

The Role of NGOs in achieving the Education for All Goals in Zambia

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Meaning of NGOs

- The term “Non-governmental Organisation” was created by the United Nations in 1945 (Willets, 2002).
- NGOs are organisations that are voluntary, independent of government, non-profit making, and service oriented for the benefit of members of society especially those at the grassroots level.

Meaning of NGOs (Cont'd)

- The World Bank defines NGOs as: Private organisations that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development. They are value-based organisations which depend, in whole or in part, on charitable donations and voluntary service, and in which principles of altruism and voluntarism remain key defining characteristics (World Bank, 2009: online).

Origins of NGOs

- The International NGO movement has its origins in missionary movements that date, in some cases, to the 16th century (Fox, 1987; Suzuki, 1998; Smillie, 1999). The modern secular NGO movement in Europe and North America have engaged in socio-economic development activities such as disaster, relief and education.

Origins of NGOs

- The modern secular NGO movement begun with the creation of the Red Cross in the 1860s (Smillie, 1999). Like the Red Cross, a good number of today's best known NGOs spring out of war such as the Save the Children in 1920, Foster Parents Plan during the Spanish War (1936-1939), and Oxfam and CARE - grew from the Second World War (Smillie, 1995).

Origins of NGOs

- The post-war reconstruction effort “in earnest in Europe with the implementation of the Marshall Plan in 1948” made suffering and starvation no longer an imminent threat in Europe (Manji and O’Coill, 2002: 573). When the reconstruction period in Europe ended, many of these NGOs had to redefine their objectives and justify their existence. In their course of action they shifted geographically to the developing countries, and in addition to their immediate concerns with relief and welfare, extended their activities into the sector of development and politics (Ndegwa, 1996, Cleary, 1997).

Origins of NGOs

- Oxfam, Plan International and Save the Children were among few organisations that decided to extend their existing humanitarian activities beyond Europe's boundaries (Manji and O'Coill, 2002).

History and Growth of NGOs in Africa

- Bratton (1989) reminds us that during the colonial era, NGOs, in the form of churches and missionary societies, were the main providers of health and education services, especially in rural areas while the state stood aloof from rural development and focused on the regulatory functions of law and order. He explains that it was only towards the end of colonial rule that the state assumed responsibility for development services. He also observes that Africa's first modern NGOs sprang up during the colonial period, in the form of ethnic welfare groups, professional associations, separatist churches which articulated the demands of newly-modernised Africans.

Growth of NGOs

- Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, both developed and developing countries witnessed steady increases of NGOs. In the OECD countries of the Global North the number had grown from, “1,600 in 1980 to 2,970 in 1993” (Edwards and Hulme, 1995:3), while in the South countries such as Bolivia, the number of NGOs increased from “100 in 1980 to 530 in 1992” (Arellano-Lopez and Petras, 1994:562) and in Kenya, the number of international NGOs working in that country went up almost three-fold to 134 organisations during the period 1978 to 1988 (Osodo and Matsvai, 1998: 8).

Growth of NGOs

- Due to the increase in numbers, influence and importance of NGOs the 1980s have been termed by some observers the “NGO decade” for rural development in Africa (Fowler, 1988; Bratton, 1989). Even then, growth has continued to be recorded in most parts of Africa. In Kenya, for instance, the NGO sector experienced its biggest growth between 1996 and 2003, from 511 registered NGOs in 1996 to 2, 511 (a fivefold increase) in 2003 (World Resources Institute, 2005:4). In Ghana, in 1960 there were only ten registered NGOs, while by 1991 it was estimated that over 350, excluding numerous village level associations were operating (Kamara and Denkabe, 1993:187).

Henriot (1997) observes that in Zambia there has been the growth and vitality of NGOs since the 1990s.

Growth of NGOs in Zambia

- The prominence of NGOs is not by chance; nor is it only a response to local initiative and voluntary action. Equally important is the fact that NGOs have increasingly gained popularity with official aid agencies in this era of neo-liberalism in most parts of the world. Therefore, the prominence of NGOs stems from two main factors: **the retreat of centralised government and the keen interest of donor agencies in the era of neo-liberalism**. The gradual retreat of the state particularly in the developing world in public service delivery has left a 'gap' that NGOs attempt to fill.

Growth of NGOs in Zambia

- NGOs and donors usually work together in developmental activities including education. NGOs have gained popularity with International aid agencies and therefore many NGOs in both developed and developing countries are funded by these aid agencies. This is because NGOs are regarded by many official agencies as more efficient and cost effective service providers than governments, giving better value-for-money, especially in reaching the poor (Brodhead, 1987; Meyer, 1992; Sollis, 1992; Vivian, 1994).

Funding for NGOs

- Global data on NGOs is scanty. Writing for the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, Catherine Agg (2006) looked at trends in aid to NGOs using Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) data, she admits the unreliability of the OECD as a source because OECD categories do not incorporate all NGO funding. However, the trends are clear. Table 1 below shows the percentage of Official Development Aid (ODA) given to NGOs from 1984 to 2003.

Table 1: Proportion of Official Development Aid channelled through NGOs, 1984-2003

Year	ODA to NGOs (%)
1984	0.2%
1991	2.3%
1998	4.7%
2003	5.9%

Funding for NGOs (Cont'd)

- In 1984, 0.2% which is less than one percent of ODA was given directly to NGOs. By 2003, the figure had grown to six percent which translates into substantial amount of money as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2 : Official Development Aid to NGOs (in million US dollars), 1984-2003

Year	Millions of US dollars
	ODA to NGOs
1984	0.8m
1991	900.0m
1998	1,100.0m
2003	2,200.0m

EFA Goals

- Goal 1: Expand early childhood care and education.
- Goal 2: Free and compulsory primary education for all.
- Goal 3: Promote learning and life skills for youths and adults

EFA Goals (Cont'd)

- Goal 4: Increase adult literacy by 50 per cent.
- Goal 5: Achieve gender parity by 2005, gender equality by 2015
- Goal 6: Improve the quality of education

Problems in Basic Education in Zambia

- Access problems
- Low learning achievements and low quality education

Quality problems

- According to the study by Mwanza (2013) the lack of good quality education in the majority of schools visited (86%) was due to the following reasons:
- lack of trained teachers, especially in community schools, and upper basic school in public basic schools;
- inadequate teaching and learning materials;

Quality problems (Cont'd)

- dilapidated and inadequate infrastructure;
- inadequate and poor sanitary conditions;
- poor learning environment.

Figure 1: A classroom block with cracked floor (potholes) (Source: Field notes, 2011)



Figure 2: A classroom with broken windows
(Source: Field notes, 2011)



The Role of NGOs in the development of Basic Education in Zambia

- Advocacy
- Service delivery

The Role of NGOs in the development of Basic Education in Zambia (Cont'd)

NGO Service Delivery in Basic Education in Zambia

- Supply inputs to government and community schools (for example, teaching-learning materials)
- Support infrastructure development (for example, school building) of government and community schools
- Supply associated services (for example, teacher training)

The Role of NGOs in the development of Basic Education in Zambia (Cont'd)

- Zambia Open Community Schools' (ZOCS) is running community schools in Lusaka and Central provinces of Zambia. For example, Linda open community school supported by ZOCS started in 1994, and the number of pupils has increased over the years (Field notes, 19/01/2011).

Table 3: Enrolment Levels at Linda Open Community School

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
2009	703	742	1445
2008	580	573	1053
2007	557	571	1028
1995	90	110	200
1994	60	90	150

The Role of NGOs in the development of Basic Education in Zambia (Cont'd)

- Establishment and running of community schools



- Support management of government-run schools (for example, Child-friendly schools)

Support marginalised and disadvantaged children (for example, paying school fees for children)



Challenges faced by NGOs in achieving EFA Goals

- Dependence on donor funding

“ We have scarce finances which makes it difficult for us to provide for our target groups” (NGO officer 2, 2010).

- Low staffing levels

“Because of financial difficulties, we cannot employ adequate staff” (NGO officer 10, 2011).

- Few advocacy NGOs
- Duplication of work among NGOs

Duplication of work among NGOs

“NGO work in Zambia is fragmented because most NGOs do not share information on their activities. As a result, some NGOs are literally doing the same programmes as other NGOs even when they do not have the competency to do them. For example, some NGOs are involved in psychosocial counselling of children even when they are not competent to do it. There is lack of specialisation among most NGOs working in the education sector” (NGO Officer 5, 2010).

Issues

- What has happened after Jomtien and Dakar?
- Why is aid dependency in developing countries problematic for the implementation of EFA goals by both State & non-State actors e.g. NGOs?