaka people tradition is rich with activities injuring the rights of the women and children like

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[33] Kameri-Mbote, P. (2000). The Operational Environment and Constraints for NGOs in Kenya.
[34] Bwibo, A. (2000). *A survey of strategic change management practices within no governmental organisations (NGOs) In Kenya* (Doctoral dissertation).
[35] Kanyinga, K. (1993). The Social-Political Context of the Growth of NGOs in Kenya.

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FGM. The area is relatively dry and has attracted a number of NGOs including Plan international, compassion international ,JICA, CIDA, CARE Kenya, Action aid, Each One Feed One, Catholic Church Diocese of Meru, This literature lay emphasis on Plan International.

## 1.4.8 Plan International

It was founded 75 years ago. It's one of the largest NGOs dealing with development of the children in the world. The plan international has operations and offices in 51 developing countries cascading across Africa ad America. Its major focus is to fight prevalent abject poverty among children as well as promoting their rights. Last year 2014 plan international was working with 86, 676 communities at the grass route levels globally among them Tharaka community that occupy Tharaka constituency. It has no roots in religions, Political and government dealings. [36] Plan international vision is to make all children realize their full potential in societies that respects rights of others.

Plan international aim is to achieve everlasting improvements in quality of life which children in developing nations hardly get. This helps children to reduce the meaning and value of life. In Africa Plan International operates in Benin Burkina Faso , Cameroon, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In America they have operations in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru. In Asia plan international has operational offices in Bangladesh Cambodia, Dina, India, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam. Set foot in Kenya sort 1982. Its core mandates were to help deprived children access better health, education, sanitation and protection.

To date more than 800,000 people in various rural Kenya either in CBOs, children clubs, farmers, youth and women have received help from Plan International. They focus on the causes of poverty and address them. They also manage cultural practices that hamper

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[36] Bratton, M. (2009). The politics of government-NGO relations in Africa. *World Development, 17*(4), 569-587.

progress of the girl child.[37] Generally Plan International aim to reduce poverty, raise children voices, support orphans and vulnerable children in the societies. Plan International started operations in Tharaka in 2002. Tharaka programme unit covers a population of 162, 150 persons in two sub counties of Tharaka North and Tharaka South. In the two sub-counties, Plan has sponsored 5,872 children. In this constituency Plan International has three programs that the research will be seeking to analyze and see whether the projects since 2002 have contributed to progress of the residents. On Hygiene the project is involved in the construction of 14 water points for 1,250 residents. On FGM, the programme aim to eradicate FGM through involvement of various stakeholders e.g. judiciary, police, cultural leaders, individuals and legislature. On Economic Security this programme aims at enhancing financial stability of the resident by promoting saving that can help locals' access loans. This is done via village saving and loans association (VSLA)

## 1.5 Theoretical Framework

This research used two theories as its guiding principle; participatory theory and Neo-liberalism theory.

### 1.5.1 Participatory theory/People – centered approach

The clamor for participatory theory or people driven development approaches emerged championed by the NGOs. The participatory theory argues that for development to occur there must be greater understanding of the social economic and political terrains of people, enhanced competence to solve ones' problems, greater control of social economic resources, mutual respect and uphold dignity of others and interactions with all other group on basis of equality.[38]

Assumptions of the theory include:

- Participation is a good thing in itself.

[37] Jenkins, K. (2004). The Christian church as an NGO in Africa: supporting post-independence era state legitimacy or promoting change?. *The Changing Politics of Non-Governmental Organizations and African Studies. Praeger Westport, Connecticut USA*, 83-99.

[38] ibid

- Projects initiated via wide consultation are bound to succeed and change lives.

- Participation brings equity; equitable development and distribution of resources and benefits.

- Involvement of people utilizes available resources locally.

- Involvement of people leads to improving knowledge and skills of locals and hence improves their self-reliance.

- Participation makes people to own the project and the idea behind it.

There is debate about whether or not NGOs have fully adopted this approach/theory. Some have argued that NGOs are not true agents of development because they have failed to place development and decision making processes in the hands of the targeted people. This has made NGOs not to identify themselves with people's needs, problems, aspirations, priorities and solutions. However there are those

## 1.5.2 Neo-liberalism theory

Another approach critical to this research is Neo-liberalism theory. Neo-liberalism is an approach in economic and social studies in which control of economic factors is shifted from the public sector to the private sector. Drawing upon principles of neoclassical economics, neoliberals' suggests that governments reduce deficit spending, limit subsidies, reform tax law to broaden the tax base, remove fixed exchange rates, open up markets to trade by limiting protectionism, privatize state-run businesses, allow private property and back deregulation.[39] This theory was applied to the developing world by IMF and World Bank which led to downsizing of the public sector institutions and massive privatizations. The consequence was net job losses with the budget restrictions compromising social service delivery on communities at the grassroots level and human capital development[40]. Thus, as the 1990s approached, there were increasing calls from NGOs for "structural adjustment programs with a human face", which implied paying

[39] Jessop, B. (2002). Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism and Urban Governance: A State Theoretical Perspective. *Antipode, 34*(3), 452-472.

[40] Foucault, M., Ewald, F., & Fontana, A. (2010). *The birth of biopolitics: lectures at the College de France, 1978-1979.* M. Senellart (Ed.). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

more attention to the social dimension of development and the role of the state in this process and it's this loophole NGOs came seal.

## 1.6 Hypotheses of the study

It is clear that there are serious questions, generally and in the case of Kenya, about the contribution of some NGOs to development. This study assessed the following hypotheses:

1. NGOs contribute to human progress/development in social-economic terms.
2. The more accountable, transparent and consultative NGOs, the more their projects contribute positively to changing the lives of people.

## 1.7 Methodology of the study

A number of research methods were deployed to collect data on this study. Primary data was collected through interviews and observations. Secondary data was collected through evaluation of some reports of the projects plan international Kenya, books, journals, articles, newspapers, and research reports. Internet, too, played key role as the source of secondary data. Primary data was collected using questionnaires which was administered to respondents who included Plan International project officials and key representatives of communities especially in Tharaka Nithi. Observation method was also be used in study the on-going projects. The plan international Kenya as the NGOs to be studied in the case was drawn from the National Council of NGOs website[41] .

A descriptive survey design was used in the study. The study focused on the role NGOs play in enhancing socio-economic development of communities. The study also sought to ascertain how transparent, accountable and consultative these NGOs are to people they seek funding on behalf. Data collected was analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative data collected was analyzed in unison with themes to bring forth inferences from opinions and perceptions of the respondents. Quantitative data was analyzed using

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[41] Bratton, M. (2009). The politics of government-NGO relations in Africa. *World Development, 17*(4), 569-587.

statistical package for social science (SPSS). Data calculated was frequencies, mean and percentages. Presentation of data was done via tables, graphs and pie-charts.

## 1.7.1 Sample size

A sample size of 5% of the beneficiary was drawn from every project under investigation except for sole proprietorship project where the owner was the only target respondent. This sample size included both project leaders and the beneficiaries. They was randomly being picked for interviews. Time limits and financial resources determined sample size in projects have many beneficiaries. The information obtained was coded on sheets and various statistical tools used to tabulate and analyze e.g. frequency distribution, tables, charts and graphs

## 1.8 Scope and Limitations

The study covers expansive Tharaka constituency in Tharaka Nithi County. The study will look into various projects initiated by plan international. Responses from beneficiaries and community representatives on their impacts will be sought in terms of promoting their lives. With a population of over 150,000 people and area covering over 1,600 square kilometers, financial resources and time will constrain the researcher. Also anticipated is some respondents not being cooperative

## 1.9 Chapter outline

This project is organized into five chapters with an introduction and conclusion of the themes discussed in every chapter.

Chapter one gives a general introduction to the study. It provides the background of the study, the problem statement, objectives, hypothesis, theoretical framework, literature review and methodology in relation to the role of non-governmental organizations in community development.

Chapter two analyses the important of NGOs in promoting human progress and community development at the grass root level.it is divided in the following subtopics: General Overview of NGOS, Human Progress and Community Development at the Grass

Root Level, Important Ideologies and Development Goals in the NGO Paradigm (grass root NGOs), NGOs as an Alternative Approach to Development in the Third World, The Spectrum of NGO Activities in the Modern World, NGOs: Agents of Development, NGOs as Sub-Set of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Failure of Economic Development in the Third World and Ngo Growth and finally the conclusion.

Chapter three discusses accountability, transparency and representation of NGOs and development community. It is classified in the following topics: Non-Governmental Organizations and accountability, Strengthening NGO accountability, Non-Governmental Organizations and Transparency, NGOs and Grassroots Community Representation, Link between NGO accountability and transparency, Trends on NGOs Reliance on Donor Funding and Target Communities Service Delivery, Strategic Interdependence between Local NGOs and Foreign Donors and finally the conclusion.

Chapter four analyzes the research findings on the role of non-governmental organizations in community development.

Chapter five presents the discussion, conclude and recommend on the role of non-governmental organizations in community development.

# CHAPTER TWO

## IMPORTANCE OF NGOS IN PROMOTING HUMAN PROGRESS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AT THE GRASS ROOT LEVEL

### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter analysis important of NGOs in promoting human progress and community development at the grass root level.it is divided in the following subtopics: General Overview of NGOS, Human Progress and Community Development at the Grass Root Level, Important Ideologies and Development Goals in the NGO Paradigm (grass root NGOs), NGOs as an Alternative Approach to Development in the Third World, The Spectrum of NGO Activities in the Modern World, NGOs: Agents of Development, NGOs as Sub-Set of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Failure of Economic Development in the Third World and Ngo Growth and finally the conclusion.

### 2.1 General Overview of NGOS, Human Progress and Community Development at the Grass Root Level

According to Adebayo, non-governmental organizations or NGOs are generally accepted to be organizations which have not been established by governments or agreements among governments.[42] Non-profit literature the term 'voluntary organization' is commonly used for domestic third sector organizations. NGO literature the umbrella term 'non-governmental organization' is generally used throughout, although the category 'NGO' may be broken down into specialized organizational sub-groups such as 'public service contractors', 'people's organizations', 'voluntary organizations' and even 'governmental NGOs' or 'grassroots support organizations' and 'membership support organizations'.[43] Non-governmental', 'third sector' or 'not-for profit' organizations have in recent years become high profile actors within public policy landscapes at local, national and global levels. Around the world, there is an increasing commitment to the delivery of social services through involving neither voluntary organizations which are

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[42] Adebayo, A. (2009).The Role of NGOs in Poverty Alleviation: A Poverty Alleviation in Nigeria, *Selected Papers for the Annual Conference of the Nigeria Economic Society*. Pp.397-414

[43] Ibid

neither government agencies directed by the state nor organizations committed to the 'for-profit' ethos of the business world. Formal (professionalized) independent societal organizations whose primary aim is to promote common goals at the national or the international level". Ahmad defines NGOs as "private organizations that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development." In wider usage, the term NGO can be applied to any non-profit organization which is independent from government. [44] NGOs are typically value-based organizations which depend, in whole or in part, on charitable donations and voluntary service. [45] Although the NGO sector has become increasingly professionalized over the last two decades, principles of altruism and voluntarism remain key defining characteristics. While the term "NGOs" is sometimes used interchangeably with "grassroots organizations," "social movements," "major groups," and "civil society." NGOs are not the same as any of these. Grassroots organizations are generally locally organized groups of individuals which have spring up to empower their members and take action on particular issues of concern to them. Some NGOs are grassroots organizations. But many are not. Social movements are broader and more diffuse than organizations, a social movement encompasses a broad segment of society which is interested in fomenting or resisting social change in some particular issue area, such as disarmament, environmental, civil rights, or women's movements. A social movement may include NGOs and grassroots organizations. "Major groups" is a term coined at the time of the United Nations Rio "Earth Summit" as a part of Agenda 21 to encompass the societal sectors which were expected to play roles, in addition to nation-states and intergovernmental organizations, in environment and development. NGOs are identified as one of these sectors, but NGOs overlap with many of the other sectors; there are women's NGOs, farmers' NGOs, labor NGOs, and business NGOs, among others. Finally "civil society" is a term that became popularized at the end of the Cold War to describe what appeared to have been missing in state-dominated societies, broad societal participation in and concern for governance, but not necessarily

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[44] Ahmad, M. (2012). "*Who cares? The personal and professional problems of NGO fieldworkers in Bangladesh* ", Development in Practice, Volume 12, Number 2

[45] Bob, C. (2012). 'Merchants of morality', *Foreign Policy*, March-April 2012: 36-45.

government. Civil society is thought to be the necessary ingredient for democratic governance to arise. NGOs are one part of civil society.[46]

According to Brown and Moore, NGOs are the voice of the people representing grassroots democracy. A counter argument is made that NGOs have tended to reinforce, rather than counter the existing power structures, having members and headquarters that are primarily in the rich northern countries. Some also believe that NGO decision-making does not provide for responsible, democratic representation or accountability.[47] NGOs themselves can be local, national or international. Sometimes international NGOs are referred to as INGOs.[48] Historically, most NGOs accredited to the UN Economic and Social Council has been international, but contrary to the popular wisdom, even the first group of NGOs accredited to ECOSOC in the 1940s included some national NGOs. Non-governmental organizations are not a homogenous group. The long list of acronyms that has accumulated around NGOs can be used to illustrate this. People speak of NGOs, INGOs (international NGOs), BINGOs (business international NGOs), RINGOs (religious international NGOs), ENGOs (environmental NGOs), GONGOs (government-operated NGOs which may have been set up by governments to look like NGOs in order to qualify for outside aid), QUANGOs (quasi-nongovernmental organizations i.e. those that are at least partially created or supported by states), and many others. While some other groups are nongovernmental, they are not usually included under the term NGO.[49] The term usually explicitly excludes for-profit corporations and private contractors, and multinational corporations (MNCs), although associations formed by MNCs, such as the International Chamber of Commerce, are considered NGOs. Similarly, political parties, liberation movements and terrorist organizations are not usually considered NGOs. However, some from outside the field of international organization especially military

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[46] Ibid p.21,p78

[47] Brown, D.L., and Moore, M.H., (2011), "Accountability, Strategy, and International Nongovernmental Organizations", *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, Vol. 30 No. 3, pp. 569-587

[48] Nge'the, D. (2006) "*Bridging the gap?: the parallel universes of the non-profit and non-governmental organization research traditions and the changing context of voluntary action*", Public Management Review, Vol. 5 Issue 3, pp. 325–344

[49] Baitenman, Helga (2010), "*NGOs and Afghan War: The Politicization of Humanitarian Aid*", Third World Quarterly, 12(1),pp.62-85.

writers have begun to refer to terrorist movements as NGOs; some would say in order to discredit NGOs. [50]

## 2.2 Important Ideologies and Development Goals in the NGO Paradigm (grass root NGOs)

According to Assokou, one of the most common ideologies that NGOs use to promote their work is the task of spreading democracy. [51] This democracy touts being a move towards more grass-roots and community based initiatives; putting the power into the peoples' hands. This ideology and struggle over defining democracy is the first point of contention between NGOs and the communities they deal with. "Democracy NGOs, supported by Western donors, have been critical in popularizing formal democracy over a residual belief in social democracy. Ironically, NGOs' preconceived solutions undermine the democratic process. Additionally, NGOs help to disempower by replacing abilities of some grassroots organizations and democratic governments to create and carry out policy. True democracy is, after all saying that everyone can think and everyone can plan. [52]

According to Bayat, this idea of spreading democracy is closely related to the idea of representation. While everything is done in the name of the poor, few NGOs speak directly with the poor. They believe they can speak on behalf of poor, ignoring their capacities to communicate themselves. [53] Not only does this inability to hear the poor undermine their intelligence and capabilities, but it further shows how NGOs who argue they are more grassroots and based in poor communities, are actually not incorporative or democratic in structure. NGOs are rarely radical. Part of this is due to the nature of their funding; mostly it is from an ideological view. Namely, that the good-natured work of aid NGOs cannot be all that wrong and so they stick to a structure and a limited view of how development should be and what certain programs should be created. With the support of

[50] Burton, B., (2013), "Australia: Conservative Group to Advice Government on Accrediting NGOs", (Electronic), http://gateway.proquest.com.
[51] Assokou, S.A., (2014), *Issues of Accountability in the NGO Sector.* Vol. 30 No. 3, pp. 569-587.
[52] Biggs, S & Neame, A., (2010). 'Negotiating Room for Maneuver: Reflections Concerning NGO Autonomy and Accountability Within the New Policy Agenda 'in Edwards, Michael and Hulme, David (eds.) *Nongovernmental Organizations: Performance and Accountability,* Eartscan, London.
[53] Bayat, A. (2006)"Who Cares about the Poor? NGOs, Social Movements and Self-Help", University of Manchester, 12-14 June,

powerful governments in the North and also in the postcolonial South, NGOs seek at best reforms instead of a radical change of the system. They seek reforms at best to change policy and rewrite rules rather than focusing on the more grassroots approaches which seeks fundamental change for individuals.[54] NGOs think in terms of immediate strategies, instead of connecting with the individuals they advocate for. Many case studies of development programs have found that many "did not seek to redress the social circumstances that caused impoverishment, but instead concerned themselves with the apparent failings of Africans themselves". The programs can and should exist this way within the workings of the NGOs because to continue funding of programs, many key targets and indicators are used that do not reflect sustainable, drastic and revolutionary change, but instead measure impact and effect that target short-term and temporary performance. Written for donors, NGOs tend to overstate impact of the number of people they effect by "putting all project outcomes in the best possible light". Using a very limited definition of success, given to the NGOs by their funders, the process of learning and growing that comes with both failures and successes is often ignored. This quantitative narrow approach becomes about an ultimate definition of one mindset of success, and gearing all actions around this goal. [55]

Ehbrahim states that the ideology of immediacy key to the NGOs business model is an important requirement which plays a huge disservice to the giving of aid.[56] The need to see immediate and positive results forces short-term goals to trump the long-term, more permanent and sustainable initiatives. In our fast-paced, technologically driven world, as well, pressure is put on communities to make faster and hastier decisions, which can sometimes require organizations to undermine their own decision making processes for the NGO agenda.[57] In contrast, Frantz Fanon recognizes the importance of taking time over speeding up the process and losing principals, stating that it is more important to

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[54] Edwards, M. (2009)."Conclusion: too close to the powerful, too far from the powerless". NGOs, states and donors – too close for comfort? (pp. 275-284). London: MacMillan.
[55] Ibid p.4
[56] Ehbrahim, A. (2005) *NGOs and Organizational Change: Discourse, Reporting and Learning,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-5, 21-33, 52-104.
[57] Fowler, A.F., (2006), "Assessing NGO Performance. Difficulties, Dilemmas, and a Way Ahead", In Edwards, M. and Hulme, D. (Eds.), *Beyond the Magic Bullet. NGO Performance and Accountability in the Post-Cold War World,* Connecticut, Kumarian Press.

remember the individual people one is helping, as opposed to the timeline of implementing a policy. The problem is that many poor people do not have the liberty to reply on a scheduled timetable when they are trying to survive. The way in which NGOs operate, on a fundamental everyday kind of functioning, further reflects some ideologies inherent in the hierarchical mindset they approach development with. NGOs hold that they are the center around which communities exist. They are the prominent organizations and communities. Local NGOs should attend their meetings, work on their initiatives, etc. instead of reversing the thinking and truly working from below.[58] Even NGOs purporting to work with community and advocating social change generate their own terms and play by them. They set the agenda for what needs to be addressed, and their brochures, websites and research is written in their language, rarely translated into the languages of the populations they are aiding. It is apparent that these choices make the NGOs more accountable to their funders who read their literature, in order to make them more prominent and hopefully become more respected and bigger player's at large leftist events such as the "World Social Forum" and the like. NGOs approach their development practices as if they are running a business that needs to prosper. [59] Not only do they look to cut ends and decrease their expenses from an authoritarian structure and focus on the profit of the organization, but they search out solutions from a very narrow resource mobilization theory. NGOs pressure more locally based organizations to work on their schedules and respond quickly, which frequently can elicit undemocratic responses. Their preference to communicate with a single individual rather than talk with a whole group results, in some situations, with NGOs attempting and pressuring or even replacing leaders of movements with people they see as holding the same ideals and ability to accomplish the same goals the NGO thinks is important.

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[58] Ibid p.23

[59] Ginsburg, M.B., (2008), "NGOs: What's in an Acronym?" *Current Issues in Comparative Education,* Vol. 1, No. (1), pp. 2-5.

## 2.3 NGOs as an Alternative Approach to Promoting Human Progress in the Third World Countries

According to Gray et.al the rapid growth and expansion of NGOs worldwide attest to their growing critical role in the development process.[60] At the international level, NGOs are perceived as vehicles for providing democratization and economic growth in Third World countries. Within Third World countries, NGOs are increasingly considered good substitutes for weak states and markets in the promotion of economic development and the provision of basic services to most people. NGOs are seen by their proponents as a catalyst for societal change because they are responsive to the needs and problems of their clients, usually the poor, women and children. Because of targeting and being responsive to marginalized groups in society, NGOs are being heralded as "important vehicles for empowerment, democratization and economic development." In fact, some NGOs are "driven by strong values and . . . interests . . . , geared toward empowering communities that have been traditionally disempowered." International donor agencies see NGOs as "having the capacity and commitment to make up for the shortcomings of the state and market in reducing poverty."[61] Perhaps the greatest potential NGOs have is to generate self-help solutions to problems of poverty and powerlessness in society. This is based on the view of NGOs as independent, "efficient, less bureaucratic, grassroots oriented, participatory and contributing to sustainable development in grassroots communities." But for NGOs to remain independent of donor or elite control and achieve their social and economic goals, they have to work diligently toward capacity building and financial sustainability. [62]

Kuechler and Burklin argues that NGOs are increasingly playing an important role in the development process of most Third World countries. [63] The growing importance of NGOs

[60] Gray, R., Owen, D., and Adams, C.A., (2006), *Accounting and Accountability: Changes and Challenges in Corporate Social and Environmental Reporting*, London, Prentice-

[61] Hulme, E. (2011); *Non-governmental organizations Performance and Accountability: Beyond the magic bullet*

[62] John L. (2014), *Non-Governmental Organisations in the commonwealth: Guides for Good policy and Practice*, Commonwealth Foundation Publication: London

[63] Kuechler, M., and Burklin, W., (2010), "The Challenge of New Movements", In Dalton, R.J. and Kuechler, M. (Eds.), *Challenging the Political Order. New Social and Political Movements in Western Democracies*, New York, Oxford University Press

in the development process is attributed to the fact that they are considered suitable for promoting participatory grassroots development and self-reliance, especially among marginalized segments of society-namely, the poor, women and children.[64] In fact, some NGOs seek to organize and involve the marginalized groups in their own development. And sometimes, they try to link their clients to the powerful segments of society by providing access to resources that are normally out of reach to the poor. For example, within development-oriented NGOs, microfinance institutions (MFIs) try to contribute to the economic improvement of the poor by: "bringing in new income from outside the community, preventing income from leaving the community, providing new [self] employment opportunities and stimulating backward and forward linkages to other community enterprises."

According to John, most development-oriented NGOs in the Third World use new and innovative development strategies such as the "minimalist cost-effective approach (favored by microfinance institutions/poverty lending programs), "assisted self-reliance" or "participatory development." [65] Overall, NGOs appear well suited to adapt the use of such innovative strategies because of their small-scale of operations, flexibility and great capacity to mobilize resources and to organize people to solve their own problems. The new development strategies perceive people as active participants of their own development.[66] These "bottom-up" development strategies stand in sharp contrast to the "top down" capitalist and state socialist models of development. Both the capitalist model based on "trickle-down" and the state socialist model of "egalitarian development" based on central/state planning of economic activity have failed to meet basic needs of the poor, women and children and have not helped these marginalized groups to solve their own problems. Both models offer no real choice to the poor about immediate local problems faced or needs. Both forms of institutionalized "top-down" directed development discourage popular citizen participation and de-emphasize people-centered development

[64] Ibid p.12
[65] Ibid p.24
[66] Nepal News (2001): *Transparency in NGOs*. Development in Practice, Volume4, p.16

activity. And finally, both models stress large-scale, capital intensive projects that are susceptible to elite control, corruption, and inefficiency. [67]

## 2.4 The Spectrum of NGO Activities in the Modern World Development

According to Norrell, the two historical roots of NGOs, care and welfare activities, and find expression in the two principal ways in which NGOs endeavour to achieve their aims through care and welfare activities; alongside their activities oriented promoting change and development. [68] These two functions are not mutually exclusive and thus do not create two recognizable types of NGOs. Many NGOs are involved in both, for now, as in the past, the two are connected: indeed, many NGOs describe themselves as multi-functional. Today, a broad range of organisations, clubs and associations are found in democratic societies which have a wide variety of social, political, civil, sporting, religious, business, cultural and recreational purposes.[69] As new concerns have arisen, and the capacities of governments to meet the needs of their citizens have been reduced by globalization and economic constraints, the role of NGOs has expanded. At the beginning of 1980s with the effect of neoliberal ideology the thoughts on democracy have developed and widened. The common understanding was that 'democracy is not just a matter of formal political arrangement, but a way of life embracing plurality, diversity and difference.[70] Civil society is the virtue of democracy. NGOs have come to be involved in the fields spanning the whole spectrum of human need including health, education rural and urban development, environment, population, social welfare, employment creation, skills training, economic development, environmental concerns, gender awareness and action, peace and human rights, and the informal sector. They have played a major role in highlighting the impact of national debt, structural adjustment and the unemployment of the disadvantaged sectors of society. In all these fields, much has been done by NGOs to pioneer new policies and practices and create a better public

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[67] Moore, M. & Stewart, S.(2008) *"Corporate governance for NGOs?"*, Development in Practice, Volume 8, Number 3
[68] Norrell, A. (2010). *"Bridging gaps or 'a bridge too far'? The management advocacy within service providing NGOs in the UK"*, p.12
[69] Ibid p.27
[70] Ron, J. (2015) 'Transnational information politics: NGO human rights reporting', International Studies Quarterly 49(3): 557-587.

understanding and awareness of many emerging, social, economic, and environmental issues and problems. [71]

According to Tendler, the rapid rise in the number of civil society organizations and their increase in quantity have not been matched by an increase in quality resulting in many common problems regarding accountability. [72] The increased number, scope and outreach of civil society organisations demand stronger, more reliable and sustainable funding mechanisms. The answer to future escalating demands on apparently limited resources may be in the creation of new and/or indigenous forms of resource mobilization, or in the development of new means to increase known resources. [73] NGO activities can be grouped under two headings. These are: Care and Welfare; Service and delivery; Mobilizing resources; Research and innovation; Human resource development and Public information. The second category is change and Development :These organisation are structured on the following field of activities; Welfare organisations; Development organisations; Environmental organisations; Indigenous people's organisations; Women's organisations; Youth organisations; Human right organisations; Environmental groups; Income generating ; projects; Job creation programs; Children organisations; Disabilities organisations and workers organisations.

Williams argues that, NGOs can use existing resources more efficiently than other agencies and mobilize additional resources. [74] They it is claimed 'speak for the poor' and are seen as; 'preferred channel' for service-provision in 'deliberate substitution' for the state. NGOs cannot be separated from the theories of democratization and social transformation. There is a marked change in the attitude of many states in the developing countries towards the vulnerable with the collapse of populism and the traditional social contract, the fate of the poor are passed on the market and trickle down of national economic growth. In the context of the apparent failure of the conventional development

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[71] Ibid p.30

[72] Tendler. J. (2012). "Turning private voluntary organizations into development Agencies: Discussion paper No.12 Washington D.C, Agency for international Development

[73] Ibid p.5

[74] Williams, A. (2012): Transparency in Networked Economy in NGOs. An overview paper prepared for Digital4Sight Inc.

models, and a clear shift of emphasis from state to individuals in development process, the NGO sector is assumed to act as agent of both democracy and development. [75]

Assokou points out that both liberals and radicals, meanwhile, welcome NGOs as agents of social transformation from below. [76] As an alternative to state intervention, the NGOs are promoted as agents to realize primary development among the poor. According to Vittorio, one of the fundamental reasons behind the recent attentions on NGOs is that they are perceived to be able to do something that national governments cannot or will not do.[77] Yet NGOs have no intention or desire to supplant or compete with the state in their development efforts. NGOs have established some very good channels to reach people in the developing world. Governments are not able to support the upkeep of social services because of huge expenditures on infrastructure. Infrastructure was accepted as an urgent need, essential to reach development and modernity in the developing countries. Most government expenditures have gone on large-scale projects like dams, hospitals, schools, water and waste-water channels, etc. Governments have generally failed to separate income generating activities and employment investments. Therefore, NGOs have become an alternative sector, some develop mentalists describe it as the 'third sector' by relation to the public and the private.

### 2.4.1 NGOs and Social Movement Support

Stiglitz states that NGOs which are concerned with supporting social movements and/or initiatives of development that are expression of the free will of groups. [78] Support the strengthening of civil society and the conflictive dynamics of individuals and group aspirations as they try to build a collective society in which every individual becomes a citizen. Second, there are those NGOs which are the expression of certain social movements, having emerged from them or representing a certain degree of their institutionalization. In this sense, NGOs are the expression of civil society's capacity for

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[75] Ibid p.13

[76] Ibid p.27

[77] Vittorio, K. (2008); "Non-governmental organizations and development" in Finance and Development Vol. 22(3)

[78] Stiglitz, J. (2008): Non- Governmental organizations: *The Private Uses of Public Interests: Incentives and Institutions and Institutions.* The Journal of Economic Perspective 12.2: 2-32.

free organisation and its vitality in its different historical perspectives. There may be many different organizational forms in different communities and in different social and political systems. This diversity of NGO activities reflects itself in the wide range of expressions NGOs use to describe their function which include as human rights, environment, development, or religious organisations.[79] The diversity also indicates that NGOs, with their highly specialized personnel, have highly specialized targets. Looking at the historical process of the NGOs, there are notions within all perspectives, and also both the governmental and the public side. These notions can be grouped as 'care and welfare'; 'philanthropy'; 'speech for the poor'; 'fill gap left by the government'; 'service substitution'; 'public service contractors'; 'agents of democratization'; 'helping people to help themselves'; 'change and development' and so on. These are the images which they are trying to project to communities and societies. These it can be argued affords opportunities to influence governments on their responsibility and accountability. [80]

## 2.4.2 NGOs and Innovative Programs

According to Simon, Changes in what NGOs do and in the political, economic, social and institutional environments, in which they operate, have considerably changed the nature and extent of the relationships NGOs have with others. [81] In general, NGOs have often pioneered and promoted innovative programs and policies subsequently supported or adopted by governments. But in some cases, NGOs activities or experiments have been adopted for the purpose of control rather than co-operation.[82] In recent last years there have been many debates on 'NGO' activities. Criticism has come mostly from Islamists, socialists and also from Third Wordlist perspective. These give voice to opposition to the Western World, New colonialism, Transnational Companies, and International NGOs. These resources have described NGOs as 'Not -for- Growth Organizations 'or ' Necessary -to- Governance Organizations'. Such criticism indicate some aspects of NGO activities especially of international donor agencies (NNGOs) which operate all over the

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[79] Ibid p.32

[80] Tendler. J.(2012). "Turning private voluntary organizations into development Agencies: Discussion paper No.12 Washington D.C, Agency for international Development.

[81] Simon, N.(2014); "The NGO movement in Africa", Nairobi, Environmental Liaison centre. *International Studies Quarterly* 50(1): 45-67.

[82] Ibid p.56

world with the huge budgets. The Islamists in Bangladesh for example see the international NGOs as tool to destroy the fabric of Bengali society. At the time, NGOs were causing a real social revolution by providing women credit in their own right, creating their own-self-employment, reducing the dependency on money landers and landlords. In 1994, NGOs were shaken by the extent of ignorance and suspicious there existed in Bangladeshi society about their work.[83] The other side of coin is that, NGOs, it is argued that, act not as human relief and care organisations in the South but as the representatives of the communities they serve. There are many case to support this argument. A few of them can be found in Northern Iraq, South Sudan or Afghanistan.

## 2.5 NGOs: Agents of Development

A number of writers questioned the strengths and weaknesses of NGOs. For example Mukasa pointed out the weaknesses of NGOs in terms of administration.[84] On the other hand, Edwards and Hulme highlight the developmental impacts, efficiency on using resources and effectiveness on influencing the state existing policies on development.[85] Norrell highlighted the performance of NGOs on alleviating poverty in rural. There are relatively few critics of NGOs activities. Their functions have been considered and perceived mostly positively. NGOs are accepted as the most efficient agents and motors of reaching and succeeding the sustainable development. In short, it is accepted that, NGOs can use existing resources more efficiently than the others, governments and agencies, and can mobilize additional resources.[86] Most NGOs tend to believe that they know better than the people who, by virtue of poor education, lack of knowledge of the world outside the village, or their overwhelming concern with immediate survival, have distorted or wrong ideas about their situation or 'real needs'. It hardly needs saying that such attitudes of NGO workers are quite similar to the attitudes of experts, who also, quite often postulate the same 'good intention' derived from humanitarian concerns.

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[83] Ibid p.29

[84] Mukasa, S. (2006) *"Are expatriate staff necessary in international development NGOs? A case study of an international NGO in Uganda"*, CVO International Working Paper 4,

[85] Ibid p.18

[86] Norrell, A. (2006) *"Bridging gaps or 'a bridge too far'?* The management advocacy within service providing NGOs in the UK",

NGOs also assert that they know what is best for the people. Powel [87] express the role of NGOs in development as: In Recent years it has been witnessed the explosive emergence of NGOs as a major collective actor in development activities and on the public agenda in general. This is a significant political, social and economic trend. Within the traditional areas of encounter between the state and people, this new actor is asserting himself with increasing people.

According to Mukasa, NGOs have been accepted as 'peripheral actors on the developmental stage, leaving big issues to organisations that command far larger financial resources'. [88] They have been content to do well on a small-scale in few localities, often limiting themselves to welfare activities. The reason behind working in micro level is that large projects require a bureaucracy and large budget. It also needs coordination of planners, technicians and administrators. Therefore NGOs prefer face-to-face relations that increase the people's confidence and work in development which gives the ability to control the project target to create mobilization and improvement in community level. Markets and private initiatives are seen as the most efficient mechanisms for achieving economic growth and providing most services to most people. Governments 'enable' private provision but should minimize their direct role in the economy; because of their supposed cost-effectiveness in reaching the poorest, official agencies support NGOs in providing welfare services to those who cannot be reached through markets.

According to Lisa, the main characteristics of NGOs are their ability to reach poor communities in remote areas that have few basic resources or infrastructure, and where government services are limited or ineffective; they have the ability to promote local participation in the design and implementation of public programs by building self-confidence and strengthening the organizational capability among low-income people; they use low-cost technologies, streamlined services and low operating costs; and they

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[87] Ibid p.14
[88] Bayat, A. (2006)."Who Cares about the Poor? NGOs, Social Movements and Self-Help."University of Manchester. p.107

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are innovative and adaptable in the identification of local needs, can build upon resources and transfer technologies developed elsewhere".[89] NGOs are good at reaching the poorest in the sense of involving them in the development activities and rising their living standards. NGOs are seen as a most effective mechanism that reaches the poor, and their strengthening has for the most part involved direct or indirect funding. NGOs are also effective working with disadvantaged women and improving women's economic and social status or effectively challenging prevailing patterns of discrimination.[90]

Lewis argues that the NGOs of concern to development have been those engaged in such functions as provision of services, community organizing, technical and educational assistance, training and technical support and advocacy.[91] In reaching the poor that not served by public agencies, to facilitate local resource mobilization and the development, NGOs have demonstrated their ability to promote local participation and willingness to adapt to local needs and conditions. NGOs deliver services at a relatively low cost and have ability to find innovative solutions to solve local problems. Those characteristics of NGOs have been accepted as the strengths of NGO. There are also weaknesses of NGOs in terms of their activities, organizational behaviour and sustainability of the proposed projects. NGOs are commonly criticized by the capacity of their introduced projects. They were taken as micro level activities and NGOs are determined as 'micro level actors'. The scope of activity lies on the center of criticism. According to these criticisms, NGOs have not the ability of evaluating and acting in regional or national level.[92] Another issue of criticism mostly goes to the survival or sustainability of projects in community level. Because it was argued that running of the externally introduced projects are difficult by the local people when the outsiders, NGO staff, withdraw their activities in the region. This is the most serious question on the NGO activities. Local

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[89] Lisa M. (2015). 'Foreign assistance, international norms, and NGO development: lessons from the Russian Campaign', *International Organization* 59(2): 419-449

[90] Ibid p.36

[91] Lewis, L. (2005), "*The civil society sector; a review of critical issues and research agenda for organizational communication scholars*", Management Communication Quarterly, Vol. 19, No. 2, pp. 238-267

[92] Boit G. (2004). *Support systems and community mental health: Lectures on concept development.* Behavioral Publications.

people's ability to sustain cooperatives, organization, communities without the guidance and support of professionals are very difficult in developing counties. It needs ability to develop relations with governmental offices and also needs ability to continue the activities within the complex bureaucratic structure of state mechanism. On the other hand, there are other aspects of criticism and questioning on the status and also roles of NGOs in general. Here, one of the important points which are the differentiation of grassroots organisations and international NGOs. This can be described 'internal' and 'external' factors in development. Today, many developing countries perceive the international organisations as negative agents for their societies. Many articles have been written on the irrelevance of WB, FAO, UNIDO or any other UN or voluntary organisations in particular in Africa's development in general developing countries.[93]

## 2.5.1 NGOs: Agents of Grassroots Movements

According to Cate, most grassroots movements which have emerged particularly in the last two decades should be viewed as the response of this 'turbulent consciousness 'to the failing promises of different kinds of Gods and Caesar.[94] In the Third World, in particular, they constitute an expression of people's deep disillusionment with the realities of development institutions and practices. They also represent their search for new ways of organizing themselves in order to solve their problems according to their own cultural aspirations and their often different vision of a desirable society.[95] They also represent the grassroots people's belief that any assistance coming from above or outside is either not for the poor, or for 'relief' operations that will ultimately increase the poor's dependency on the same sources.[96] The lessons are therefore that, for all matters concerning their survival and their ultimate liberation, they should henceforth only rely on their own collective-forces which they alone will mobilize and to develop. There is clearly a danger in building up a new NGO myth according to which NGOs could be

[93]Muema M. (2006) " international development; NGOs in Africa", CVO International Working Paper 4,
[94] Cate, D. (2007) 'The NGO management debate', in Id.The Management of Non-Governmental Development Organizations, London: Routledge, 2 edn, pp. 6-33.
[95] Morris, D. & Madon, S. (2004) "Information systems and nongovernmental development organizations: advocacy, organizational learning, and accountability", The Information Society, 20: 117–126
96 Catherine, S. M. (1995). "NGO Transparency in Kenya:Beneficiaries, Donors and State" in Non-governmental Organizations. Vol 23 p. 123

trusted solely because they are different from the state apparatus. No one could challenge the fact that there are differences between NGOs and governments, namely with regard to their particular modalities of action, their greater freedom from bureaucratic constraints and their field of interest. NGOs are indeed often in a better position to serve and to work with isolated communities. As such they also may understand better the needs of their 'target populations' and the possibility of implementing more effectively the projects designed to this end. Yet there is still little evidence to show that their perception of the people's deeper cultural and existential aspirations go beyond the significant concept of 'target populations', i.e., populations who have been 'targeted' by the 'developed' world. [97]

## 2.6 NGOs as Sub-Set of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)

The location of NGOs within civil society is found very crucial and problematic in many countries. Because of the dynamics or structure of these institutions are much different than those of western ones. It is easy to fall into a trap of thinking that civil society is a level of playing field and the new salvation for development. Civil society is a messy arena of competing claims and interests between groups and thoughts. The term 'civil society' has a long history in social sciences, and its definition has altered with Hegelian, Marxist and Gramscian interpretations long before it was restructured in the 1990s. The most familiar of modern interpretations, described civil society in a distinctive sense; as the sphere where battles capitalist logic. Civil society takes on the notion of 'terrain'; a place where the state, the people and the market interact and where the wage war against the hegemony of the market and the state. By the 20th century, civil society had been constructed in opposition to the state, the law, nature and capitalism- for good or for ill. There are many ways of presenting civil society that as one of the three sector, and 'engine of caring'.

Catherine states that most organizations are referred as NGOs thus belong, analytically to the private sector, albeit to the service (i.e., not for profit) sub-sector thereof. True, some

97 D'Cruz, D., (2013), *NGOs Must Become More Accountable,* (Electronic: www.ipa.org.au/Media/ddafr220703.html, [Accessed: 22 July].

NGOs have been created by and operate on behalf of members. But for most part, NGOs serve persons who are not members of their organisations, and this makes them essentially service organisations, with mostly employees producing and distributing benefits. Currently, there is much talk NGOs as leading actors in civil society. One of the difficulties with this is that. It is believed that 'civil society' simply was equated with 'NGOs'. It was thought that NGOs are sub-sets or element of civil society and therefore civil society is understood as a 'pool of organisations within the social life and everyday new elements are included within this pool. Hundreds of thousands of formally or informally organized groups and organisations are accepted as the core of civil society. But civil society is not a homogenous mass of organisations. Therefore civil society, in a way, is understood as a value neutral term which refers to all of those arguments. Civil society can also be described as a 'building' and the bricks of this building are the organized groups within social system that do not belong either to the state or to the private sectors.[98]

According to Cronin, there are several ways of interpreting 'civil society'. One of the difficulties is that 'civil society' it is discussed through a variety of terms the equivalence of which have not been effectively explored. [99] These include NGOs, voluntary associations, non-profit sector, not-for-profit sector, charitable organisations, benevolent societies and third sector. Depending on who uses these terms, there may, or may not, include bodies such as labour unions, trade associations, professional societies, or legally unrecognized (and even illegal) bodies such as cartels and crime rings. In many cases it is not what is effectively excluded and why. It might be assumed that the most straightforward approach to 'civil society' is through the legal aspect, in relation to 'freedom of association'. This is, both, a very narrow and a very broad approach. It is a way and process of natural indigenous association and also in a broader meaning the right of associating in the international arena. Civil society can also be understood as 'deeply rooted network of organisations and institutions that mediate the citizens and the state'. It

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[98] Ibid p.5,pp 16

[99] Fowler, A. (2010). "NGO futures: beyond aid: NGDO values and the fourth position". In: Third World Quarterly, 21(4), 589-603.

is the 'connective tissue of democratic culture' or a 'way of promoting pluralism and diversity in society', or a 'vehicle for various kinds of individual expressions' or 'mobilizer of a far greater range of human talent'. But within the evolving economic and political context there is little questioning of whether NGOs are appropriate vehicles for the process which is called 'democracy'.[100] Democracy tends to be seen as a smooth, linear, time-based progression from one predetermined set of outcomes to another'. They highlight the points that: Civil society is an arena of social and political life autonomous from state domination where progressive values and political practices can be seen articulated, counter hegemonies institutions can be created which can nurture and nourish the creation of an autonomous political actors who are able to articulate and defend their interests, proposed alternative projects For structuring the state and society and transform the relations of state and society. Such a position on the state and civil society see it as entirely distinct entities.[101]

Kuechler, M., and Burklin point out that although "civil society is not concerned primarily with power, it may be ranged against the excessive concentration or abuse of power in any quarter".[102] It is generally accepted that both are the holders of 'power' in the modern globalized world. The role and relevance of NGOs has long been questioned from political and sociological perspective. Politically there is the well-known conceptualization of civil society defined by the term 'power broker'. From the political perspective of acquisition and use of power, NGOs are accepted as less powerful. This approach is questionable. Today, it is known that there are hundreds or thousands of international NGOs which have at their disposal greater budgets than many countries. They have been serving as the agents of transitional companies and the western interests. They have promoted 'liberation movements' or civil wars within the rest of the world such as in Albania, Afghanistan, Northern Iraq and Sudan. The dramatic increase in the

[100] Helga (2010), "NGOs and Afghan War: The Politicization of Humanitarian Aid", Third World Quarterly, 12(1),pp.62-85.
[101] Lewis, D. (2003) "Theorizing the organization and management of non-governmental development organizations towards a composite approach", Public Management Review, Vol. 5 Issue 3, pp. 325–344
[102] Kuechler, M., and Burklin, W., (2010), "The Challenge of New Movements", In Dalton, R.J. and Kuechler, M. (Eds.), Challenging the Political Order. New Social and Political Movements in Western Democracies, New York, Oxford University Press.

numbers and budget of such organisations are considered skeptically from the third world's point of view.

## 2.7 Failure of Economic Development in the Third World and Ngo Growth

According to Kathryn, donor agencies increasingly support NGOs in providing services to the poor in Third World countries where markets are inaccessible and where governments lack capacity or resources to reach the poor. [103] In most Third World countries including those in Africa, both states and markets are weak or in decline. In Africa, the persistence of the dual crises of weak states and nascent or declining markets pose a classic dilemma for proponents of either market- or state-led economic development. The failure of both markets and governments in Africa to deliver economic development has contributed to the rapid growth and expansion of NGOs on the continent. Evidence accumulated over the past three decades shows "the inability of the African State to deliver on its development promise." In fact, the African State is now perceived as "the inhibitor of social, economic, and political development." The demise of the African State has inevitably given rise to the ascendancy of NGOs to fill up the "development vacuum" that has been created. The expansion of the NGO sector in Africa is most clearly reflected at the country level. For example, in Kenya there are about 500 NGOs and in Uganda there are more than 1,000 registered foreign and indigenous NGOs. Similarly, other African countries have a large number of active NGOs. These countries include: "Zambia with 128, Tanzania with 130, Zimbabwe with 300, and Namibia with over 55." [104]

Morris states that the growing role of NGOs in all sectors of development is an indication of the decreasing capacity of the African state to undertake meaningful development. [105] Besides increases in NGO numbers, the amount of development resources they receive or handle for development purposes has grown over the years. It is estimated that

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[103] Kathryn S. (2009) 'Transnational advocacy networks in international and regional politics', *International Social Justice Journal* 31 (159): 89-101.

[104] Ibid p.23

105 Morris, D. & Madon, S. (2004) "Information systems and nongovernmental development organizations: advocacy, organizational learning, and accountability", The Information Society, 20: 117–126

"official aid to Kenyan NGOs amounts to about US$35 million a year, which is about 18 percent of all official aid received by Kenya annually [and] . . . in Uganda, NGOs disburse an estimated 25 percent of all official aid to Uganda." The weakening financial situation of Uganda and Kenya, like that of other African countries, is due to a combination of huge external debts, corruption and the effects of structural adjustment programs imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).[106] In particular, the structural adjustment programs have "strained the ability of the African states to provide services and has attracted more NGOs to cushion the adverse short-term effects of adjustment programs, such as by providing affordable healthcare services." Given the prevailing political and economic conditions in Kenya, as well as elsewhere in Africa, the role and contribution of NGOs to the development process is expected to increase.

Donor agencies increasingly funnel development assistance through NGOs and other non-state institutions because the states in Sub-Saharan Africa are considered both inefficient and corrupt. As Dickiich observes, the "failure of the [African] state to provide for basic services has led to many official donors to use NGOs rather than the local state to provide services."31 In Uganda, a succession of inefficient, violent and corrupt regimes since 1971 has contributed to the emergence of over 1,000 indigenous NGOs to provide self-help solutions to the poor. Most "ordinary Kenyans have had to fend for themselves, relying on organizations outside of the state rather than on the state itself to provide basic necessities." In general, most service-oriented NGOs have generally "moved into service provision where the state has moved out." No doubt, NGOs have been necessary in African countries to fill up the "developmental gaps" caused by the weak post-independence state. While African States have become increasingly weak, formal markets have steadily declined and in some cases have been replaced by informal or parallel markets, most African economies are faced with "declining or negative rates and stagnating or falling per capita income figures; balance of payments and debt problems (which have become more severe (since) the 1980s, requiring IMF and the World Bank programs with their attendant conditionality packages and consequences.

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106 Kaldor, M. (2013) Global Governance and Civil Society: An Answer to War, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 78-108 ('Social movements, NGOs and networks').

Many (export) commodity prices remain low while most import prices remain high. In many countries, agricultural production is falling while aid levels stagnate. Health and nutrition levels are falling while informal or magendo economies (have) become more important as states weaken and formal markets decline. 'Socialist' states have performed poorly and 'capitalist' ones are not significantly better. Hopes for economic growth and development have shriveled on all sides."[107]

In African countries, authoritarian regimes "induced an 'exit' from the formal economy [as well as] a general avoidance of state institutions by a wide range of groups and occupations." Furthermore, economic restructuring due to structural adjustment programs and privatization contributed to the retreat of African states from their responsibilities of promoting economic development and providing "basic social services such as health care, education, sanitation and basic security. "Given the weak private sector and the state withdrawal from the provision of basic economic necessities and social services, "many NGOs are being pressurized into dealing with poverty alleviation (not eradication), and the provision of basic social services . . ." Thus, NGOs increasingly fill in social and economic spaces created by weak markets or retreating states. As a result, "NGOs have been heralded as . . . new agents with the capacity and commitment to make up for the shortcomings of the state and market in reducing poverty." Some critics of NGO participation in economic development contend that such involvement provides legitimacy and support to governments that have failed to deliver economic development or provide basic social services to their citizens.[108] Other critics charge that NGOs save "donors money and allow them to avoid addressing implementation difficulties, while also allowing them [the donors] to retain ultimate control over activities." The absence of viable states or markets in most Third World countries including African states has left NGOs as the most important alternative for promoting economic development. Thus, the failure or inability of both states and markets to meet the basic needs of the majority of the people in the Third World has given rise to the growing importance of the NGO sector in the development process. Such inability has also exposed the inherent

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[107] Ibid p 23
[108] Hulme. E. (2011); Non-governmental organizations Performance and Accountability: Beyond the magic bullet Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-5, 21-33, 52-104.

limitations of the state or private sector as major agents of promoting economic development in the Third World.

## 2.8 Conclusion

In the 21st century, NGOs hold a great promise to provide self-help solutions to problems of poverty and powerlessness in many Third World societies. It seems that societies are based mostly on the individual organisations. These organisations can initiate various kinds of activities from economic to environmental. People have become part of these activities. It has become a way of life and also a mechanism of livelihood. Now, there are full -time professional organisations that are consuming time and energy to engage the interests and involvement of other groups and institutions in society. [109]They are addressing matters which are detrimental to the well-being, circumstances and prospects of people in such fields as human rights, environment, peace, gender awareness, and the rights of indigenous and may be subordinated people. This sensitivity can also be understood as self-satisfaction and also hear confessions if it is studied critically. Global problems of communities are not their own destiny. It is the result of modern, global, capitalist and the colonialist processes. It is also the result of the understanding and the discourses of the western world. NGOs are increasingly making up for the shortcomings of the state and market in reducing poverty in Third World countries. Furthermore, their future role in development is expected to increase precisely because of favorable international donor support. In fact, since the launching of the Structural Adjustment Participatory Review Initiative (SAPRI) in 1997, NGOs are increasingly influencing economic and social development policy in Third World countries. SAPRI provides a framework for joint evaluation of economic reform by the World Bank, Third World governments and one thousand civil society organizations including NGOs. But despite their growing role and expected contribution to Third World development, NGOs should neither be considered a panacea nor the "magic bullet" for solving the problems of development. [110]

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[109] Hulme. E. (2013); Non-governmental organizations Performance and Accountability: Beyond the magic bullet Cambridge University Press, pp. 11-15,
[110] Ibid p.34,pp67

# CHAPTER THREE

## ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY AND REPRESENTATION OF NGOS AND DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses accountability, transparency and representation of NGOs and development community. It is classified in the following topics: Non-Governmental Organizations and accountability, Strengthening NGO accountability, Non-Governmental Organizations and Transparency, NGOs and Grassroots Community Representation, Link between NGO accountability and transparency, Trends on NGOs Reliance on Donor Funding and Target Communities Service Delivery, Strategic Interdependence between Local NGOs and Foreign Donors and finally the conclusion.

### 3.1 Non-Governmental Organizations and Accountability

According to Fries, accountability is concerned with obligation to justify words and deeds to society in general and to specific sets of internal and external stakeholders. [111] It embraces the actors, mechanism and institution by which civil society organization is held responsible for their actions and would include financial and performance accountability. Accountability is one of the processes whereby a leader, company, or organization seeks to ensure integrity. In the context of globalization and rapid economic development, NGOs in are becoming more and more involved in social, political and economic issues that require them to support poorer and more marginalized groups to seek accountability when impacted negatively by external development projects.[112] This requires NGOs to work beyond the community with new stakeholders such as national and regional governments, companies and international finance institutions. NGOs who are working in these contexts have to be vigilant regarding their own accountability and

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[111] Fries, R. (2013). "The Legal Environment of Civil Society", In Kaldor, M., Anheier, H. and Glasius, M. (Eds.), *Global Civil Society*, Oxford, UK, Oxford University Press.
[112] Ginsburg, M.B., (2008), "NGOs: What's in an Acronym?" *Current Issues in Comparative Education*, Vol. 1, No. (1), pp. 90

legitimacy as they support communities to demand accountability from others. NGOs have to be able to demonstrate their own effectiveness, reliability and legitimacy as actors working towards the goal of good governance and equitable development. However, accountability is a complex responsibility for NGOs as they are situated in the middle ground between multiple stakeholders to whom they must to some extent be accountable. It has been suggested that NGOs typically have about six different stakeholders to whom they could be accountable. These include donor, governments, the general public, the NGO staff, other NGOs, social movements, beneficiaries of services, global organizations and the private sector. Often these lines of accountability between the different stakeholders pull in competing directions.[113]

Ginsburg points out that Performance accountability requires NGOs to be accountable for what they do and in the 1990s, in response to a number of criticisms, the humanitarian NGOs responded by developing a "Code of Conduct, a Humanitarian Charter and a set of technical standards".[114] They also developed the "Humanitarian Accountability Project (HAP), (placed) a new emphasis on the quality and transparency of evaluations, (created) an active learning network (and developed) initiatives to explore quality models and professional accreditation". This kind of accountability is similar to that which we require from corporations and is focused on accountability to donors (patrons) and clients. Voice accountability on the other hand, requires NGOs to be accountable for what they say. That is, they are accountable to "an abstract purpose". This form of accountability is similar to what Najam calls "accountability to them", where NGOs are accountable for their goals and aspirations, and for their mission. Over the last ten years NGOs have had to respond to both "the veracity of what they said and the authority with which they spoke". Their response has been to develop research capacity within NGOs or to make strategic alliances with academics or other research groups. NGOs are also discussing voice accountability within themselves. This has mainly centered on "how their voice

[113] Glasius, M. (2010). *Global Civil Society*, Oxford, UK., Oxford University Press.
[114] Ginsburg, M.B., (2008), "NGOs: What's in an Acronym?" *Current Issues in Comparative Education*, Vol. 1, No. (1), pp. 2-5.

relates to the people they are primarily concerned about the poor, people whose rights have been violated, and the victims of war".[115]

An important issue when considering the accountability of NGOs is the means by which they will be required to provide an account. Francis outlines three types of accountability, "explanatory accountability..., and accountability with sanctions... (And) responsive accountability", suggesting that the only "full accountability" is that where sanctions are imposed if the account or actions are inadequate. [116] Corporations are regulated, and sanctioned, by Governments to report on their activities, but regulation by governments of an organisation whose most important role is often to counter the power of those governments presents a paradox that is difficult to resolve, particularly when many NGOs work across national borders. Thus, the problem inherent to political accountability also applies to NGOs "There is no single, global, public will" making it difficult to be accountable to conflicting views of what is "good" Notwithstanding these problems, and that there are currently few mandated reporting requirements for NGOs, most NGOs do in some way try to influence state behaviour. Therefore, they must often "adjust their strategies, goals and relationships to appear attractive to states", which already adds a "layer of accountability to their actions".

### 3.1.1 Types of Accountability

A number of authors consider it important to distinguish between internal and external accountability of NGOs. [117] Internal accountability, to members or boards, is often directly contrasted to the accountability of states to their electorate, highlighting the problem that members have little ability to effectively monitor or influence the actions of the NGO as voters do with governments. On the other hand, competition between NGOs serves as an accountability mechanism as it is easy for members to transfer their membership at relatively little cost.[118] External accountability mechanisms include

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[115] Ginsburg, M.B., (2008), "NGOs: What's in an Acronym?" *Current Issues in Comparative Education,* Vol. 1, No. (1), pp. 90
[116] Ibid
[117] Francis, M., (2008). "Accountability and transparency in Non-governmental Organization, Vol. 1, No. (1), pp. 1-6.
[118] Banks, N., & Hulme, D. (2005). The role of NGOs and civil society in development and poverty reduction. *Brooks World Poverty Institute Working Paper,* (41).

international law and participation in international forums such as those organized by the United Nations. An NGO's reputation amongst both its members and its peers is also seen as an important type of accountability. Limitations in funding and weak levels of influence mean that in order to be effective, NGOs must cooperate with each other in networks and earn the trust and respect of their peers. NGOs are considered to have a moral obligation to act in the public interest and are accountable for what they say and the positions they take on particular issues thus they must be accountable for the values they promote: "It is what it does, and not representation, that makes an NGO legitimate".

According to Kulim, NGOs discharge their accountability in a number of ways. These include disclosure and reporting, undertaking performance assessment, engaging in community participation and through self-regulation. [119] There are various reporting requirements in law in many countries, particularly in order for an NGO to gain tax exemptions and these requirements are directed at providing accountability to the public at large. These often require quite detailed information about finances, organizational structure and programs, but such regulation of reporting has also been abused by governments who use it to control NGOs they consider subversive. Donors usually require performance assessments but while providing an accountability mechanism they also "focus attention on projects or programs, while overlooking the NGO ...itself". Participation with the community is emphasized by NGOs and is an important means of accountability they employ. This can include "public meetings..., surveys, or a formal dialogue on project options" or actual involvement of community members in the project. Self-regulation is the efforts by NGOs to develop their own standards or codes of conduct. A number of such codes or charters have been developed over the last ten years and include work by the International Red Cross, the Red Crescent Movement and the HAP project. "The more standards of governance, management, and financial controls are developed internally, the less need there is for external regulation". [120]

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[119] Economist Kulim, (2014), "A Survey of Corporate Governance". *The Economist: Special Supplement,* 29 January.
[120] Ibid p.50

NGOs can demonstrate that a variety of accountability mechanisms are in place to ensure they are responsible for the actions they undertake in community development programs. [121] Their actions and activities themselves, often being highly visible to society with increased public access to information via the internet and press, mean that being unaccountable is not really an option, particularly for smaller organisations. This combined with the fact that most calls for accountability come from those who have been targeted by NGO actions. Despite being under strict control and pressure by the state machinery, NGOs have tried to continue working under such adverse conditions. For example, NGOs have provided various social services to fill the gaps in the existing system of social development, and have also tried to protect the rights of the most vulnerable groups of citizens, and involve the state in social partnerships. Many of these attempts have been in vain: political authorities largely instrumentalised NGOs for their own purposes; as providers of services that the state could not provide, or as a "facade" imitating the participation of civil society in policymaking which, in fact, did not involve the interests and aspirations of the majority of citizens. Moreover, the state created decorative forums for political discussions, to which select NGOs that are perceived to not pose a threat to state policy are invited. This resulted in a division within the NGO sector. Thus, most socially-oriented NGOs did not get tangible government support, despite rhetorical backing by the state. In addition, efforts by some socially-oriented NGOs to seek ways to cooperate with state authorities (within the existing restrictions) were criticized by those NGOs who did not consider themselves loyal to the (in their view) corrupt authorities.[122] The state in turn often questioned the possible contribution of NGOs to development and blamed them for not having representative legitimacy; NGOs are perceived as lobbyists and agents of international organizations and foreign governments.

[121] Ebrahim, A., (2013), "Accountability in Practice: Mechanisms for NGOs", *World Development*, Vol. 31 No. 5, pp. 813-829.
[122] Kaldor, M. (2013) *Global Governance and Civil Society: An Answer to War*, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 78-108 ('Social movements, NGOs and networks').

## 3.1.2 NGO Accountability and transparent to donors

Upward accountability refers to the mechanisms for ensuring accountability between donors and NGOs. These accountability mechanisms are normally strong as there is a power relationship between the donors and the NGOs related to the transfer of funds. In order to maintain these funds and guarantee future funds, it is in the interest of NGOs to be answerable and responsive to the contractual obligations required by the donors. The NGOs interviewed during the research study stated that accountability to donors was important. Reporting, monitoring and evaluation, and auditing were all aspects of upward accountability to donors that NGOs are familiar with. However, NGOs also noted that there were many challenges in terms of being accountable to donors. The most commonly cited challenge was the concern that donor priorities are so influential that they often take priority over accountability to other stakeholders, primarily the communities with whom the NGOs work. Because of the power relationship between donors and NGOs and the reliance of NGOs on diminishing funds in an expanding market place, NGOs are often afraid to challenge donors, to highlight difficulties and failures and to provide more nuanced and truthful accounts of their activities. [123]

## 3.1.3 Accountability and Transparency to Government, Communities and Other NGOs

NGO accountability to government is also based on an upward power relationship. The government of Countries creates a legal and regulatory environment within which NGOs function and in this respect the government has significant leverage.[124] NGOs to their accountability to the government in terms of respecting and working within the laws of Countries, sharing information to government departments and being open and transparent on their activities. It is also noted that to be seen as legitimate in the eyes of the government it is important to be professional, to work within the laws and to have strong-evidenced based research. Some NGOs also involve government departments in

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[123]Fowler, A.(2006). "Assessing NGO Performance. Difficulties, Dilemmas, and a Way Ahead", Connecticut, Kumarian Press. Vol. 1, No. (1), pp. 66

[124]Moses A. (2009). NGO and African prosperity. Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 78-108 ('Social movements, NGOs and networks').

activities to build relationships of trust, develop capacities and in efforts to link communities to government.[125] In some Countries there are many benefits from NGOs working more closely together on key issues and strengthening actions towards common goals. In other countries there are some good examples of NGO collaboration and the emergence of networks designed to foster collaboration around key issues, it appears there is little consideration of what is sometimes termed as "horizontal" accountability between NGOs. While NGOs may not be in a position to hold each other to account for issues such as financial mismanagement and other contractual obligations required as part of upward accountability, there could be more accountability between NGOs in terms of transparency and representation issues in relation to downward accountability to communities. Lack of collaboration and accountability to others in the NGO sector can to some extent have a detrimental impact on communities, resulting in contradictory advice, NGO competition for target groups, and sometimes inaction, all of which detract from the importance of the issues facing the communities. This collaboration and accountability between NGOs is particularly important when there is a need to build strong alliances and political influence to challenge rights abuses and to hold more powerful actors to account.

The NGOs almost without exception, states that their primary responsibility was to the needs and aspirations of the communities with whom they worked. This is often referred to as "downward" accountability. However it seems that while in theory accountability to communities is something NGOs strive towards, in reality it is one of the most challenging aspects of accountability for NGOs to define and implement. According john, it appears that the normal way of dealing with accountability to communities is through ongoing processes rather than through formal tools and mechanisms, as is the case with upward accountability.[126] Accountability to communities is not based on an act of delegation of power (unlike the donor NGO relationship) but rather a relationship of credibility and reputation.[127]

[125] D'Cruz, D., (2013), *NGOs Must Become More Accountable*, (Electronic: www.ipa.org.au/Media/ddafr220703.html, [Accessed: 22 July].

[126] Ibid p.19.pp106
[127] Deegan, C., (2010), *Trends in Accounting: Triple Bottom Line Reporting*, Paper presented at the *CPA Congress*, Adelaide, 17 November.

## 3.2 Strengthening NGO accountability

According to Cronin & Regan, there are number of challenges for NGOs in terms of strengthening their accountability to different stakeholders, and particularly their accountability downwards to communities. [128] Listed below are some suggestions as to how NGOs can continue to improve their own accountability, particularly to the communities they serve. It is important for NGOs to provide more critical and honest feedback to donors, pointing out where donor priorities might conflict or detract from community priorities. Reports to donors should be more reflective of the realities and challenges being met in the field so that donors can also begin to better understand the situation and tailor their support in more practical ways. [129] Understanding the need for accountability to government is important. As NGOs take a stronger role in promoting good governance, citizenship and accountability, it is important that they also demonstrate the same accountability and good governance. While NGOs may not always agree with government actions or policies, they are still required to work within the law of the country and to ensure communities they are supporting also abide by the law. Collaboration can often be challenging when there are many NGOs working around similar issues in the same communities. [130] Differing NGO priorities and activities can work against building the strong alliances needed to push for accountability and policy change, and multiple advice offered from NGOs in the same communities can be counterproductive. There is a need for NGOs to work together, to share resources, skills and experiences more consistently to support communities mobilize and network around rights issues.

David and Korten points out that donors and government demand accountability from NGOs. Their research found that communities are not demanding accountability from NGOs and tend to have a sense of trust in the NGO being there to work for the good of

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[128] Cronin, D., and O' Regan, J., (2011), Accountability in Development Aid: Meeting Responsibilities, Measuring Performance - Summary Document, A Research Report for Comhlamh, Comhlamh Aid Issues Group.
[129] Ibid p.39
[130] Clarck, J. (2012).' Democratizing Development: NGOs and the State, Development in Practice, 2, 3, p.151-162

the community. [131] This perhaps indicates a lack of real analysis of NGO goals and how they align with their own. Linked to this, there is often a power dynamic between NGOs and communities that prevent communities (who are often poorer, less educated and unorganized) holding organized, professional and salaried NGOs to account. There are also no obvious means and mechanisms by which communities can hold NGOs to account. Presenting NGO support as a service, requesting feedback on the service so that it can continually be improved, and providing mechanisms for communities to do so could perhaps counter these power dynamics to some extent. There is often an assumption by the NGOs themselves that because they are supporting and helping the community and providing professional expertise, that is adequate in terms of being answerable to the community. [132] The research found there was a lack of real analysis by NGOs on the impacts and harm that their work had the potential to cause in communities. NGOs should continually document and learn from experiences of working with communities so that potential harms can be identified and minimized. It is often a challenge for NGOs to be accountable to the whole community rather than just a few community representatives who they work with on a regular basis. It would be beneficial for NGOs to establish methods, perhaps through specific peer groups (youth, women, elders, poorest of poor), to understand broader community concerns other than just working through key people such as community representatives.

According to Catherine, the mechanisms for NGO learning and downward accountability to communities are less well developed than the mechanisms for upward accountability. NGOs need to spend more time and effort focusing on developing mechanisms and learning around downward accountability. [133] International NGOs who primarily work with affected communities through local NGO partners have a further challenge of

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[131]. David W. and Korten, C., (2009) "Working More Effectively with Nongovernmental Organizations" in Samuel Paul Arturo Israel (eds) *Nongovernmental Organizations and the World Bank*, The World Bank Publications Washington D.C.
[132] Kathryn S. (2009) 'Transnational advocacy networks in international and regional politics', *International Social Justice Journal* 31 (159): 89-101.

[133] Ibid p.23

ensuring accountability to communities when they are often distant from those communities. International NGOs need to discuss and develop strategies for ensuring downward accountability to communities with local NGO partners. In the face of rapid development, with communities being impacted by large-scale projects in a short time-frame, ensuring appropriate accountability mechanisms and processes such as adequate consultation, meaningful participation and feedback between the communities and NGOs can be problematic and perceived to be less important than securing accountability from the project developers. NGOs need to have a set of key, workable mechanisms that can guide their accountability to communities in these situations.[134]

## 3.3 Non-Governmental Organizations and Transparency

Biggs and Neame define transparency as "being completely open and frank about things." In European Community discussions, it is the catchword for the openness of EC operations to public gaze.[135] In business politics, it has been defined as "the release of information that is relevant to evaluating those institutions". In finance, it is "a process by which information about existing conditions, decisions and actions is made accessible, visible and understandable". In institutions and organizations, it is "the process of sustaining trust based relationships with stakeholders through open exchange of information and knowledge". Stakeholders, including the general public, require information from NGOs in order to assess and evaluate their activities. In this realm, transparency means access to such information.

According to Morris, transparency builds trust and confidence on the part of stakeholders and the public in general.[136] For the case of this study, transparency is a process whereby relevant information of an organization is made accessible to the stakeholders, including the public, to enable them to assess, evaluate, and make their own judgment about that organization." The particular focus of the study is on the availability of information about

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[134] Brown, D.L., and Moore, M.H., (2011), "Accountability, Strategy, and International Nongovernmental Organizations", *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, Vol. 30 No. 3, pp. 569-587.

[135] Biggs, S & Neame, A.,(2010). 'Negotiating Room for Maneuver: Reflections Concerning NGO Autonomy and Accountability Within the New Policy Agenda 'in Edwards, Michael and Hulme, David (eds.) *Nongovernmental Organizations: Performance and Accountability*, Eartscan, London.

[136] Ibid p.45

how NGOs manage development funds. People seek information from NGOs to learn how money meant for community development was spent. It is in this context that NGOs need to explain and justify their actions.

Transparency and honesty have become pressing issues in the NGO business in recent years. "Only a few NGOs seem to be transparent in their activities," Transparency is an indispensable aspect of accountability: effective accountability requires a statement of goals, transparent decision-making and relationships, and honest reporting of resource use and achievements, which can emphasize the honesty and efficiency with which resources are used or the impact and effectiveness of the work. Access to relevant and timely information about NGO activities is crucial to ensure that internal and external stakeholders can hold the organization to account. Not only must NGOs be transparent and honest, they also must be perceived as such. Otherwise a government can politically isolate them, leaving them unable to generate voluntary support for their work. Transparency can conflict with the principle of confidentiality and the right to privacy, which are entrenched in the laws of most states. The concerns over confidentiality and privacy are legitimate, but a wealth of information can still be made available to stakeholders and the wider public. There is also the selfish desire of rent-seekers to hide their ill-gotten gains, coupled with the fear of losing power to the newly informed. In some cases even where it is in an institution's interest to be transparent, individuals within the institution may prefer secrecy in order to cover up incompetence, to protect opportunities for rent-seeking, or simply to avoid public scrutiny. Transparency requirements can mandate additional activities and, in turn, place additional burdens on an NGO's already-scarce resources. [137]

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[137] Williams, Anthony (2012): Transparency in Networked Economy in NGOs. An overview paper prepared for Digital4Sight Inc.

### 3.3.1 Non-Governmental Organizations and Relative Transparency

Vittorio points out that some NGO leaders assert that their organizations are more accountable than some governments and with some justification.[138] The treaty establishing the European Commission, for instance, guarantees any European Union citizen access to EU parliament, council, and commission documents. But when the Organization State watch sought a document setting out far-reaching changes to the code of public access to EU documents, the Council turned down the request on the remarkable ground that it is "release could fuel public discussion on the subject." Although the right of access is guaranteed by the constitution and some international instruments, some government in Africa have used controversial legislation to narrow the space for public debate, silence those perceived as critical of its policies, and shield itself from domestic and international scrutiny. Civil society organizations and human rights activists have also been targets of state intimidation and harassment. Many have been forced to work in increasingly restrictive and oppressive conditions, facing threats, disruption of meetings by the police, ongoing surveillance by state security agents, and arbitrary arrests.[139]

### 3.3.2 The Transparency of NGOs Deficit and Its Roots in Kenya

According to Ayca, many NGOs in Kenya do not publicly disclose necessary information within the country. The stakeholders and the general public are entitled to information about the management of development funds. A majority of Kenyans NGOs display increased transparency of this sort to their foreign donors, but not to other stakeholders.[140] In respect to finances and remunerations, many Kenyan NGOs are not transparent toward the communities that benefit from their interventions. Transparency and honesty indicators such as budgeting and monitoring, auditing and evaluation, producing reports and press releases, holding public meetings, properly exploiting

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[138] Vittorio, K. (2008); "Non-governmental organizations and development" in Finance and Development Vol. 22(3)

[139] Larry. S. (2007); "NGOs today of development: Transparent practitioners' of development strategies and advocates for poor", in development seeds of change

[140] Ayca E. (2015) 'Global governance and domestic politics: fragmented visions', in Markus Leader and Philipp S. Muller (eds) *Criticized Global Governance*, Basingstoke: Palgrave-Macmillan, pp.161-176.

information and communication technologies, and project management in general all require skills, capacity, and dedication. Skills and capacity often are lacking.[141] Although staff motivation and dedication are high, a gradual decline in motivation due to high inflationary trends, which have reduced staff remunerations to mere "peanuts." Most NGOs also exhibit inadequate financial resources and lack of financial sustainability plans, shortcomings that are blamed primarily on lack of capacity to identify new needs and develop. Fraud and corruption are ordinarily predicated upon personal benefit.[142] In Kenya NGOs, kickbacks, fudged receipts, and project funds illegally diverted to non-project activities are often driven not by a desire for personal benefits, but rather by a desire to assist the organizations' activities and thereby help attain the project goal. Such practices, however, undermine transparency and honesty standards. They should therefore be discontinued. At a minimum, such practices should be specifically negotiated with donors and other stakeholders. Of the great number of NGOs in Kenya, only a small proportion is truly fraudulent. The activities of such a small group will not tarnish the internationally recognized good work of the many other NGOs. Increased transparency in NGOs should diminish the corruption: dishonest conduct would be easier to detect, and therefore to deter, through honest reporting, monitoring, and evaluation.

### 3.3.3 Transparency and Communicating NGO Accomplishments

Hashemi argues that it is noteworthy that despite the hurdles, NGOs are still able to engage and organize villagers into groups and committees, thereby giving them the opportunity to discuss common problems and prioritize their strategies.[143] NGOs continue to render services to their beneficiaries despite fears of intimidation, arrest, and torture. They also manage to network with partners and maintain good rapport with foreign donors. Other strengths of NGOs include teamwork within individual organizations and fairly good communication with all stakeholders other than the government. Weaknesses include inadequate management skills; poor planning in relation to identifying issues systematically and strategizing goals; the inability to clearly

[141] Avant, Deborah (2014) 'Conserving nature in the state of nature: the politics of INGO policy implementation', *Review of International Studies* 30(3): 361-382.
[142] Ibid p.23
[143] Hashemi, S. M. (1995). "NGO Transparency in Kenya: Beneficiaries, Donors and State" in Non governmental Organisations -Performance Beyond the Magic Bullet. London Publications.

identify the beneficiaries of a given project; the inability to counter the misinformation of the government-controlled media and thereby eradicate public bias; and the lack of proper documentation of activities and practices, which hinders learning and exchange of ideas.[144]

Additionally, NGOs have not been able to adopt a common national code of ethics. While NGOs have adopted various means to communicate their efforts to the public, without a nationwide, coordinated approach to their common problems, the circumstances necessary for NGO transparency and honesty will remain elusive.[145] In particular, Kenyan NGOs have not been able to come together as a force to confront or engage the government. In a less hostile socioeconomic and political environment, NGOs would be able to manage the available resources (human, material, information, and financial) in a transparent and honest manner acceptable to all parties. NGOs might improve their situation by strengthening their advocacy and awareness-building networks. With increased promotion of their activities, the successes and the failures alike, they will be able to win the hearts and minds of donors and the general public, thereby fostering a positive image of themselves while at the same time rebutting the vindictiveness and bias of the government information system.[146]

## 3.4 NGOs and Grassroots Community Representation

NGOs are values-based, civil society organizations working to address local, regional, and international problems like poverty, hunger, and environmental degradation.[147] · They range from small, volunteer-led, participatory organizations with limited financial resources to large well-funded bureaucracies with a highly professionalized staff. Charity-oriented NGOs like Mercy Corps and Save the Children primarily engage in direct service provision and disaster relief. Others function as providers and with holders

[144]Lisa M. (2015). 'Foreign assistance, international norms, and NGO development: lessons from the Russian Campaign', *International Organization* 59(2): 419-449.

[145] Baitenman, H. (2010), "NGOs and Afghan War: The Politicization of Humanitarian Aid", Third World Quarterly, 12(1), pp.62-85.

[146] Ibid p.20

[147] Kaldor, M. (2013) *Global Governance and Civil Society: An Answer to War*, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 78-108 ('Social movements, NGOs and networks').

of income for community-based stakeholders, whether in the form of salaries, stipends, grants, or loan financing. A particularly important role of NGOs includes communicating about social problems and their solutions. NGOs draw upon multiple forms of print, radio, television, and online media to create persuasive communication campaigns. In this way, NGO professionals perform important kinds of communicative labor, or work centered on communicating on the behalf of particular groups, issues, or policies. The messages NGOs create and promote have powerful impacts. A carefully crafted advocacy campaign can garner much needed financial support for a cause and persuade lawmakers to make important policy changes. NGO campaigns also help define social problems and make particular solutions more or less likely.[148] However, a key irony is that NGO campaigns often lack meaningful participation with the very people they claim to represent. Instead, these campaigns are generated by professionals who may not share a set of common experiences with the groups being targeted for aid. Thus, despite the best of intentions, and by virtue of their ability to speak on the behalf of others, NGOs may further marginalize groups unable to access the public sphere.[149]

According to Hashemi, even though their communication campaigns may not incorporate the participation of local stakeholders, NGOs are regularly cast as grassroots organizations.[150] Within popular culture, NGOs are often described as being "closer to the grassroots" than their government counterparts, and may even be equated with the grassroots, or local-level groups who are directly impacted by the problems or conditions that they seek to change. When associated with the grassroots, NGOs and other actors gain legitimacy, and are seen as more authentic. A grassroots identity can mistakenly imply that NGOs reflect the will of the people. The recent controversy over the legitimacy of Working Families for Wal-Mart brings to light tensions related to NGO representation and a grassroots identity. Formed in December 2005, Working Families for Wal-Mart positioned themselves as a grassroots, citizen-sponsored initiative dedicated

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[148]Banks, N., & Hulme, D. (2012). The role of NGOs and civil society in development and poverty reduction. *Brooks World Poverty Institute Working Paper*, (171).

[149] Gray, R., (2012), "Accounting and Environmentalism: An Exploration of the Challenge of Gently Accounting for Accountability, Transparency and Sustainability", *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, Vol. 17 No. 5, pp. 399 - 425.

[150] Ibid p.45

to defending Wal-Mart from union critiques of their workplace practices. However, the group's grassroots identity, and with it, their ability to speak on the behalf of Wal-Mart workers, was severely challenged once their financial ties to Wal-Mart came to light. This example illustrates how the language of the grassroots deflects attention away from the many complexities involved with speaking and advocating on the behalf of others.

Kabir argues that the language of the grassroots is persuasive because it implies a deep connection to a local place. [151] Typically, the local is tied to ideas of morality and authenticity. In this way, groups associated with a local place tend to be seen as having a deeper understanding and a more legitimate claim on decision making. Especially in the context of globalization, the local is more often seen as the primary site for resistance and agency. More recently, the local has become positively associated with the celebrated notions of micro-enterprise and social entrepreneurship. Here, the entrepreneurial spirit is seen as flourishing at the local scale.

Together, these associations help reinforce a positive image of the grassroots, and mean that being associated with the grassroots increasingly functions as an important source of legitimacy. When equated with the grassroots, NGOs are much less likely to have to account for the power they wield, including their ability to communicate social problems and their solutions.[152] For example, when linked with the grassroots, Working Families for Wal-Mart were able to position themselves as a legitimate, authentic voice of local working people. However, they quickly lost their ability to speak on the behalf of others once their grassroots status was challenged. Through their communication campaigns, NGOs craft images of local communities and their needs. Many times, community-based groups are afforded very little ability to participate in the creation of the messages others use to represent them to a broader global audience. Increased attention to communicative labor, or the work involved with communicating on the behalf of others, draws much

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[151] Kabir, N. (2009). "In a Mess: One of The Better-known NGOs Faces Charges of Irregularities". The Daily Star, May, 25. (from World wide web).

[152] Norrell, A. (2006). *"Bridging gaps or 'a bridge too far'? The management advocacy within service providing NGOs in the UK.* vol 3.p.45

needed attention to the tension-filled relationship between NGO workers and the groups they represent.[153]

## 3.5 Link between NGO accountability and transparency

There is link between NGO accountability and transparency problems. Organisations note that the transparency of an NGO is an important component of its accountability and legitimacy. [154] Some organisations perceive themselves as very transparent and therefore don't see any problem in this regard. Yet, most organisations believe that greater transparency is needed. However, many NGOs have different opinions on the extent of transparency needed in relation to their target group and the risks of "excessive" transparency for NGOs operating in a context of an authoritarian political regime. Some NGOs believe that the more transparent an organisation is (including its financial affairs) the more trustworthy it is. Such NGOs argue that the publication of reports, including in the media, inspire confidence. However, a significant number of NGOs believe that transparency should focus on the activity itself and its results; with financial transparency, it is necessary to "balance" transparency, i.e. not to unnecessarily "highlight" the organization's finances. These views result from the perception that excessive financial transparency generates jealousy among government officials as to the resources of NGOs, and increases their desire to control the flow of funds to the NGO sector. Some NGO leaders note that the corrupt political system is also an obstacle to greater transparency of NGOs. On the other hand, considering the "balanced transparency" argument, in poor countries even relatively small funds spent by NGOs can cause jealousy and misunderstanding by ordinary people. There is no consensus on this point, although some experts believe that NGOs' fears about the danger of excessive financial transparency are not justified. These experts argue that if an NGO reports their finances to the tax and other fiscal services, why not also report to target groups? NGOs' fears are explained partly by the fact that NGOs are not very experienced and do not

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[153] Fowler, A.F., (2006), "Assessing NGO Performance. Difficulties, Dilemmas, and a Way Ahead", In Edwards, M. and Hulme, D. (Eds.), *Beyond the Magic Bullet. NGO Performance and Accountability in the Post-Cold War World*, Connecticut, Kumarian Press.
[154] Fowler, A. (2010). "NGO futures: beyond aid: NGDO values and the fourth position". In: Third World Quarterly, 21(4), 589-603.

know in what format to disclose and distribute information without risk to themselves. Others explain these fears with the mismatch between performance and invested resources, which results in the reluctance of NGOs to be completely open. [155]

There may be a problem of corruption in the NGO sector, but many NGOs prefer to avoid discussing this topic. "Transparency is worth the money", meaning that lack of funds prevents NGO from having frequent contact with its target groups, publishing reports, etc. donor reporting requirements alone are often so complex that local NGOs do not have time left for transparency and accountability towards their direct stakeholders. [156] Due to the fact that NGOs lack time (and sometimes do not consider it important) to inform various audiences about their work, their public image is quite contradictory. The stereotypes of NGOs as "grant eaters" and agents of foreign funds are still strong among the general public. In one focus-group discussion, an NGO representative said that the term "grant eaters" was coined two or three years ago when scandals in the major NGO associations in relation to the misuse of donor funds had been revealed. Thus, it was recognized that NGOs should feel responsibility for the prevention of corruption in the sector.

## 3.6 Trends on NGOs Reliance on Donor Funding and Target Communities Service Delivery

According Paul, the NGO-donor relationship has become understood as exceptionally volatile. [157] Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in developing countries rely heavily on foreign donor funding and potential over-reliance on donors becomes apparent. NGOs react to changes in the external environment in different way. NGOs have increasingly become donor-dependent, donor-driven, service providing entities. In the process, they have moved away from their foundations as grassroots-connected, participatory, bottom-

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[155] Ibid p.28

[156] Florini, A. (2009): *Does the Invisible Hand Need a Transparent Glove? The politics of transparency.* An overview paper prepared for the Annual World Bank conference on Development Economics, Washington D.C., and Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, April 28-30.

[157] Paul D., (Eds.), (2006), Beyond the Magic Bullet. NGO Performance and Accountability in the Post-Cold War World, Connecticut, Kumarian Press.

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up, political entities that aim to achieve empowerment and transform the structural causes of poverty.

The evidence of increasing dependency, however, is hard to find: the level of government funding to NGOs to some extent reflects the political cycles of donor governments. Social Democratic governments generally see support of NGOs in aid work as worthy of support because there is sharper and more direct poverty and basic needs focus, while conservative governments with a stronger individual and market focus, generally do not support NGOs as much, and tend to wind funding back. Take the record of the Howard government in Australia, the Harper government in Canada, the Key government in New Zealand, and the Rutte government in the Netherlands as being cases in point with their heavy cut backs of support to NGO aid programs, when they were/are in power. In Australia the high point of being 'too close for comfort' was in the mid-1990s when some eight per cent of ODA went through NGOs, and 30 per cent of total NGO funding came from AusAID sources (as highlighted in this ANAO report [pdf]). This was hardly a case for dependency even at that time, but by 2011 (according to the ACFID Annual Report) this figure had dropped to four per cent of ODA and only 15 per cent of NGO funding came from AusAID, with the rest coming from the agencies' own public appeals and other international donors.[158]

The discussions about dependency invariably are connected to questions of NGOs effectiveness. However, there is little in the public space on overall NGO effectiveness because what is there is generally positive.[159] In 1995 at the height of the 'dependency' debate in Australia, an AusAID review of NGO Effectiveness ('Review of the effectiveness of NGO programs', not available online), which involved looking at a sample of all of the projects funded by AusAID under its NGO subsidy scheme, over the previous five years, found them to be effective in meeting their objectives for the vast majority of their work. Similarly in the UK in 2010 the National Audit Office found that 80 per cent of NGO projects were largely successful. Despite this almost overwhelming evidence, questions still keep being asked if NGOs are effective and deliver 'value for

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[158] Edwards, M., and Hulme, D.,(2006), Beyond the Magic Bullet. NGO Performance and Accountability in the Post-Cold War World, Connecticut, Kumarian Press.
[159] Ibid p.60, p.34

money'. Hulmeih argues, in relations to gender issues in the ACFID Report of Aid Effectiveness. [160] There are real risks that a narrow focus on 'value for money' may work against the long-term. complex. holistic work required to overcome gender inequality and discrimination and enable women's empowerment. The question of value for money hinges of course on the time period. A focus on too short a period for issues such as gender justice or social change may not show meaningful results. and so on this basis funding may be cut. and a lot of good work end up being lost. The other issue worth reflecting on is whether value for money measures. and results-based planning, can easily co-exist with the notion of participatory development. where the voice of the local communities and the aid recipients are what is being listened to, one of the hallmarks of NGO work. The problem is that value for money is seen through the lens of economy. efficiency and effectiveness. while NGOs might see it as something more structural. The British NGO Christian Aid sees it not as economy, efficiency and effectiveness but as scale, depth. and inclusion.

## 3.6.1 NGOs and Civil Society service delivery

According to Florini, when it comes to safeguarding. protecting, and promoting the position of marginalized or excluded groups, civil society the space in which people mobilize to bargain, negotiate, or coerce other actors in order to advance and promote their interests is key. [161] The global development agenda has shifted markedly over the past three decades, placing different emphases on the relative roles of the state, the market, and civil society according to the ideologies underpinning the development agenda at each specific time. Large-scale ductions in public expenditures and state-provided services alongside displeasure at the perceived failures of 'top-down' development opened up new spaces for NGO growth and expansion. 20th century viewed

[160] Hulmeih, D., (2008), "Introduction. NGO Performance and Accountability", In Edwards, M. and Hulme, D. (Eds.), Beyond the Magic Bullet. NGO Performance and Accountability in the Post-Cold War World, Connecticut, Kumarian Press.
[161] Florini, A. (2009): Does the Invisible Hand Need a Transparent Glove? The politics of transparency. An overview paper prepared for the Annual World Bank conference on Development Economics, Washington D.C., and Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, April 28-30.

favorably for their ability to connect with beneficiaries and their role as innovators in working with the poor. NGOs became the new "sweethearts" of development.

The withdrawal of structural adjustment programs marked another shift, returning the state's role in development back to center stage, but this time with an explicit focus on 'good governance'. While this 're-governmentalization' of aid drew attention away from NGOs, the language of democracy, human rights, participation and "strengthening civil society" that accompanied it consolidated their role as proxies for broader processes of citizen engagement that would enable them to act as a countervailing power against local and national governments. The extent to which NGOs have opened up this space remains questionable given the difficulties they face realizing their civil society functions. Although recognizing the need for a vibrant civil society, the donor community's narrow emphasis on NGOs and 'results' has curtailed its effectiveness when it comes to facilitating transformative development. Aid has enabled NGOs to expand access to services among marginalized and excluded groups, but this has been through channels that are weakly connected to deeper processes of political, economic, and structural change in which marginalized or excluded groups search for alternative ways of organizing the economy, politics, and social relations. Despite using their identity as civil society organizations to consolidate their legitimacy, NGOs in Bangladesh, for example, have increasingly divorced themselves from their civil society roots. In the growth of funding to NGOs in order to foster a 'vibrant' civil society, civil society has been treated as political magic bullet without a nuanced understanding of how it fits into a more complex network of relationships with the state, political parties, and citizens within diverse country contexts.[162]

According to Deegan, the aid industry's narrow definition of civil society conflates the term with professional NGOs who can master the donors' terminology, ways of working, and who can satisfy strict accountability processes to governments, Northern NGOs, philanthropists, and other non-traditional donors.[163] Despite their perceived advantages

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[162] Ibid p.34, Pp.56
[163] Deegan, C., (2010), *Trends in Accounting: Triple Bottom Line Reporting*, Paper presented at the *CPA Congress*, Adelaide, 17 November.

as grassroots-oriented 'democratizers of development'. NGOs face significant constraints and contradictions in their ability to strengthen civil society given the pressures they face to be non-political. their weak roots in society. the pressures they face to be accountable "upward" to donors rather than "downward" to beneficiaries. and their focus on short-term projects rather than long-term structural change. These pressures have enabled NGOs to excel in their service delivery function. But this has come at the expense of their civil society function, which remains key to NGO legitimacy. It is these characteristics that separate most NGOs from other forms of indigenous civil society entities. membership-based organizations (MBOs) is preferred more traditional forms of civil society organizations such as social movements. political, or religious institutions. trade unions, cooperatives, small self-help groups. and campaigning organizations, among others. Research on NGOs has been limited when it comes both to the experiences of social movements and the 'solidarity NGOs' that support them, the latter which tend to be smaller, less formal, and more politically radical than most NGOs involved in international development

## 3.7 Strategic Interdependence between Local NGOs and Foreign Donors

In accordance with their increasing international presence and importance, non-governmental organizations (NGO) have been subject to growing criticism related to their management and operations. This essay argues that the relationship of strategic interdependence between local NGOs and foreign donors which encompasses exchanges in symbolic and financial capital and is characterized by both cooperation and antagonism that further reproduce and reinforce existing relations' is inherently asymmetrical and has important organizational and managerial consequences for NGOs in terms of their identity, activities and reporting; autonomy, legitimacy and accountability; and, in that it further perpetuates global/local and North/South asymmetries. The strategic interdependence between local NGOs and foreign donors

concerning organizational reporting. monitoring and learning are central to understanding NGO behavior and change. [164]

### 3.7.1 Foreign Donor Resources and Demands

In exchange for financial resources and legitimacy. and in order to gain symbolic capital and maintain their reputation. external funders demand structured. professional information systems to reduce ambiguity and enhance the utility of NGO reporting. Funders demand information not only to monitor activities. they also make demands for additional outputs and information systems that emphasize quantifiable valuations of success and failure that favors product over process measuring success according to concrete outputs and deliverables rather than sound and engaging project design and implementation and diverts the time and attention of NGOs from their primary objectives. [165] For instance, NGOs are required to report on their physical and financial progress on a quarterly basis and are pressured to scale activities to improve their performance with respect to quantitative matrix targets of monitoring systems, which favor products and targets over processes, in order to secure funding. which effectively functions to change the way in which NGOs view and approach their operations and objectives. In exchange for this information. foreign donors provide local NGOs with financial resources as well as legitimacy, heightening the NGO's international profile and conferring it greater authority as important actors engaging in meaningful work.

### 3.7.2 Local NGO Resources and Demands

NGOs provide foreign donors with information and symbolic capital in exchange for funding and perceptions of legitimacy. Information is an essential input to funders as it enables funders to take credit for the local NGO's success and build their reputation and

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[164] Charonovitz, S. (2007) 'Two centuries of participation: NGOs and international governance', Michigan Journal of International Law 18(2): pp. 183-284.

[165] Reimann, D. (2006). 'A view from the top: international politics, norms and the world-wide growth of NGOs', International Studies Quarterly 50(1): 45-67.

status as legitimate international institutions. It is thus reputation derived from information that is a central resource provided by NGOs to funders, as it legitimizes the activities of donors by providing them with greater visibility and reputation critical sources for symbolic capital. Indeed, NGOs, in part, gain legitimacy from their reputation as objective, neutral experts, and that they engage in "information politics" through structuring their operations to generate and disperse information demanded by funders quickly, effectively and in innovative ways, in order to gain political leverage. This "information politics" is also played out when NGOs resist funder attempts to structure their behavior e.g. positivist monitoring and reporting requirements by formulating buffer strategies, including the symbolic generation of information in the form of surveys and case studies to satisfy funder needs, selective sharing of information to protect their core activities from unwanted interference, omitting negative results, and though strategic professionalization e.g. hiring professional consultants and enhancing their management and organizational systems to enhance reporting legitimacy. Thus, while NGOs supply foreign donors with symbolic capital, contribute to their reputation, and provide them with information, they do not only demand funds from donors to maintain their infrastructure, they are also seeking symbolic capital to enhance their legitimacy and reputation.[166]

## 3.8 Conclusion

There is an increasing tendency of NGOs to rely on governments for funding, which can ultimately compromise the very attributes that make NGOs desirable "independence and freedom of action."[167] Development NGOs receive the majority of their funding from the government from sixty-six percent for American NGOs to between eighty and ninety-five percent for Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan, Kenyan, and Nepalese development NGOs. Although development NGOs have historically received the vast majority of funding

[166] NGO Affairs Bureau. (2008). Flow of Foreign Grant Fund through NGO Affairs Bureau at a Glance. Dhaka: NGO Affairs Bureau, PM's Office/GOB
[167] Brown, L. David and Korten, David C., (2009) "Working More Effectively with Nongovernmental Organizations" in Samuel Paul Arturo Israel (eds) Nongovernmental Organizations and the World Bank. The World Bank Publications Washington D.C.

from governments. more human rights NGOs are being funded by states and intergovernmental organizations. Even the UN subsidizes some human rights NGOs to facilitate their participation. The most commonly cited challenge concern that donor priorities are so influential that they often take priority over accountability to other stakeholders. primarily the communities with whom the NGOs work. Because of the power relationship between donors and NGOs and the reliance of NGOs on diminishing funds in an expanding market place. NGOs are often afraid to challenge donors. to highlight difficulties and failures and to provide more nuanced and truthful accounts of their activities. Transparent and honest management of NGO resources pleases donors and other stakeholders, and is necessary to ensure continuous support and thus sustainability. More broadly. transparency is critical to development and a thriving democracy. It enables civil society to understand. analyze. and participate in discussions relating to community development and other social issues. Kenyan NGOs must understand that transparency is indispensable if they are to realize their overall goal of social transformation.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATIONS OF THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF PLAN INTERNATIONAL THARAKA CONSTITUENCY

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter covers data presentation and analysis of the data collected through questionnaires and Secondary data collected through evaluation of some reports of the projects plan international Kenya. books, journals. articles, newspapers, and research reports. In order to simplify the discussions, the researcher provided tables that summarize the collective reactions and views of the respondents.

### 4.2 Response Rate

The targeted sample size was 30 respondents. Those filled and returned questionnaires were 30 respondents making a response rate of 100%. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60% is good and a response rate of 70% and over is excellent. This means that the response rate for this study was excellent and therefore enough for data analysis and interpretation.

**Table 4.1: Response rate**

| Questionnaires | Frequency | Percent (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Response | 30 | 100% |
| Non-response | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 30 | 100.00% |

## 4.3 Demographic Information

The study sought to establish the demographic information in order to determine whether it had influence on the role of non-governmental organizations in community development. The demographic information of the respondents included Age and education levels of the respondents.

### 4.3.1 Age Bracket of the respondents

The researcher sought to investigate whether the age bracket of the respondents affected the role of non-governmental organizations in community development. The results are displayed on the table 4.2

**Table 4.2: Age Bracket of the respondents**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| 20 - 30 years     | 10        | 33.33      |
| 31-40 years       | 11        | 36.67      |
| 41-50 years       | 4         | 13.33      |
| 51-60 years       | 3         | 10.00      |
| 60 years and above| 2         | 6.67       |
| **Total**         | **30**    | **100.0%** |

Majority of the respondents (36.67%) aged between 31-40 years, followed by the age 20 - 30 years (33.33%). 13.33% were of age 41-50 years. 10.00% comprised of 51-60 years with only 6.67% aged 60 years and above. The findings implies Plan International project officials and key representatives of communities especially in Tharaka Nithi were of young age that is 40 years and below.

### 4.3.2 Respondents' Education level

The researcher sought to investigate the education levels of the respondents to see whether it had effect on the topic role of non-governmental organizations in community developments. The findings are displayed on the table below.

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**Table 4.3: Education level**

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Primary level | 12 | 40.0 |
| Secondary level | 11 | 36.7 |
| University level/college | 7 | 23.3 |
| Total | 30 | 100.0 |

The findings revealed that majority 40.0% had primary education, 36.7% had secondary with the least percentage (23.3%) having university education. This implies that majority of Plan International project officials and key representatives of communities especially in Tharaka Nithi had inadequate education.

## 4.4 Heard About Plan

The study sought to investigate the proportion of respondents who had heard about plan international. The results are displayed on the table below.

**Table 4.4: Heard about plan**

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 24 | 80.0 |
| No | 6 | 20.0 |
| Total | 30 | 100.0 |

According to the study findings majority 80%had heard about plan international with only 20% who had no idea about plan international. However, those who had heard plan international confirmed different ways in which they associated the organization with including: sponsoring children, community projects, through community empowerment projects, in education sectors, agricultural sectors in training farmers, classroom construction, through provision of water tanks and in dam construction.

## 4.5 Knowledge on the Objectives of Plan International

The researcher sought to establish the proportion of respondents who had Knowledge on the objectives of plan international in Tharaka constituency. The results are displayed on the table below.

**Table 4.5: Knowledge on the objectives of plan international**

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| Yes | 17 | 70.8 |
| No | 7 | 29.2 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 |

From the findings it was noted that out of 24 who had heard about plan international 17(70.8%) had knowledge on the objectives of plan international. However, a proportion of 7(29.2%) had no idea on the objectives of plan international. From the findings respondents mentioned some of the objectives they knew about the plan international including: responsive budgeting, sponsoring community projects, seeing that the need all children in the world are met, improving learning of pupils in school and helping the community.

## 4.6 Plan International Meeting the Above Objectives

The researcher sought to establish the proportion of respondents who had Knowledge on whether Plan International had met its objectives. The results are displayed on the table below.

**Table 4.6: Plan International meeting the above objectives**

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| Yes | 12 | 70.6 |
| No | 5 | 29.4 |
| Total | 17 | 100.0 |

The findings reveal that out of 17 who had knowledge on the objectives of plan international. 12(70.6%) were of the opinion that plan international had met their objectives. However, 5(29.4%) were of the opinion that plan international had not met their objectives. Respondents in addition mentioned the extent to which plan international had met the mentioned objectives including: taking children to school. providing breads to pupils. providing facilities such as toilets and computer sand funding projects in Tharaka and kwale counties.

## 4.7 Ability to Name A Least 2 Projects Initiated By Plan International

The study sought to establish the proportion of respondents who were able to name a least 2 projects initiated by plan international in Tharaka constituency. The results are displayed on the table below.

Table 4.7: Ability to name a least 2 projects initiated by plan international

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| Yes | 19 | 79.2 |
| No | 5 | 20.8 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 |

From the findings out of 24 respondents who had heard about plan international majority 19(79.2%) were able to name a least 2 projects initiated by plan international. However, 5(20.8%) were not able to mention any 2 projects initiated by plan international. From the findings the mentioned projects included: sponsoring children and classroom construction, installing solar panels and building toilets, community empowerment and girls training, dam construction and school fees payments, child protection and girl child networking, water and food supply, stopping FGM and training community on democracy.

## 4.8 Effect of Projects on Livelihoods of Locals

The study sought to investigate the opinion of respondents on whether the plan international initiated projects had Effect on livelihoods of locals. The results are displayed on the table below.

**Table 4.8 : Effect of projects on livelihoods of locals**

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| Yes | 17 | 70.8 |
| No | 7 | 29.2 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 |

From the study findings it was observed that 17(70.8%) agreed that the plan international initiated projects had effect on livelihoods of locals. 7(29.2%) said that plan international initiated projects had no on livelihoods of locals. However the respondents of yes opinion explained ways in which the project had changed the livelihoods of locals including: children get more time to read due to availability of lights in schools, pupils are now comfortable in the spacious classrooms hence high performance, people have known their rights, there is conducive environment due to availability of water and archaic practices had reduced.

## 4.9 Projects Service and the Purpose Intended

The study sought to assess whether the Projects initiated by plan international were serving the purpose intended. The opinion of respondents is displayed on the table below.

**Table 4.9 : Projects service and the purpose intended**

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| Yes | 13 | 54.2 |
| No | 11 | 45.8 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 |

From the study findings the researcher noticed that majority 13(54.2%) of the respondents were of the yes opinion that the Projects initiated by plan international were serving the purpose intended. 11(45.8%) of the respondents who had heard about plan international were of the opinion that the Projects initiated by plan international were not serving the purpose intended. The findings revealed some reasons given by the respondents who were of yes opinion including: children get more time to read due to availability of lights in schools. pupils are now comfortable in the spacious classrooms hence high performance, people have known their rights. conducive environment due to availability of water and archaic practices had reduced. However the remaining proportion of the respondents also gave the reasons why they thought Projects initiated by plan international were not serving the purpose intended including: there are many problems faced by the residents unknown to plan international official. plan international only carry out small projects which do not benefit majority of the residents, there are still high levels of poverty in the constituency of Tharaka and that they only organize for seminars which do not benefit the residents hence time wastage.

## 4.10 Personal Benefit from Projects Initiated By Plan International

The study sought to assess whether the Projects initiated by plan international personally benefited the residents of Tharaka constituency. The opinion of respondents is displayed on the table below.

Table 4.10: Personal benefit from projects initiated by plan international

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| Yes | 13 | 54.2 |
| No | 11 | 45.8 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 |

The findings revealed that majority 13(54.2%) had personally benefited from projects initiated by plan international. However 11(45.8%) of the respondents who had heard about plan international had not personally benefitted from its projects. Those of the no opinion gave the following reasons to justify their opinions: some said did not like to

depend on anyone. some said they were not artisans therefore couldn't benefit. had no children in school and others claimed it only helped pupils. However those who agreed that they had personally benefited from the body also justified their opinion: had received computers. water tanks, payment of school fees. training on various topics. food supply as well as photocopies at low prices.

## 4.11 Plan International Projects and Critical Developmental Problems

The study sought to assess whether the Projects initiated by plan international addressed critical developmental problems facing residents of Tharaka constituency. The opinion of respondents is displayed on the table below.

**Table 4.11: Plan international projects and critical developmental problems**

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| Yes | 15 | 62.5 |
| No | 9 | 37.5 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 |

From the findings the researcher noted that majority 15(62.5%) agreed that Projects initiated by plan international addressed critical developmental problems facing residents of Tharaka constituency. With only 9(37.5%) who disagreed that Projects initiated by plan international addressed critical developmental problems facing residents of Tharaka constituency. Those of yes opinion gave the following reasons: plan international had provided water tanks to help in water harvesting, class room construction as well as payment of school fees. The respondents who gave a no opinion aid that they had not witnessed any critical developmental problems being addressed by the plan international.

## 4.12 Plan international and involvement of the community in the management of the project

The study sought to assess whether the plan international involved community in the management of the projects. The opinion of respondents is displayed on the table below.

**Table 4.12: Plan international and involvement of the community in the management of the project**

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| Yes | 14 | 58.3 |
| No | 10 | 41.7 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 |

The findings revealed that majority14 (58.3%) of the respondents agreed that plan international involved the community in the management of the project. 10(41.7%) confirmed that plan international did not involve the community in the management of the project. The respondents of ye opinion gave the following reasons to justify that plan international involved the community in the management of the project: plan international confirmed from the community on availability of the raw materials, community was also involved in collecting of the raw materials, the body always called for sensitization meetings and that community was allowed to air their problems. The no respondents also justified their opinion by the following reasons: plan international never consulted from community because they only talked to officials.

## 4.13 Training on the project

The researcher sought to get respondents opinion on whether they had received any training on the projects initiated by plan international. The opinion of respondents is displayed on the table below.

**Table 4.13: Training on the project**

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| Yes | 10 | 41.7 |
| No | 14 | 58.3 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 |

The finding reveal that majority 14 (58.3%) had not received any training on the project initiated by plan international. The study findings revealed that only 10(41.7%) had

training on the project initiated by plan international. Yes opinion respondents had received training from various institutions including: governance and leadership. agricultural offices, department of forestry. hired rooms as well as education offices for maximum of one week. The training had benefited the respondents in different ways including: how to manage small groups. how to manage firms. planting trees at home. computer skills. and ideas on human rights. Respondents who did not training on the project initiated by plan international gave the following reasons: plan international trained just a proportion of leaders. they were not interested to attend and others said that they were not invited to attend.

## 4.14 Skills / Knowledge That Exist In the Community and Are Not Being Used By the Plan International

The study sought to assess whether there were Skills / knowledge that exist in the community and are not being used by the plan international. The opinion of respondents is displayed on the table below.

Table 4.14: Skills / knowledge that exist in the community and are not being used by the plan international

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| Yes | 17 | 70.8 |
| No | 7 | 29.2 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 |

Majority 17(70.8 %) of the respondents agreed that there were Skills / knowledge that exist in the community and are not being used by the plan international. However a small proportion 7(29.2%) said that there were no Skills / knowledge that exist in the community and are not being used by the plan international. The yes opinion respondents gave the following examples of unused skills: various talents and skills such as ability to play and ability to do construction.

## 4.15 Personal Consultation during the Initiation of Project

The researcher sought to get respondents opinion on whether they personally consulted during the initiation of project plan international. The opinion of respondents is displayed on the table below.

**Table 4.15: Personal consultation during the initiation of project**

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| Yes | 7 | 29.2 |
| No | 17 | 70.8 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 |

Majority 17(70.8%) of the study respondents were not consulted during initiation of the project .however 7(29.2%) were personally consulted during initiation of the project. Those consulted said it was done through school meetings and chief's Barraza's. Majority of the respondent who were not personally consulted had no problem with not being consulted. However other said that their view would have helped to reduce some failures observed.

## 4.16 Relationship with Plan International Staff during Course Their Work

The researcher sought to get respondents opinion on Relationship with plan international staff during course their work. The opinion of respondents is displayed on the table below.

**Table 4.16: Relation with plan international staff during course their work**

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| Excellent | 6 | 25.0 |
| Very good | 14 | 58.3 |
| Fair | 4 | 16.7 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 |

From the findings the researcher noticed that majority 14(58.3%) related very good with plan international staff during course their work, 6(25.0%) had their relation with plan international staff during course their work being excellent with only 4(16.7%)whose relationship with plan international staff during course their work was just fair.

## 4.17 Sense of Ownership of Plan International

The researcher sought to get respondents opinion on Sense of ownership of plan international on a scale of 1 to 10. The opinion of respondents is displayed on the table below.

**Table 4.17: Sense of ownership of plan international**

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| 1 to 5 | 17 | 70.8 |
| 6 to 10 | 7 | 29.2 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 |

From the study findings majority of the respondents gave a score between 1 and 5. Only 7(29.2%) gave a score which was above average (between 6 and 10). This implied that majority felt that they were not much associated with the plan international.

## 4.18 Plan International Project and Representation of Community Real Needs

The study sought to investigate the respondents view on plan international project and representation community real needs. The results are displayed on the table below.

**Table 4.18: Plan international project and representation of community real needs**

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| Yes | 5 | 20.8 |
| No | 19 | 79.2 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 |

From the findings it was noted that majority 19(79.2%) felt that Plan international project did not represent of community real needs. However a small proportion of the respondents were of the opinion that plan international project represented their real needs. Those of yes opinion said that the projects had solved different issues including: classroom problems. fees problems. water problem as well as food problem. However those who thought the projects were not representing their needs said that plan international did not understand their problems because no consultation was being made before carrying out the projects.

## 4.19 Involvement In Monitoring and Evaluation of the Progress of the Plan International Projects

The study sought to investigate the respondents view on Involvement of community in monitoring and evaluation of the progress of the plan international projects. The results are displayed on the table below.

Table 4.19: Involvement in monitoring and evaluation of the progress of the plan international projects

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Somehow involved | 8 | 33.3 |
| Not involved | 16 | 66.7 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 |

The study findings established that 16(66.7%) of the study respondents who had heard about plan international were not Involved in monitoring and evaluation of the progress of the plan international projects. 8(33.3%) confirmed their Involvement in monitoring and evaluation of the progress of the plan international projects somehow.

## 4.20 Making of Critical Decisions Regarding Projects to Be Initiated By Plan International

The study sought to establish who makes critical decisions regarding projects to be initiated by plan international in Tharaka constituency. The results are displayed on the table below.

**Table 4.20: Making of critical decisions regarding projects to be initiated by plan international**

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Plan international officials only | 12 | 50.0 |
| Project committees only | 4 | 16.7 |
| Chairman of the project | 3 | 12.5 |
| Both NGO officials. Beneficiaries and project committees | 5 | 20.8 |
| **Total** | **24** | **100.0** |

From the study findings majority 12(50.0%) said that decisions regarding projects to be initiated by plan international were made by Plan international officials only, 5(20.8%) were of the opinion that decisions regarding projects to be initiated by plan international came from both NGO officials, Beneficiaries and project committees, 4(16.7%) were of the view that decisions regarding projects to be initiated by plan international came from project committees only, with only 3(12.5%) who said that decisions regarding projects to be initiated by plan international came from the chairman of the project.

## 4.21 Foreseeing Of Problem Regarding the Maintenance of This Project after Plan International Has Left

The researcher sought to analyse the opinion of the respondents on whether they were foreseeing of problem regarding the maintenance of this project after Plan International has left.

**Table 4.21: Foreseeing of problem regarding the maintenance of this project after Plan International has left**

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| Yes | 8 | 33.3 |
| No | 16 | 66.7 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 |

The study findings established that 16(66.7%) of the study respondents who had heard about plan international did not foresee any problem regarding the maintenance of this project after Plan International has left. 8(33.3%) confirmed their wee Foreseeing of problem regarding the maintenance of this project after Plan International has left. However the foreseen problem included: problems with repairing of computers provided by the plan international, the needy pupils will lack school fees, the projects might fail to complete if left in the hands of locals and that there might be some disagreement between locals hence collapse of projects.

## 4.22 Community Ability of Initiating Similar Project without the Assistant of From a Donor

The researcher sought to analyse the opinion of the respondents on ability of the Community to initiating similar project without the assistant of from a donor. The opinions are displayed on the table below.

**Table 4.22: Community ability of initiating similar project without the assistant of from a donor**

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| Yes | 5 | 20.8 |
| No | 19 | 79.2 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 |

Majority 19(79.2%) of the respondents were of the opinion that Community was not able to initiate similar project without the assistant of from a donor. However 5(20.8%) were

of the opinion that Community was able to initiating similar project without the assistant of from a donor.

## 4.23 Knowledge of the Resources Needed To Run the Project

The researcher sought to analyse the opinion of the respondents on their knowledge of the resources needed to run the project. The opinions are displayed on the table below.

Table 4.23: Knowledge of the resources needed to run the project

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|
| Yes | 7 | 29.2 |
| No | 17 | 70.8 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 |

From the finding a great number 17(70.8%) of the respondents lacked knowledge of the resources needed to run the project. However 7(29.2%) had knowledge of the resources needed to run the project.

## 4.24 Extent of Involvement in the Management of the Resources

The researcher also sought to analyse the opinion of the respondents on extent of involvement in the management of the resources. The opinions are displayed on the table below.

**Table 4.24: Extent of involvement in the management of the resources**

| Opinion | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Fully involved | 2 | 8.3 |
| Mostly involved | 1 | 4.2 |
| Somehow involved | 7 | 29.2 |
| Not involved | 14 | 58.3 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 |

From the study findings 14(58.3%) of the respondents were not involved in the management of the resources. 7(29.2%) were somehow involved in the management of the resources, 2(8.3%) were fully involved in the management of the resources, and 1(4.2%) were in the management of the resources most involved in the management of the resources. The respondents who indicated their lack of knowledge of the resources needed to run the project gave the following reasons: some said that only leaders had the knowledge resources needed with other who claimed they were not aware of any project initiated by plan international.

## 4.25 Conclusion

This chapter covered data presentation and analysis of the data collected through questionnaires. In order to simplify the discussions, the researcher provided tables that summarize the collective reactions and views of the respondents.

The findings on the analysed issues concur with Adebayo findings that many NGOs have relationships at different levels with different international partners. [168] But in most cases than not, they stand to represent more of what the donor agencies want than the beneficiaries whom they claim to represent. To an extent, they are put under pressure by the fact that they are found in a web of responsibility, first to the donor, next to the state and finally to the beneficiaries. In this situation, they are therefore forced to find common grounds in a way which will be satisfactory to all three groups which often

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[68] Adebayo, A. (2009).The Role of NGOs in Poverty Alleviation: A Poverty Alleviation in Nigeria, Selected Papers for the Annual Conference of the Nigeria Economic Society. Pp.397-414

is an uphill task with many risks involved. Yet. some have succeeded to move on because they have decided to focus on getting the results the donors want. while in some way also trying to make the community get some level of support or improvement to an extent. But surpassingly in many cases. they follow donor directions on project implementation with less consideration on local realities and which has led to the failure of most development projects or a less than good outcome than expected.

The findings also concur with Edwards findings that one big issue which till date has been one of the main causes of failure in reaching set development targets is evaluation and accountability.[169] In most organizations. the community within which they work hardly gets any information about the budget or a briefing of how the whole project is expected to run so that they could also follow up and call to order the organization when it is straying. As well as most of these organizations lack sophisticated boards and pprofessional staff, yet they are expected to deliver complicated and difficult services with high expectations on performance.

According to Williams, this is a common scenario because some of the sponsored projects are developed in NGO offices rather than from the communities through participation in identifying and developing strategies which can bring about long lasting changes and in which case they hardly have sustainable components.[170] Hence, the NGO tends to focus more on being accountable to the donor to secure more funding and trust than to the community in which they work. While on the part of the donor, when they want to do evaluation, they rely on reports from the NGOs and at some point they may send an evaluator to check the progress or completion of the project and this often doesn't last more than a few days. Given the limited time for evaluation, much of the loopholes of the project are easily hidden or camouflaged by these NGOs and the evaluator may end up seeing only what went right and to their satisfaction. But the underlying realities are not seen and this is a serious shortcoming because at the end no lessons are learned and with other projects, the same mistakes are being made over and

[169] Edwards. M. (2013). "NGO Legitimacy - Voice or Vote?" *BOND*, Vol., pp. 14
[170] Williams, A. (2012): Transparency in Networked Economy in NGOs. An overview paper prepared for Digital4Sight Inc.

over and from my experience. the expected outcomes of projects may be difficult to come by in such situations.[171]

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[171] Ibid

# CHAPTER FIVE

# SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents summary of the findings. conclusions based on the findings and recommendations there-to on the role of non-governmental organizations in community development: a case study of plan international Tharaka constituency. The chapter also presents recommendations for further studies.

## 5.2 Summary of Findings

The study aimed to assess the role of non-governmental organizations in community development. It was guided by the following specific objectives: To assess whether or not NGOs are accountable, transparent and adequately represent the development aspiration of the community they target and to investigate whether or not NGOs over reliance on donor funding compromises the choice of the projects at expense of the target communities thus compromising their autonomy in service delivery. The study established that majority 80% of Tharaka residents had heard about plan, the study also established that a good number 70.8% of the respondents had knowledge on the objectives of plan international. However the findings showed that 70.6% of the respondents were of the opinion that plan international had met their objectives. Further the findings established that 79.2% of the respondents were able to name a least 2 projects initiated by plan international. From the study finding it was observed that 70.8% the sampled respondents agreed that the plan international initiated projects had effect on livelihoods of locals. From the study findings the researcher noticed that majority 54.2% of the respondents were of the yes opinion that the Projects initiated by plan international were serving the purpose intended. In addition 54.2% had personally benefited from projects initiated by plan international. 62.5% agreed that Projects initiated by plan international addressed critical developmental problems facing residents of Tharaka constituency. The findings however, revealed that majority 58.3% of the respondents agreed that plan international involved the community in the management of the project. Majority 58.3% had not received any training on the project initiated by plan

international. Majority 70.8 % of the respondents also agreed that there were Skills / knowledge that exist in the community and are not being used by the plan international. In addition Majority 70.8% of the study respondents were not consulted during initiation of the project. The findings revealed that most respondents 58.3% related very well with plan international staff during course their work. 79.2% felt that Plan international project did not represent of community real needs. 66.7% of the study respondents who had heard about plan international were not involved in monitoring and evaluation of the progress of the plan international projects. From the findings it was observed that majority 50.0% of the respondents were of the opinion that decisions regarding projects to be initiated by plan international were made by Plan international officials only. 66.7% of the study respondents who had heard about plan international did not foresee any problem regarding the maintenance of this project after Plan International has left. From the study findings majority 79.2% of the respondents were of the opinion that Community was not able to initiate similar project without the assistant of from a donor. 70.8% of the respondents lacked knowledge of the resources needed to run the project. From the study findings 58.3% of the respondents were not involved in the management of the resources.

## 5.3 Discussion of the findings

### 5.3.1 NGOs accountability, transparency and adequate representation of the development aspiration of the community they target

The findings revealed that as a result of accountability, transparency and adequate representation of plan international children in Tharaka constituency had more time to do their revisions as well as studying due to availability of lights in schools; pupils were comfortable in the spacious classrooms constructed by plan international hence high performance. People had known their rights including girl children who had received protection against FGM. The residents of Tharaka were enjoying conducive environment due to availability of water and however, archaic practices had reduced in Tharaka constituency. Respondents confirmed that it was through plan international accountability, transparency and adequate representation that they had received computers, water tanks, payment of school fees, training on various topics, food supply

as well as photocopies at low prices. On the other hand the findings revealed that 66.7% of the study respondents who had heard about plan international were not involved in monitoring and evaluation of the progress of the plan international projects. However the large number of respondents 79.2% felt that Plan international project did not represent of community real needs. This is because plan international did not understand their problems because no consultations were being made from the community before carrying out the projects.

According to Fowler, accountability. transparency and adequate representation of an NGO is an important component. [172] Most organisations believe that greater transparency is needed. However, many NGOs have different opinions on the extent of transparency needed in relation to their target group and the risks of "excessive" transparency for NGOs operating in a context of an authoritarian political regime. Some NGOs believe that the more transparent an organisation is (including its financial affairs) the more trustworthy it is. Such NGOs argue that the publication of reports, including in the media. inspire confidence. However, a significant number of NGOs believe that transparency should focus on the activity itself and its results; with financial transparency. it is necessary to "balance" transparency, i.e. not to unnecessarily "highlight" the organization's finances. These views result from the perception that excessive financial transparency generates jealousy among government officials as to the resources of NGOs, and increases their desire to control the flow of funds to the NGO sector. Some NGO leaders note that the corrupt political system is also an obstacle to greater transparency of NGOs. On the other hand, considering the "balanced transparency" argument, in poor countries even relatively small funds spent by NGOs can cause jealousy and misunderstanding by ordinary people. [173]

The findings revealed that the perception and understanding of the issue of accountability transparency and adequate representation on the development aspiration of the community they target groups within the NGO (plan international) sector varies. It was noted that the transparency of an NGO is an important component of its accountability

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[172] Fowler, A. (2010). "NGO futures: beyond aid: NGDO values and the fourth position". In: Third World Quarterly, 21(4), 589-603.
[173] Ibid

and legitimacy. It was also noted that the publication of reports, including in the media, inspire confidence. However, a significant number of respondents believe that transparency should focus on the activity itself and its results: with financial transparency, it is necessary to "balance" transparency, i.e. not to unnecessarily "highlight" the organization's finances.

## 5.3.2 NGOs reliance on donor funding in relation to target communities service delivery

From the findings, due to the fact that NGOs are undercapitalized. they are very susceptible to donor pressure with their financial survival putting them at mission drift and assuming service responsibilities which may not be in the long term interest of the organization or the community. On the other hand, Brown [174] says that in trying to satisfy the donors, for instance in promoting good governance either through a sensitization campaign, Non-governmental organization tend to fall out in most cases with the government, who on their part think these NGOs are trying to create some kind of mmistrust for them in the communities. This has resulted in the government setting certain restrictions on their activities and a firm control over them in some way.

Cronin says that in spite of the fact that a majority of these NGOs are highly dependent on aid, they have really been doing some commendable work within poor communities in Africa.[175] Many of these communities thanks to aid from donors and effort on the part of the NGOs and community together, they have achieved some reasonable results in some areas of their projects. According to the findings it is quite evident in Tharaka communities has received provision of water, lighting system and computers, improved agricultural methods as well as in dairy farming, and empowerment through sensitization has brought about a great change to the residents. Presumably, in the isolated cases, can really see the effect the relationship between

[174] Brown, D.L., and Moore, M.H., (2011), "Accountability, Strategy, and International Nongovernmental Organizations", *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, Vol. 30 No. 3, pp. 569-587.
[175] Cronin, D., and O' Regan, J., (2011), Accountability in Development Aid: Meeting Responsibilities, Measuring Performance - Summary Document, A Research Report for Comhlamh, Comhlamh Aid Issues Group.

donors and NGOs and the provision of aid has had on development initiatives within the community some short term and others long term.

## 5.4 Conclusions

According to Deegan. to some extent there is an improvement in plan international issues mentioned in the study given the increasing call for and the enforcement of participation in NGO (plan international) activities. whereby communities play a role and also, a sustainable aspect being added to most NGO projects.[176] Also. many NGO are now being brought under networks within which certain successes can be used and replicated while the learning process is unified and the strength of unity is put in force and through which certain activities on NGOs (plan international) are put under check and control to some extent. Donors as well have been trying to implement new approaches in the way they interact with NGOs in Africa giving them an opportunity to maximize their potentials in working with these communities.[177]

## 5.5 Recommendations

### 5.5.1 Recommendations to NGOs

NGOs including plan international need to think about their role in the development of society, and based on that- address issues of accountability to key stakeholders. NGOs need to learn to put issues of accountability and overall performance into context. Therefore, approaches to accountability will depend on the specifics of an organisation, the scope of its activities, and the type and number of its stakeholders. When implementing programs, NGOs should start with an analysis of whose rights their programme will affect, and what the NGO commitments and responsibilities of other stakeholders are.[178] NGOs need to outline answers to questions of "accountable for what?", "accountability to whom?" and "accountability in what form?".

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[176] Deegan, C., (2010), *Trends in Accounting: Triple Bottom Line Reporting*, Paper presented at the *CPA Congress*, Adelaide, 17 November.
[177] Ibid
[178] Simon, N.(2014); "The NGO movement in Africa", Nairobi, Environmental Liaison centre. *International Studies Quarterly* 50(1): 45-67.

NGOs including plan international must choose forms of accountability in accordance with their source of legitimacy. If NGOs consider the quality of their services to be a source of legitimacy. it is necessary to address how to prove the quality of work and its impact on the target groups. If an NGO (plan international) values the trust of people, then there is a need for other forms of accountability. If NGOs declare to represent their target groups. there should be a close relationship with these groups. including feedback and participation.

## 5.5.2 Recommendation to donors

From the observetions. donors should ensure that there is continual evaluation of the projects in the different regions including Tharaka constituency and be able to learn from the problems that may arise from the circumstantial implementation of these projects. From this, they can be able to come up with better ways of implementing projects which are community tailored and effectively sustainable. Thus aid should be made dependent on observed or foreseeable programs in development outcomes like poverty reduction, improved literacy rates and an observable generally good quality of policies.

According to Sunga, donors are also called upon to be very sensitive to the needs of their constituents and have the skills and capacity not only to listen, but to forge an effective program to meet these needs.[179] A democratized aid transaction has two components it should give control of aid to recipients as much as possible to be able and should be able to be more transparent. This will promote a higher level of commitment and energy which will be obtained from recipients and the learning process will be easier and faster. Goals should be empowerment and participation which will lead to accountability.

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[179] Sunga S. (2007) 'Dilemmas facing NGOs in coalitions-occupied Iraq', in Daniel A. Bell and Jean-Marc Coicaud (eds) *Ethics in Action: The Ethical Challenges of International Human Rights Nongovernmental Organizations,* Cambridge: Cambridge Universe Press, pp. 99-11

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**Appedices1: RESEARCH QUESTIONAIRE**

<u>Introduction</u>

I am Mwangangi Sabastian Njagi. a Masters student at the Institute for Diplomacy and International Studies, University of Nairobi. I am in the process of writing my Thesis on Role of Non-governmental Organization in community development: A case Study of Plan international. Tharaka Constituency. I would be grateful for your views and opinions on the matters in the questionnaire below. Please note that you may complete the questionnaire anonymously and that all individual responses will be treated confidentially.

<u>Thank you very much.</u>

Personal details

     i.    Name _____(optional)

    ii.    Age _____(optional)

    iii.    Education _____

    iv.    Position and organization _____

Have you heard about Plan international?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes in what way(s)

_____

If No (please do not proceed)

_____

Do you know the objectives of plan international to this community?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If Yes to what extent name any

_____

Do you think Plan International has been meeting the above objectives?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes to what extent have they been met?

_____

Can you name a least 2 projects initiated by plan international in your area.

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes which ones

_____

Do you think that projects have changed livelihoods of locals?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, in which way?

_____

Do you think these projects are serving the purpose that was intended?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, briefly explain

_____

If no, why do you think they not

_____

Have you personally benefited from this project?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, in which way?

_____

If no why not

_____

Do the project initiated by plan international in your area address critical developmental problems facing you as locals.

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes state which needs of the community that the project satisfied?

_____

_____

_____

_____

If no why not

_____

_____

What are the greatest challenges facing the projects?

_____

Does plan international involve the community in the management of the project? ☐

       Yes

☐   No

       If yes how _____

       If no why not _____

Have you received any training on the project?

☐   Yes

☐   No

If yes please give the details below

| Institution that trained you | Skills received | Duration | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |

If you answer yes to the question above, do you find the training you have received to be useful in your day-today activities?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes how

_____

If No why not

_____

Do you find the training you have received to be useful in your day-to-day activities?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes how _____

If No why not

_____

Do you know the skills / knowledge that exist in the community and are not being used by the plan international?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes describe which ones

_____

Were you personally consulted during the initiation of this project?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, briefly explain in what ways you were consulted?

_____

If No, please explain if you had any problems with not being consulted?

_____

In a scale of 1-10 score your sense of ownership of the Plan International project

_____

Indicate how you related with plan international staff during course their work

a)    Excellent  b) Very good        d) Fair        e) Poor

Give reasons for your answer

_____

Does the plan international project initiated in your area represent your real needs? 

☐

    Yes

    No

☐

If yes why _____

If no why not_____

To what extent are you involved in monitoring and evaluation of the progress of the plan international projects?

a)        Fully involved    b) Mostly involved    c)       Somehow involved    d) Not involved

Who makes critical decisions regarding which projects should be initiated by plan international in your area?

a)        Plan international officials only

b)        Project committees only

c)        Chairman of the project

d)        Both NGO officials, Beneficiaries and project committees

Others                           specify

_____

Do you foresee any problem regarding the maintenance of this project after Pla International has left?

☐  Yes

☐  No

If yes name likely problems

_____

Can the community initiate similar project without the assistant of from a donor?

_____

☐ Yes

☐ No

Do you know the resources needed to run the project?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes to what extent are you involved in the management of the resources?

a)      Fully      b) Half way   c) Small way      d)      Not involved.

If No state reason why not

_____

Any other comments or suggestions?