

# Contribution of Non-governmental Organisation to the Socio-Economic Development of the People of Borno State

**Bashir Kachalla Mohammed<sup>1</sup>, Ruth Asur<sup>2</sup> & Ali Mustapha<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Accountancy, Ramat Polytechnic, Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup>Department of Business Administration, Ramat Polytechnic, Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria

<sup>3</sup>Department of General Studies, Federal Polytechnic, Damaturu, Yobe State, Nigeria

Corresponding Author: [bakmohgreat1@gmail.com](mailto:bakmohgreat1@gmail.com) Mobile No.: +234 803-585-9949

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**Abstract:** *This study was conducted in Borno state, Nigeria to examine the contribution of Non-Governmental Organisation to the socio economic development of the people of the community. Description research module which involves both the quantitative and qualitative research methods was adopted in carrying out the study. A set of questions were administered to the management, staff and opinion leaders of the NGOs and communities to help know how they have contributed to development in state. Data generated were analyzed using SPSS. Results of the study indicated that, the various NGOs in the state have indeed contributed to the development of the people in the area. The communities have seen a face lift in terms of Education, Health, Agriculture and food security, Economic empowerment as well as Good governance. It was recommended that there should be a strengthened collaboration between the Government and NGOs and also among the NGOs to prevent duplication of projects.*

**Keywords:** *Contribution, non-governmental organisation, socio-economic, Development, Borno state.*

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## Introduction

Insurgency which has been seen as the most common type of armed conflict has posed the greatest threat to global peace and security in the 21st century. This has created an unprecedented internal population displacement in urban areas of Africa. The victims are affected by complex challenges and risks like joblessness, homelessness, marginalization, food insecurity, increased mortality and morbidity, loss of access to common property, and social disintegration. The government in Nigeria which include local, state and federal claims to be serving and assisting the affected people through its agents and organisations.

The need for organizing people into accredited associations and their involvement and participation in socio-economic development have now been fully recognized. In recent years, they have increased in considerable number, acquired greater importance and significance and put up many new experiments in the field of development. Non-governmental organisation play a crucial role in development by supplementing government efforts as they are close to the minds and hearts of the people. They have their roots in the people and can respond to the needs and aspirations of the community very effectively.

In recent years, non-governmental organisation have acquired greater importance and significance than before because the government has not been able to reach the people, especially the poor and weaker sections. They have been able to make their presence felt from the local to the national level and now at the international level. Many of them have pioneered

works in areas, which were ignored by the process of national development planning (Anandharajakumar - 1995).

Non-Governmental organizations are organizations that are not part of any government. A key distinction is between not-for-profit groups and for-profit corporations; the vast majority of NGOs are not-for-profit. In some countries, particularly socialist ones, some NGOs are government-organized. The purposes of NGOs cover the entire range of human interests and may be domestic or international in scope. Many NGOs are key sources of information for governments on issues such as human rights abuses and environmental degradation. Some NGOs fulfill quasi-governmental functions for ethnic groups that lack a state of their own. NGOs may be financed by private donations, international organizations, governments, or a combination of these. In Britain, quasi-autonomous non-governmental organizations, or “quangos”, are organizations that have no elected boards and receive public funds which they also disburse (Drezes’sen, 1989).

In Nigeria there are many NGOs which participate in different activities towards poverty alleviation among the people. They contribute 80% in development and most of them are based at district level as well as Sub county level. These NGOs help focus on future investment to target the raising income as well as improve the quality of life of young people. They carry out measures to increase on the house hold income, they focus on road improvement, land, agriculture, rural market, employment, labour productivity, rural credit and financial services, micro and small scale enterprises. They carry out measures to improve the quality of life of the youth, they target the provision of basic services like Primary Health Care, Primary education, water and the environment as well as disaster management (MFPED, 2006).

According to Dhillon & Hansra (1995), the NGO’s have their roots in the people and can respond to the needs and aspirations of the community very effectively. They can experiment new approaches to rural development. The success of this rural development therefore depends upon the active operation of the Non-Governmental organization and willing co-operation of the rural people through Self-Help organizations. In recent years, the Non-Governmental organizations have acquired greater importance and significance in improving the life’s of the rural since the government has not been able to reach the people, especially the poor and less privilege in society or weaker sections (David Lewis and Nazneen Kanji). They have been able to make their presence felt from the local to the national level and now at the international level also. Many of them have pioneered works in areas, which were ignored by the process of national development planning (Anandharajakumar 1995).

In Borno state, agriculture is the major economic activity where by 80% of the people grow crops on small scale like millet, maize, rice, beans, potatoes, cassava among others, all these at subsistence level. There are also other activities like brick laying, poultry and cattle rearing. All these require support from NGOs to perform some services for the purpose to achieve efficiency. Different NGOs operate Worldwide, in Africa, Nigeria and in Borno state. These organizations involve some transfer of certain public function and services to in order to improve on the development of an area. If these NGOs achieve their objectives in Borno state, poverty among the People will be reduced at a rate less than 10% (absolute poverty) and below 30% (relative poverty). This can be done through the expansion of health centers, Primary schools, access to safe and clean water, increased income for house hold. (MFPED, 2006). It is because of this background that this study intend to find out the contribution of NGOs on the socio-economic development of the people of Borno state.

Majority of the people in Northeastern Nigeria are living below the poverty line, and this is far much higher than the nationwide average rate. NGOs play an important role in poverty alleviation for the development of the rural area where they get involved in areas such as provision of safe water, roads, sanitation facilities, primary health care, but their role is not fully known in Borno state. When these NGOs come into existence, it is a big challenge since most times they come in the middle of the financial year when most of public organizations budgets and priorities areas have been set. But they also come with different plans, objectives, conditions, priorities, and strings attached which do not favor all people's immediate needs. Therefore this study set out to examine the contribution of NGOs on the socio-economic development of the people in Borno state.

The major objective of this research work is to examine the Contribution of Non-governmental Organisation to the Socio-Economic Development of the People of Borno State.

### **Literature Review**

The theoretical explanations to key issues relating to the study will be discussed. It will consider what NGOs mean, concept of socio-economic development, it will also review literature on the functional role of the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), sources of Funds for NGOs, its contribution in promoting development and Challenges the NGOs are bound to encounter in carrying out their programme.

### **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)**

The term NGO is broad and ambiguous. It covers a range of organizations within civil society from political action groups to sports clubs. Its clear definition still remains contested. However, it can be argued that all NGOs can be regarded as civil society organization though not all civil society organizations are NGOs. NGOs could be defined as "private organizations that provide basic social services, or undertake community development" (World Bank, 2007).

According to Streeten (1997), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are group of people working together in a structured manner without much government intervention or political influence and freedom to form organization to engage in self-help and income generating projects. NGOs are professionally-staffed organizations that aim at contributing to the reduction of human suffering and to the development of poor countries.

### **Concept of Socio-Economic Development**

Development is a widely participatory process of directed social change in a society, intended to bring about both social and material advancement (including greater equality, freedom and other valued qualities) for the majority of the people through their gaining greater control over their environment. Hence, development is a constant process of transformation. It is a dynamic concept denoting a state of ceaseless change. (Girigiri, 2000:111)

Development may simply be understood as the unending improvement in the capacity of groups of individuals and societies to control and manipulate the forces of nature as well as themselves (and where necessary, other individuals and societies for their own material benefit and ultimately for the benefit of humanity at large. It is the process of actualizing man's inherent capacity to live a better and more fulfilling life. (Girigiri, 2000:111)

According to Akpakpan (1992), Development is a process of improving the quality of lives of people through; incomes and consumption, levels of food, medical services, and education level, Creating conducive atmosphere for the growth of peoples' self-esteem through the establishment of social, political and economic systems and institutions which promote human dignity and respect and increasing peoples' freedom to choose by enlarging the range of their choice

variables, example, varieties of goods and services. Development could also be seen as the capacity of a state to increase its human resource with the aim of achieving higher outcome of productivity for the satisfaction of the basic needs of majority of its citizens and empowering them to make demands on the government.

Rural Development is the improvement of the living standards of the low-income population living in rural areas on a self-sustaining basis, through transforming the socio-spatial structures of their productive activities. In essence, rural development implies a broad based reorganization and mobilization of the rural masses so as to enhance their capacity to cope effectively with the daily tasks of their lives and with changes consequent upon this.

Akpakpan (1992:4), opined that rural development is the retransformation of rural areas of the society; i.e. the transformation of the economic, social, and political structures, institutions, relationships, and processes in the rural areas which have hindered productivity, social consciousness, and political participation in the past, and must involve measures and actions that will bring about such transformation measures and actions that will generate economic opportunities (e.g. jobs and incomes) and improve literacy, health, housing, real output of goods and services, techniques of production, and social and political consciousness in the rural areas of the society.

#### **Sources of Funds for NGOs**

A non-governmental organization (NGO) is a non-profit, citizen-based group that functions independently of government. NGOs are organized on local, national and international levels to serve specific social or political purposes.

As non-profit organizations, NGOs rely on a variety of sources for funding projects, operations, salaries and other overhead costs. Because the annual budget of an NGO can be in the hundreds of millions (or even billions) of dollars, fundraising efforts are important for the NGO's existence and success. Funding sources include membership dues, the sale of goods and services, private sector for-profit companies, philanthropic foundations, grants from local, state and federal agencies, and private donations. Individual private donors comprise a significant portion of NGO funding. Some of these donations come from wealthy individuals - such as Ted Turner's \$1 billion donation to the United Nations, or Warren Buffett's pledge to give 10 million Berkshire-Hathaway class B shares to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (valued at more than \$31 billion in June 2006). The bilateral and multilateral aid is one of the biggest sources of funding we have seen over the past fifty and more years. These originate either from the foreign offices of the developed countries or from the multilateral organizations set up by different countries such as the United Nations, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank. These organizations have been created to extend international support for alleviating poverty and reducing the socio-economic gap between the developed and the developing countries. But their agendas are far more complex and they are not necessarily focused upon injecting funds into NGOs, but definitely a small part of their massive programs does include funding support for NGOs in developing countries.

Another important source of funding is the private charities/foundations/international organizations that are more privately handled and have a better focus on equipping local NGOs not just financially but also technically. In countries where there is some economic growth recorded with a presence of a wealthy private sector, NGOs can also look upon the corporate agencies as another major source of funding for them. There are also international corporate groups that have Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) agenda for enhancing equity, social

justice and development. Besides, in the present times, the corporate agencies are also partnering with NGOs for joint profit-oriented projects.

Despite their independence from government, many NGOs rely heavily on government funding in order to function. Some governmental NGO funding may be viewed as controversial because the funding may support certain political goals rather than a nation's development goals.

### **Contribution of the Non-Governmental Organizations to Economic Development**

The Non-Government Organizations has contributed immensely in various sectors of the economy such as the education, economic empowerment and Agriculture.

#### **Education**

All over the world, education is accepted as the process by which individuals acquire knowledge, skills and competencies. It is universally accepted that one of the benefit of 'good education is that it enables individuals to contribute to the development and improvement in the quality of life for themselves, their and the nation as a whole.

The self-realization aspect of education is well emphasized by Gandhiji an Indian educationist. To him education is 'an all-round drawing of the best in the child and man (body, mind and spirit)'. Education is a 'pouring out' and not a 'pouring in' process. The word e means 'out of' and deco means 'I lead'. In other words, education means leading out the inborn powers and potentialities and enabling the child to become what he is capable of becoming.

It is on account of this belief in the benefit of good education that successive Governments of Nigeria have sought to use education as the vehicle for accelerating the implementation of their development policies and programmes.

Improving efficiency in management in education through; management reform, improved discipline and accountability in schools, Teacher absenteeism would be minimized, Increasing access and participation which would lead to increase the enrolment and retention of pupils, school awareness would be created toward gender equity, Performance targets would be set in all basic schools. Above all there would be popular participation of all stakeholders' school development. (SBMC manual, 2018)

#### **Health**

The health sector is one of the fields that is receiving recognition by NGOs to compliment government's efforts towards ensuring that most people have access to better healthcare. In Nigeria, religious agencies especially the early missionaries have sizable number of health facilities in rural communities to cater for health needs of the people.

#### **Agriculture and food security**

Agriculture is the strategic sector for stimulating development process and poverty reduction in the poor countries. Food security is defines as good quality nutritious food, hygienically packaged and attractively presented, available in sufficient quality all year round and located at appropriate places at affordable prices (Aboagye et al,2007). Report shows that high levels of food imports, poor post-harvest management, poor marketing have effect on the long term sustainability of national food security. NGOs therefore have a crucial role to play within the agrarian sector again to supplement government efforts. Many NGOs are instrumental in building a network of micro-enterprise in rural areas to boost rural agriculture and provide counseling services to women entrepreneurs (Avasthi and Srivatsava, 2001).

#### **Economic Empowerment**

NGOs are indispensable because of the fact that there is a limit to what governments are willing and able to do for their respective citizens. Generally, their roles range from providing relief

services, conserving the environment, contributing to development projects or simply battling with governments over human rights issues. They are particularly critical in circumstances where State funds are limited, political situations are fluid, natural disasters resulting from both predictable and unpredictable environmental circumstances occur, ethnic strife is rampant and the level of per capita income severely restricts the ability to purchase needed goods and services – social, educational and economic (Asamoah, 2003). This explains why donor interests and NGOs activities are more common in some places or at some period than the other. For instance, in war-torn nations like Somalia, Sudan, Iraq, Sierra Leone, Congo, Rwanda, Ivory Coast, where governance mechanism have been very greatly rendered inactive, the role and influence of the civil society have been of great leverage, especially in helping the impoverished, the sick and the prisoners. Also in most disaster areas like the Eskimo, the Niger Delta, NGOs are playing lofty roles. During the military regimes in Nigeria, too many of such organizations existed as advocacy and human rights groups. This explains why the practice of NGOs and civil society organizations is more prevalent in the poor countries of Sub-Saharan Africa.

NGOs serve as partners and facilitators in development (Muchena, 2004). They serve as media for intermediation between international institutions and poor communities, especially in an era of face offs in home countries. In crisis-infested societies, they are the voices of the weak and suppressed. They take initiative and provide voice for unheard interests, play monitoring role by improving accountability and reducing incentives for corruption in governments, and promote environmentally sound strategies (The World Bank, 2003).

Most importantly, they have come to be recognized as veritable sources of foreign aid to poverty-infested communities.

The support for this group of organizations also arises more from their impressed efficiency and less bureaucratic characteristics in service delivery, especially when compared with government agencies and departments. According to Karla (1999), NGOs are often more efficient than government agencies because, they can attract volunteers and monetary donations, which lowers their costs vis-à-vis the government, they compete among themselves for grants, donations, and, in some cases, contracts, which often leads to cost savings.

Essentially, the exclusive preservation of certain kind of roles for non-governmental institutions makes their existence indispensable virtually in every society. In politics, they exist to advocate for the inclusion of the politically weak members of the society; in the event of natural disaster, they are there to render emergency relief services without invitation nor expectation of economic gains; in times of war, the essential areas of NGOs is to provide relief and help protect women and children from war crimes and other adverse effects; in times of epidemic, they also arise to the challenges of providing for the health needs of the people, offering technical advices on the prevention and cure of diseases, and helping governments search for permanent solutions against further spread; and under normal circumstances, they search for and take care of the poor and the marginalized. It is this primary (and sometimes unsolicited) and unpaid-for services of NGOs that have helped to attract them the fame they today enjoy.

### **Theoretical Framework**

There exist different permutation ways of redressing poverty situation in Nigeria. One of the ways could be through the review of some theories of poverty that offer a better opinion of the problem of poverty and reduce it to minimum. This study essentially reviewed the theories of poverty and employment to provide a better insight into the study. The study anchored on the general theory of employment, interest and money because it is the responsibility of government

to take care of her citizens, but where government cannot meet up, NGOs can complement government.

### **Methodology**

The sources of data for this study included primary and secondary data. Primary data was mainly used to gather information from the NGO's and community opinion leaders because they have in-depth knowledge and also open avenues for the group to asked relevant questions and secondary data sources was from related books, publications, journals, newspapers and previous research works.

The research adopted the description research module which involves both the quantitative and qualitative research methods.

Convenience sampling was used to select NGO's in the State; Purposive sampling was used to select staff and management of the various NGOs for the interview because they have in-depth knowledge about the research topic. Community opinion leaders and relevant government bodies were also be purposively selected and interviewed because they also have in-depth knowledge about the topic.

A set of questions was administered to the management, staff and opinion leaders of the NGOs, relevant government agencies, the internally displaced persons and members of the host communities in other to determine how they have contributed to development of people of Borno. Data generated was analyzed using STATA Package.

The entire research process was conducted with due respect to ethical considerations in research. The researcher obtain the consent of the respondents to participate in the study. The researcher considered treating the respondents' views with utmost confidentiality. In general, a high degree of openness regarding the purpose and the nature of the research took precedence by the researcher.

### **Population Sample size**

The sample size for the study comprise of 25 staff and management of Non-Governmental Organization which was selected purposively, 30 opinion leaders from the selected communities. The research purposively selected 25 staff and management because they had an in-depth knowledge and information about the research topic and also community opinion leaders because they also have in-depth knowledge about the topic and also because they are also the first point of contact in the communities and large number of communities in the sub county.

### **Data Analysis, Presentation and Discussion of Findings**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter consists of analysis of data collected from the field for discussion and presentation. The chapter aims at answering the research questions in chapter one. It analyzes the responses provided by the NGO's and community members with the aim of finding out, the contribution of NGOs in developing the people of Mahango Sub County Kasese district. A structure questionnaire was used for collecting primary data, whiles charts and tables were used to illustrate some information where it was deemed necessary. Respondents for the study were NGO staff, management and community opinion leaders, all these people were willing to provide every necessary and relevant information needed for the study. In the research conducted, 30 opinion leaders were interviewed at the community level, 5 staff and 5 management from each NGO. Hence, the total population used for the study was 55 respondents.

**Background Characteristics of Respondents**

The demographic data of the respondents including gender, age, educational status, and occupation of respondents are presented as follows:

**Table 1: Showing Distribution of Respondents by Gender**

| Gender | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------|-----------|------------|
| Male   | 25        | 45.5       |
| Female | 30        | 54.5       |
| Total  | 55        | 100        |

*Source: field survey, 2023*

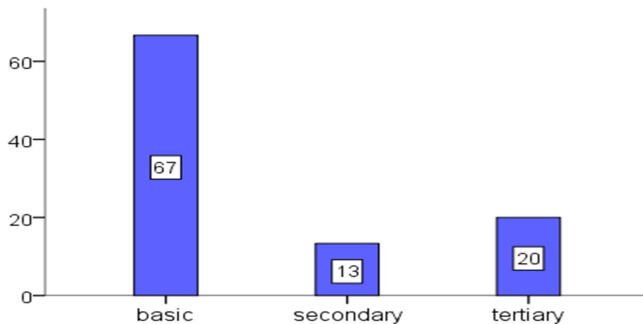
From the table 1 above, 54.5% were females whiles 45.5% respondents were males. It was revealed that, most of the NGOs projects in the state benefits women who are the less privileged, with low income levels, semi-literate or illiterates and constitute the majority.

**Table 2: Showing Distribution of Respondents by age**

| Age      | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| 15-20    | 2         | 3.6        |
| 21-30    | 25        | 45.4       |
| 31-40    | 10        | 18         |
| Above 41 | 18        | 33         |
| Total    | 30        | 100.0      |

*Source: field survey, 2023*

From the table 2 above, the highest age group is above 41, representing 33% whiles the lower age group is 15-20, representing 3.6%. The data collected at the field was targeted at the opinion leaders such as the ward head, the women leader and as well as NGO management. The above people were targeted because they have an in-depth knowledge and were in the best position to provide us with the needed information to accomplish this task. For instance, the opinion leaders are mostly approached by the NGOs before any project is undertaken by the NGOs.



**Figure 1: Showing Educational Status of Respondents**



**Source: field survey, 2023**

From figure 1 above, 67%, had basic education while 13% had some secondary education while about 20% had tertiary education. It revealed that, majority of the respondents have basic education while a few have attained secondary education. This however was due to the operation of the NGOs by providing educational infrastructure, school uniform, training, employs and pay teachers to teach at the rural communities, to teach both the primary schools pupils and adults, to increase the literacy rate in the community.

**Number of NGO's operating in the state**

According to data from Borno state Agency for Coordination of sustainable Development and Humanitarian Response (BACSDAHR), there are 281 NGOs in Borno state. All the respondents indicated that they are aware of NGOs operating in the state. These organizations are mostly Non-profit seeking ones whose main aim is to lift the very poor and marginalized out of their extreme poverty line. During the study, discussion with the people revealed that, the communities were involve in almost all sectors of development.

**Table 3: Showing Provision of educational infrastructure**

| Response     | Frequency | Percentage   |
|--------------|-----------|--------------|
| Yes          | 48        | 87           |
| No           | 7         | 13           |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>55</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

**Source: field survey, 2023**

The table 3 above shows that, 87% of the respondents indicate that, NGO's have contributed to enhance provision of educational infrastructure. It was realized that, some of the schools built in the communities were initiated and built by the NGOs. The NGOs mobilized community members to build nursery and primary school blocks and construct furniture to ensure that, all children are enrolled in school.

**Table 4: Showing Provision of Educational supplies**

|              | Frequency | Percentage   |
|--------------|-----------|--------------|
| Yes          | 48        | 87           |
| No           | 7         | 13           |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>55</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

**Source: field survey, 2023**

From table 4 above, 87% of respondents admitted to the fact that NGO's 'contribute to the provision of educational supplies while 13% disagreed. It was revealed that some of the NGOs provide text books, exercise books, school uniform, pencils eraser among others to teachers and students to facilitate quality teaching and learning in the communities in order to improve upon the standard of education in the sub county, hence increasing the literacy rate.

**Table 5: Showing Provision of Farming equipment**

| <b>Response</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Yes             | 40               | 73                |
| No              | 15               | 27                |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>55</b>        | <b>100.0</b>      |

*Source: field survey, 2023*

From table 5 above, 73% of respondent admitted that NGO's contribute to the provision of farm equipment while 27% disagreed. Respondents revealed that NGO in Agriculture, working in the various communities have helped to provide protective gloves, hoes, spades, and wheelbarrows.

### **Findings**

The findings of the research revealed that, there are about 281 NGOs operating in Borno state. The study revealed that, the state was involved in all most all sectors of development. To bridge the poverty gap created by displacement among community, hence the reason for the NGOs operating in the state to assist the government in the development of the people to improve upon their standard of living.

About 90% of the respondents testified that, education, entrepreneurship, water supply, health and agriculture are the major activities undertaken by the NGOs operating in the state. In Agriculture, there were interventions such as farm equipment to enhance food security. In economic empowerment, there were interventions such as loans and savings, training of women to operate in businesses, keep financial records. Additionally, NGOs contributed by sensitization, involvement in decision-making to demand accountability from their leaders. These indicators implemented were all geared towards developing the people at large. Discussion with both community members and staff of the Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) revealed that many changes have taken place in various sectors.

Regarding education, there is access to education due to availability of school facilities and provision of educational supplies. This has raised the level of school enrollment especially the girl child education.

In the aspect of agriculture, there is now all year round farming and access to farm products. Women in agriculture have also seen a face lift.

The NGOs have improved upon the standard of living of the people and the communities as well in enhancing the provision of educational infrastructure, educational supplies, farming equipment, sensitization, involvement, health education in different aspect of health. However, it does not mean that, they have no challenges with their operations.

Some of the problems both the NGOs and communities face are lack of proper communication between the NGOs and community members on project implementation, wrong timing of project implementation and poor involvement of community members in decision making about development projects, financial constraints and inaccessible.

### **Conclusion**

It is evident from the findings that, NGOs have contributed to socio-economic development of the people of Borno state in Provision of Educational infrastructures and facilities such as school building, exercise books, uniforms, school bags, training and employing of teachers. Health

education such as HIV/AIDs prevention, voluntary counseling and testing, how to prevent the spread tuberculosis, gonorrhoea, syphilis and infections. In agriculture, inputs and education on modern farming practices, have being provided to community members to enhance agriculture in the state, Advocating on good governance, they NGOs have contributed to sensitizing the people on their fundamental human rights, empowering women to participate in politics and to help them become economically independent. All these interventions provided by the NGOs operations have impacted positively in the life of the people in almost all aspect of development.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the research findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were made. The findings revealed that, NGOs have contributed much to the development in the state, and for that matter the following issues were recommended;

- There should be a strengthened collaboration between the Government and NGOs and also among the NGOs as this will help to prevent duplication of projects in some communities while other communities will be lacking some of this project to ensure sustainability, as released from the research that, the NGOs and government sometimes end up implementing the same project in the same community but at different times.
- There should be a strong collaboration among local Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) by coming together to write proposal for grant. This is because most donor funding is huge for one NGO, to manage effectively and efficiently. This will therefore help in soliciting for more funding for the development of all sectors in the state at large and not just some communities hence help in the development of the whole Sub County.
- The Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) should always involve the community members in project identification and implementation in the communities, since community members complain about their involvement, this will make the project sustainable because, beneficiaries will feel that, the project is for them, hence their responsibility to protect and maintain the project, community members should also be involved in the identification of projects in the aspect of monitoring and evaluation of the projects in the Sub county .

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