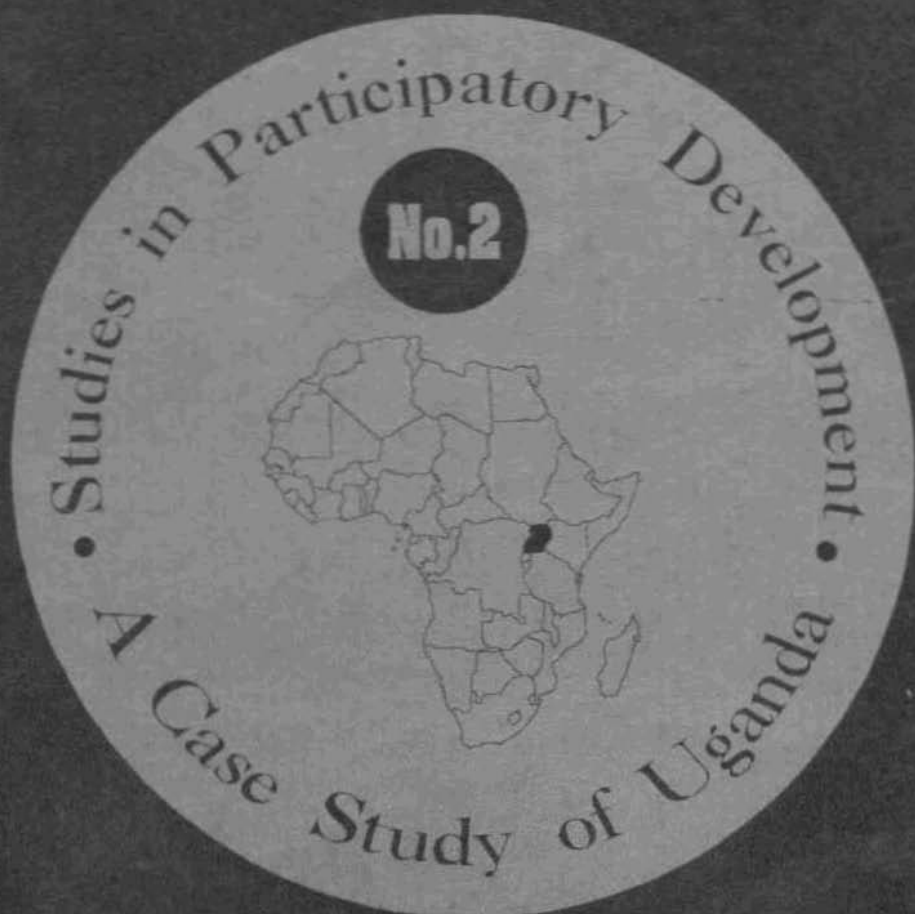


ASSESSMENT OF POPULAR PARTICIPATION
IN THE FORMULATION AND
IMPLEMENTATION OF
DEVELOPMENT POLICIES
AND PROGRAMMES



United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
Public Administration, Human Resources and
Social Development Division



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STUDIES IN PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT
No. 2

**ASSESSMENT OF POPULAR PARTICIPATION IN
THE FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF
DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES**

A CASE STUDY OF UGANDA



*United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
Public Administration, Human Resources and
Social Development Division*

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PREFACE

It is now eminently clear that popular participation in development is an essential prerequisite of and a cornerstone of human-centred self-reliant and self-sustaining development. Without the active involvement of people and their organizations in the development process, improvements of human Conditions can neither be achieved nor sustained.

The **African Charter for Popular Participation in Development** affirms this by calling for an era in which the participation and empowerment of the ordinary men and women are the order of the day. In a rare consensus, the Conference attested to the fact that people's participation must be at the heart of Africa's development mission and vision and it confirmed that authentic development springs from the collective imagination, experience and decisions of people. The Charter, and the emerging unanimity, have presented us with an unparalleled opportunity to unleash the creativity and harness the energy of the people for a better future for themselves, their countries and Africa as a whole.

It is this recognition that prompted the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa to take the initiative to establish a Focal Point for Promoting Popular Participation in Development to facilitate the implementation of the **Charter**, strengthen the role of people's organizations and work with them to formulate and articulate programmes and initiatives that would foster widespread participatory action.

The Studies in Participatory Development are designed to promote and facilitate the institutionalization of participatory processes and enhance people's involvement in the political,

social and economic lives of their countries and the sharing of experiences, ideas, concepts, institutional mechanisms and organizational forms on participatory development.

To ensure that the studies remain useful, relevant and topical, suggestions of appropriate subjects for inclusion in the series as well contributions for publication under the series are actively encouraged and sought from our readers. Comments and feed-back on any of the studies published under the series will also be highly appreciated. Please address correspondence on these and related matters to:

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I INTRODUCTION

Since independence Uganda has been characterized by wars, political strife, problematic administrative and social structures, all conspiring to create a non-conducive climate for economic recovery and growth. When the National Resistance Movement (NRM) came into power in 1986 it inherited a country that was virtually in ruins on all fronts. Most of the physical infrastructures were destroyed, inflation had soared up to 300% and the effects of war were evident every where. Compounding this was the strife that were still ongoing in several parts of the country.

More importantly, the mechanisms to enable the people's voices to be heard and to influence the decision-making process at the various levels was not yet in place, thereby, not allowing for popular participation to flourish. In fact, even with the federal status and other aspects of indirect rule, the governance remained generally centralized. The Governor, the Provisional and District Commissioners and the Chiefs right to the smallest village enforced laws and the people obeyed. The style of mobilization was such that people were assembled and simply told what to do.

To address these problems, the NRM government launched a Rehabilitation and Development Plan 1987/1988-1990-91, guided by its Ten Point Programme. One of the points central to the programme was the intention to enhance the capability of the people to participate in the democratic processes. This programme encourages the participation in development of NGOs and GROs. Some people argue that the government was pushed into this by the donors, principally the IMF. While there is some validity in this argument, one should bear in mind that one of the NRM Ten Point Programme states that:

We shall follow an economic strategy of mixed economy which means allowing the majority of economic activities to be carried out by private

entrepreneurs - with the state, however, taking part in selected fulcrum - like sectors that the states can use to guide the economy as a whole towards the desired goals.

Encouraged by such policy provisions the number of NGOs has increased substantially since 1986. Because of their diversity and the paucity of information on them, one can only generalize about their activities, limitations, and problems. Generally, these organisations have contributed to several major issues, including policy reform and dialogue, the promotion of the private sector, the incorporation of women into the economic framework of the country, and the problem of the environment. It must be noted that the indigenous NGOs are still institutionally weak and require strengthening in accountability, sustainability, and leadership. Nevertheless, they have provided avenues through which people can interact and influence the government as well as mobilize their resources for a greater contribution to national development.

II HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: NGOs

In Uganda, as in many other parts of Africa, the concept of community participation is not new. Traditional consultative and participatory mechanisms existed at all levels. Village elders and councils played a major role in reaching a consensus prior to making decisions or taking action. It was only under the colonial system that some institutions, notably the church, encouraged and facilitated the formation of groups for the purpose of "penetrating into the dark Uganda". By 1925, the Uganda Mothers Union, a church group, had more than 40 clubs in the country involved in a wide range of activities. It is noteworthy here that the church was one of the oldest NGOs in Uganda and much credit goes to it especially in providing social services such as schools, technical institutions, and health. Before independence, of the eighteen NGOs appearing in the Uganda Directory of NGOs, twelve of them were religious based. These included Uganda Foundation for Blind, the Uganda Scouts Association, and the Association for University Women. Because of the non-political nature of NGOs the colonial government tolerated them. In addition, they filled the gaps in providing some basic social services, that otherwise would have been left to the government. Other associations of a political and economic nature also emerged, especially after the second world war. Their leaders talked about "representation", "cooperatives", "workers welfare" and generally challenged the whole philosophy of the colonial set up. After independence in the 1960s, church based NGOs continued to increase in numbers and they were joined by several non-religious organizations like OXFAM, Uganda Red Cross, etc. However, the advent of Idi Amin, dramatically changed the course of events and several NGOs left the country, leaving their functions to the churches as conduits of their work. During Obote II, NGOs once again started coming into the country with a particular interest in relief and medical services centering mostly in the North, due to the

large concentration of the very poor there or as some cynics allude, the North being the center of political power at the time.

1. NGOs in Uganda: Overview

The terms, Non-Governmental Organizations, NGOs, and Pos, People's Organizations, are at times used interchangeably in Uganda. When so used, the implication is that they are organizations formed "by the people, for the people, and of the people". They arise out of the people's aspirations, visions, and demands. On close examination, however, the definition adopted in the Uganda NGO Directory does not agree with the above-mentioned definition:

For an organization or institution to be non governmental, it must be a voluntary one, it must be completely independent of government in its policy formulation and in the areas of operations.

As noted, this definition either by design or implication does not refer to the organizations as being owned by the people for the promotion of their aspirations. One would have to delve deeper into the constitutions of NGOs to understand their avowed relationship with the people.

2. Current Situation of NGOs

There has been a sudden influx of these organizations since NRM took control in 1986. According to Uganda NGO Directory, 60 percent of the indigenous NGOs have been established only since this time. Many factors may account for this mushrooming.

- improved peace and political stability
- increase accountability by the various levels of government and institutions.
- efficient bureaucracy and line ministries.

- government and donors favouring policies of privatisation.

3. Number and Distribution

Currently, the government cannot estimate their number. Information available in the NGO Directory which was published in 1990, is a useful indicator. Information on distribution by districts refers mainly to their activities. It does not entail the size, the impact, the effectiveness of their activities. As expected, the majority are based in the central region: Kampala (12), Mpigi (62), Luvero (45), Mukono (45), Lganga (39), Jinja (38). All these are within a distance of fifty miles from Kampala, the capital city. The rest of the distribution, apart from two districts, is not highly unproportional. It ranges from 20 to 30 NGOs per district.

4. NGO Development Activities

It would be of little exaggeration to say that NGOs are involved in almost all development activities in the country. When discussing the activities, one should bear in mind some of the major factors influencing these activities. These include: resources, geographical coverage, and the type of programmes. In general, the international NGOs have more resources and greater capacities than the indigenous NGOs. As regards geographical coverage some NGOs are spread all over the country while others have confined themselves to a particular region or locality. The programmes of these NGOs range from multisectoral to single issues with some NGOs handling their own programmes in the field or merely financing the programmes of other grassroots organizations. In few cases, NGOs have been contracted by the Donors to implement programmes on behalf of the Ugandan government.

The following broad categories constitute the major development activities.

- Relief and Social Welfare: This includes working with the disabled, orphans, widows, children and all those affected by natural or man-made calamities. Activities under this category are traditionally more well known and include: management of orphanages, relief in the form of food, clothes, medicine, and funding. Although, religious institutions are the oldest in this area of work but there are other NGOs both international and indigenous, involved in these activities (e.g Concern International, Uganda Women Effort to Save Orphans (UWESO), Red Cross, Uganda Foster Care and Adoption Association (UFCAA), Uganda Community Based Association for Child Welfare (UCOBAC), Save the Children's fund). Some NGOS like Action Aid, World Vision, AVIS, AMREF are involved in providing support services for educational institutions such as books, paying fees, technical/vocational work and so forth. They are also involved in rehabilitation of community centres, health units and shelter provisions.
- Awareness Creation: Many of the foresighted indigenous NGOs are also involved in awareness raising activities. This awareness raising coupled with training is expected to increase internalization of the activities within members of the community, so that they regard the programme as truly theirs. Action for Development (ACFODE) is particularly known for these activities. In some cases, awareness activities are combined with advocacy aimed at the beneficiaries as well as the policy makers.

Uganda Rural Development and Training Programme (URDT) and Volunteer efforts for Development Concerns (VEDCO), Kigulu Development Group, Human Rights organizations regard awareness and training as central to their work.

- Poverty Alleviation: The majority of the NGOs and GROs are also concerned with poverty alleviation programmes. As a result there are many projects related to improving agricultural skills and income generation. This includes setting up extension work, rural technology, co-operatives, vocational institutes, and women projects in poultry, crafts, etc. In fact, small income generating activities constitute the bulk of activities in this domain.
- Leisure/Hobby: Some NGOs are involved in sport and entertainment activities and use their medium for educational and developmental purposes. NGOs such as NDIWULIRA and KINIMBA have done a lot to educate the people about AIDS through the media of drama. The Ugandan Theatrical Group Association has also embarked upon mobilising women to start drama groups to promote community developmental projects in their respective areas. Some of these activities have been used as entry points by indigenous NGOs for interacting with youth groups.
- Family Life Education: Programmes in this area have been designed to enhance the status of women through activities that increase their capacity to control their future. Such activities include an understanding of the optimal use of

family resources, family planning and income generation activities (e.g Women Heifer Projects, Donkey Projects and other relying on multi-sectoral and participatory approaches).

5. Funding of NGOs

The Ministry of Planning and Economic Development revealed that the government was unable to estimate the amount of money brought into the country by NGOs. There has been no mechanism to establish such transactions. Generally, methods of funding vary from situation to situation. With the limited information on the subject the sources of funds given below are likely to be inconclusive. Nevertheless, the sources are the following:

- International NGOs - International NGOs, both in the country and outside, fund indigenous NGOs and GROs. Some of the funding is given to the NGOs and GROs directly while others prefer to deal with GROs directly to avoid misappropriation of funds. Yet, foreign NGOs like Oxfam, World Vision and Action Aid fund their own activities with money raised abroad.

- Individuals and the Ugandan Private Sector

The Ugandan private sector has not yet forged firm relationships with NGOs and GROs. They may make occasional donations but by and large their potential has not been exploited. Hence, most funds are raised from friends and associations abroad.

- Official Sources: This takes many forms:

- o Foreign embassies have funded groups especially those involved in income generation activities.
- o UN agencies such as UNDP provide assistance to community groups and NGOs through funding programmes like the Africa 2000 Environmental Protection Programme.
- o International monetary institutions such as the EEC assist well over 1700 groups since 1986.
- o Foreign governments also provide assistance and channel funds to the national governments through the NGOs.
- o Ugandan government through its ministries provides funds to several NGOs such as FOCA, ACFODE, Uganda Community Based Health Care Centre, etc.

- Miscellaneous Sources - Funds collected from membership, user charges, sale of products, credit fund schemes.

In discussing funding note must be taken of the problems of accountability and sustainability when dealing with programmes rather than with projects. In addition, funding, overtly or inovertly encourages dependency. In ushering in the

conditions for successful development works, these problems will have to be tackled in the future.

III NGO: ALLIANCES AND GOVERNMENT LINKAGES

1. Women Groups

Women groups share most of the characteristics mentioned when discussing NGOs and GROs. Women groups as a sector are beginning to assert their importance in the development of the country as well as influencing policies on political, economical and cultural spheres at various levels. Their activities may be categorized as follows:

- Provision of legal services, counselling and enhancing awareness of women's legal rights; income generation, reflected in activities such as farming, crafts, zero grazing and training in the field of entrepreneurship, management, and rendering credit. Association Uganda Media Women's eg. Uganda Women Finance and Credit Trust, Uganda Association of Women lawyers (RDA), Action for Development (ACFODE) are some NGOS engaged in these activities.

2. Youth Organizations/Groups

Like women, quite a number of the features of NGOs and GROs apply to youth groups as well. According to the NGO Directory, thirty-four NGOs are listed under "youth", though this information may be grossly inadequate. Most of those listed in the Directory are involved in tailoring, handicrafts, typing, brick-making, sports, farming and moral education. It must be noted that income generation is prominent amongst the aims of these activities, a few of which are carried out in vocational training institutions by NGOs and GROs such as Ava Maria Training and Youth Development; the Boys Brigade, YMCA and YWCA, etc. Other example of

success stories include work done by youths trained by World Vision Uganda, an international NGO, with over seventy development projects in nearly a half of the districts of the country.

On the political front, the more educated youth are beginning to make demands that they be given a chance to participate in national affairs, but if the youths are to play their rightful role in national development, certain strategies need to be implemented by the government.

3. Workers Association

The definition of a "worker" is not easily resolved amongst many working Ugandans. To some, such a person would necessarily be a member of the trade union movement. Consequently, such workers would inevitably be, by and large, urban dwellers, thus, excluding the majority of the rural people who perform their small survival activities individually or collectively.

Other grades of employees would be known by their professional associations like Uganda Teachers' Association, Federation of Uganda Employers; all these associations and groups wield different capacities and powers in the country.

4. Resistance Councils

Resistance Councils (Rcs) were initially established by the NRM whilst still in villages. When the NRM took over power in 1986, the RCS were firmly instituted as part of governance at all levels i.e. from the village level (RC1), Parish (RC2), Sub-country (RC3), Country and Municipalities (RC4) district (RC5) and at the National level (National Resistance Council - NRC). Rcs refer to both the councils and the committees. Their roles are to carry out the mobilization of the respective classes and generally facilitate self-help

development projects collectively or involving the above-mentioned groups. They suggest to government issues of political, social and economic importance, and act as liaison between government and the people. The debate continues, using Rcs as an example. The point of contention is whether the NGOs set up by the state work to transform that same government.

IV NGOS LINKAGES WITH GOVERNMENT

The NGOs and Pos seem to have mixed feelings on the type and level of interaction that should exist between their organizations and the government. The standard position is the government should only provide a conducive environment and a facilitative role to enable NGOs and Pos to become more effective. From the position of the Ugandan government, there are many reasons advanced by them for a need to interact with these organizations, especially at the national level. These reasons are as follows:

- Security - the need to monitor the activities of the NGOs for purposes of security is a critical factor for the Ugandan government. However, the general view point is that NGOs should confine their programmes to their declared objectives and refrain from activities which may create discord in the country.
- Coordination - officials at various levels of the government are also interested to know what NGOs do so that their activities may be incorporated into District/National level plans. This would permit a more optimal utilization of resources as well as allow NGOs to align their programmes according to national priorities and needs.
- Soliciting external assistance - government also needs to interact with NGOs so as to plead for their cases with international donors and mobilize additional funding.
- Dependency and sustainability - the fear that the NGOs may perpetuate a dependency syndrome

when the government is encouraging self-reliance and sustainability also necessitates government/NGO interaction where both are equal partners in the development process.

- Complimentarity - the government realises that NGOs and government can complement each other wherever the government does not have the capabilities or the requisite resources. NGOs too on their part require a conducive environment whereupon both parties are able to exchange resources in the political and economic sphere.

Above all, both parties are aware that in the last analysis, it is the government which is really in charge of national development. So while the NGO/PO projects are important

they do not by themselves provide solutions to problems on a national scale. Their projects will remain irrelevant to the majority of the needy unless used as beacons to light up pathways for others- notably the state to pursue (J.Clark).

V NGOs AND POLICY-MAKING

In essence, very few indigenous NGOs have the ability to influence policies especially at the national level. There are many reasons that account for this. One most obvious factor about indigenous NGOs is that they are still at the learning stage. Most of them are afflicted by lack of funds, transport, and offices and spend a lot of time worrying about credibility, visibility and day to day survival with very little time left to advocate for the people.

To be able to carry out advocacy and plan for policy changes, requires that NGOs have clarity of vision, mission statement and well articulated objectives. As Montgomery has aptly put it:

"Local leadership is without doubt necessary to mobilise and sustain popular commitment, but the skills appropriate for that purpose seldom include with the technical knowledge for long-range planning or the management ability to go beyond small-scale local operations."

NGOs, therefore, require skills in policy analysis, persuasion and negotiations and most importantly, a thorough grasp of the subject matter. Not only must the NGOs know what is envisaged in the national plans but they also need to be cognisant of the different interests that are represented - what are the gaps and how can they be filled. In short, they need to be aware of the broader content and issues?

In order to be effective, NGOs also need a form of leadership that has the capacity to analyse issues of development critically and utilise the field experiences to work out a strategy for interacting with policy makers on behalf of the people.

Finally, the strategy of "umbrellas" is of critical importance. Through networking associations like the UCObAC, NUDIP, VCBHCA and NUSA, NGOs can increase their power at the national level while retaining their legitimacy at the grass roots. For example, VCBHCA serves as a forum of exchange for a common policy related to CBHC initiatives and programmes. The purpose of this forum is to strengthen the existing communication network between CBHC programmes and between the programmes and the government and other agencies. It is also responsible for coordinating CBHC activities in order to avoid duplication of resources and to utilize the available resources effectively.

In conclusion, it can be said that some NGOs on an individual level and as members of "umbrellas" have been able to influence policies. They have, however, not yet been able to challenge and reorient the actual existing power structures. This is not expected considering that the majority of the NGOs are still weak, new and lack the requisite competences to carry out such activities. They are still in the process of democratising their own organizations, and coming to terms with their unequal partners - the donors. In the circumstances, even forming alliance with various movements needs time to mature.

1. Parametres of Interaction

A board aimed at defining the parametres of the government/NGO interaction was established in 1989. Its major features may be summarized as follows:

- It registers and monitors all activities of NGOs in the country.
- NGOs are expected to submit their work plans and indicate their geographical area of representation.

- Detail on their activities and the budget involved must be discussed and then forwarded to the Resistance Councils (RC) and District Development Committee (DDC).
- NGOs activities will be monitored by Rcs, District Administrator and the Board itself, this can affect their chances to extend their registration.
- The public is also expected to monitor and comment on the activities of the NGOs.

The overall responsibility of coordinating the NGOs rests with the Prime Ministers Office (Aid Coordination Secretariat). Under this clause, two monthly meetings are organized by the Prime Ministers office during which new NGOs are introduced, matters needing government consideration are raised and information of any interest is disseminated. Conflicts can also be resolved in these board meetings.

Despite the fact that most NGOs consider this forum a waste of time, several positive achievements can be noted. Using the platform NGOs were able to get themselves included in the PAPSCA programme. Secondly, NGOs have used the forum to invite high ranking ministries to address them. Thirdly, because of their complaints, the Vice President set up a committee to look into the grievances.

However, what is most needed is to strengthen the Aid Secretariat office logistically and possibly legally to strengthen its capacity to monitor and advise NGOs more effectively.

Ministries with which NGOs have contact with:

Ministry of Justice - to register NGOs so that they seek legal guidelines, draw up agreement with line ministries and should there be a need, they can sue and be sued.

Ministry of Women, Youth and Culture - to assist grassroots women in income generation activities.

Ministry of Local Government - to assist in literacy programmes.

Ministry of Finance and Economic Development - to oversee tax exemption issues.

Ministry of Environment Protection - to protect the environment in which these projects operate.

Ministry of Health - to conduct educational courses on health matters.

2. Technical Assistance

It is now an accepted practice that in many of the rural development projects, the people are expected to make contributions, normally in the form of labour and local resources. The government will participate and supplement what is lacking in the part of the people. This practice of community participation also applies in respect of international and indigenous NGOs.

One big project shared with Ugandan government is Northern Uganda Reconstruction Programme where NGOs such as Oxfam, Care, Save the Children, Lutheran World Federation and World Vision are involved.

Interaction between government representatives and NGO/GRO is maximum at the grassroots level. There are cases where officers have been seconded by the government to work along with the NGOs/GROs and quite often the GRO mobilise people for government services. Some NGOs even sit on the board of the DDC. For example, the Department of

Community Development always interacts with groups and clubs, the agriculture department with farmers including youth associations while that of cooperatives with societies. The Ministry of Labour interacts with workers associations in settling disputes while the Department of Education consults students associations together with teachers unions.

In conclusion, the government interacts with NGOs at different levels and through different sources. It takes many forms: consultative, collaboration, coordination, monitoring, and regulatory.

VI POLICIES CONCERNING WOMEN

Women in Uganda have been campaigning to change laws and practices that adversely affect them. These laws are customary as well as statutory and may discriminate against women by commission or omission. The practices affecting women adversely are cultural norms as well as traditions related to the work place and home. The major of these activities has been sensitizing the public and the mass media, conducting workshops in educational institutions, in NRC and the courts. For example, women organizations such as Fida, through its legal clinic counsels women free of charge and takes up their cases in court. Other organizations have recommended that a Department of Women's affairs be set up in the Prime Minister's Office and that a 'Women's Desk' be established in the various line ministries. In addition, it is recommended that a course in women in development be available at Makerere University and women be appointed in position of authority. Accordingly, most of these suggestions were implemented by the government.

VII LABOUR LAW AND WELFARE OF WORKERS

Workers' organizations are fighting for their independence and to change the archaic laws affecting their welfare. NGOs have so far managed to get workers represented on some of the boards and have undertaken numerous studies and made recommendations concerning budgetary proposals. They are hoping to get into NRC a bill widening the definition of who may join a trade union movement and in this connection find the Industrial Court a useful institution.

VIII SCOPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES

It is recognized that the issue of the environment is key to the survival of the country. Yet, owing to several environmental problems such as deforestation, soil degradation, loss of biological diversity, soil erosion and surface and groundwater degradation, as well as in recent years the dumping of toxic waste, the lives of millions of Ugandans are at risk today.

These lengthy ills illustrate the difficult situation NRM government found itself in when it came to power, and subsequently the NGOs themselves. Most of these ills could be traced to the issue of power relationships and resource allocation. Above all, they could be traced to lack of guidelines and clear policies concerning environmental protection. Nevertheless, when the NRM government came into power it established for the first time, the Ministry of Environmental Protection. Incidentally, its interest in the subject coincided with the interest of the many NGOs.

The big well-organized indigenous NGOs, like URDT, VEDCO, etc have programmes that aim at relating environmental issues into their development activities. At least, they include objectives worth mentioning "promotion of ecologically sustainable development or integrated development. However, the majority of NGOs concentrate on single aspects such as tree planting, alternative energy resources, clean environment, terracing, agro-forestry, organic soiling, soil management, environmental education and sanitation, and wetlands. In addition, this knowledge has been reinforced by seminars for Rcs and mass media, promoting the enactment of punitive laws to give harsh punishments to environmental crimes.

It must be noted that the prevailing idea on the part of NGO's is to create guidelines and clear policies concerning

environmental protection and develop a partnership with the community groups as they are aware of their problems and can best deal with them if there is to be long-term success in this field.

IX IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS AND ENHANCING CAPACITY FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION ON THE PART OF NGOS

Considering the theme of the workshop, it is important if NGOs are to play their rightful role in the participatory development and enable "the people" to be involved in shaping their future. However, they first need to enhance their institutional and programme capacity. There is a general argument that the following areas need strengthening for the majority of these organizations:

Needs Identification/Assessment

There is evidence that some NGOs have succeeded mainly because they designed programmes built on what the people wanted. There are many ways of carrying out this needs assessment, however, the majority of NGOs are not trained to do this and therefore end up with projects whose vision, mission and objectives are unrelated to the needs and requirements of the people and bear little relationship with the tasks to be performed. It is of utmost importance that NGOs be trained in needs assessment mechanisms so that both the people and the NGOs through dialogue and genuine sharing identify their needs.

Project Design, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

The strengthening of NGOs with staff trained in project formulation, monitoring and evaluation is also crucial. The Donors complain that most project proposals are poorly written, are vague in their objectives, unrealistic in their budgeting and do not include mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation. One of the common problems relating to implementation is that very often NGOs are unable to utilise all the funds and have to hurry to "finish" the money. Another problem is that since NGOs do not utilize the people in formulation of projects, the two groups instead of working as partners tend to follow different directions. As regards evaluation, very few NGOs venture into it. It is regarded as a complicated scientific exercise. However, with the proper training in participatory monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, a lot can be achieved.

Documentation and Report Writing

Donors as well as government agencies require reports. Some of the reports are a part of routine reporting and financial accountability practices. However, the NGOs are ill-equipped in preparing these reports. There is no doubt

that documenting experiences both written and unwritten is a very useful tool. It permits one to share information, it is useful to the government itself, and makes it easy for outsiders including consultants, researchers, educational institutions to utilise such written and unwritten material. It is gratifying to note that some NGOs like URDT and DENIVA are establishing Resource Centres. This requires training in documentation, report writing and generally in communication.

Accountability

To many people, accountability is thought of only in terms of financial accountability - to account for the money received from funders. And yet, there are many other aspects of it which are equally important. An NGO should be accountable to the people in whose names such funds are normally mobilised. It should be accountable to the State. There is also accountability within the organization itself. In a recent workshop sponsored by the German Agro Action, for its partners in Uganda on 'Strategic and Visionary Planning' held in May 1992, the issue of accountability figured prominently. The participants were introduced to the "accountability chart", an exercise that enthused them tremendously. During the ensuing discussion, the importance of the chart was

highlighted especially in: building a team; placing right people for the right job; reinforcing continuity; reducing conflicts; strengthening alignment, rationalising information flow, maximising resource utilization and indicating that each individual is collectively and individually important. Therefore, it is important that NGOs get the requisite training in this area.

Staff Development

One area of management that has rarely been given the attention it deserves by the NGOs is staff development planning. One reason that may account for this weakness is the way NGOs do their work. Their orientation in general tends to be short-term and reactive centred around projects and far removed from long term planning and projection. Visionary planning ensures that those involved clarify where they want to go, where they currently are, and the action steps to bridge the gap. Without proper planning for staff development, NGOs will end up with a permanent crisis: projects lacking manpower and low morale as workers cannot see any future. High rate of staff "defection" is an issue that concerns the donors as well.

Training Methodologies and Materials Development

Training methodologies and materials development is also an area of concern. Most of the training materials used are the 'standard' ones and yet the methodologies that involve participatory approaches in the different forms are not catered for in such standard books. Nor do they take care of the local conditions. Some NGOs like UCBHA in conjunction with UNICEF and government are developing their own materials. This is one of the areas where there could be intersectoral joint ventures. This is a new area where a lot of assistance is needed. Such materials may be developed on a multi media basis. There is considerable innovation like the use of music, dance and drama, story telling, riddles, proverbs, etc. in disseminating especially health education in the rural areas. Locally made visual aids and local materials that take into account people's traditional cultural patterns of communication are becoming quite popular too. All these areas need to be researched into and developed for use especially in groups where many people may be illiterate. DENIVA could be the right institution to commission this study and to assess what is on the ground.

Training

As has already been mentioned, there are very many community/grass roots groups. In different ways, some relate to NGOs, Donors, Government, etc. They too suffer some of the weaknesses mentioned above and need to be involved in training. In particular, the following training areas were identified: Leadership; community mobilization and participation; gender issues; integrated development; resource use; governance and democracy.

As described above, the task looks enormous especially considering the numbers involved. Fortunately, many NGOs have found it useful to organize training jointly. Examples are many where NGOs have trained several groups together. Sectoral umbrellas also consider training to be one of their major activities. Organizations like Kigulu Development, which is essentially a district group networking body emphasises training. DENIVA through the Change Agent programme, carries out training especially of group leaders in many regions of the country.

In terms of utilization of resources and cross fertilization of experiences, such training

programmes have a lot of potential and have achieved considerable success.

All these are suggestions emphasising the need to equip NGOs with the competence to interact with "a highly politicised" context with both internal and external sources acting on it simultaneously. Such fora should discuss training parameters for NGOs and encourage joint training.

If NGOs are not solid institutionally and programme wise, they are unlikely to engage in popular participation as they will be unable to mobilize their members for the same purpose.

In addition, when discussing development, it is necessary to look at the whole issue of participation in all its forms: what it is, its shortcomings in Uganda, and how it can be enhanced. Experiences and information should be exchanged among the different groups: women, youth, political activists, official, human rights advocates and workers. Also, effective participation for development calls for the establishment of people's organizations at the various levels. These can take many forms and types e.g. small services and credit organizations: small entrepreneurships: producer groups and others. These should be taken as case studies for drawing the ordinary people into the development process and problems.

A major concern of the indigenous NGOs, in particular, is to make the people understand their resource limitations and how dependency syndrome perpetuates poverty and that self

reliance commitment and careful prioritising are the cornerstones to sustainability and national development.

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