

## Non Governmental Organizations as Pivot of National Development:A Critique.

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### ABSTRACT

The term Non - Governmental Organisation (here after referred to as NGO), is not very helpful as a starting point for an analytical discussion since it is an umbrella term covering a wide range of organisations from household names to small peasant organisations. There is no doubt, as we can deduce from the achievements of the NGO community in Nigeria, that much good has been done through NGOs, often in situations of extreme need but the challenge of sustainable development is still the major developmental problem of the nation state waiting to be tackled successfully. This omnipresent challenge is the reason for the increased role given to the NGO when it was believed that the state has failed to provide sustainable development to the people but surprisingly, this problem is still present in Nigeria.

Keywords: Government, Organizations, National Development and NGO.

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### INTRODUCTION

According to [1], the term, NGO has become widely accepted as referring to a legally constituted, non-governmental organisation created by natural or legal persons with no participation or representation of any government. In the cases in which NGOs are funded totally or partially by governments, the NGO maintains its non - governmental status and excludes government representatives from membership in the organisation [2,3,4,5]. This is why unlike the term inter-governmental organisation, NGO is a term in general use although it is not a legal definition. In many jurisdictions, NGOs are defined as civil society organisations or referred to by other names as we shall interchangeably use in this work. International non - governmental organisation (here after referred to as INGO) therefore has been defined by the Economic and Social Council, ECOSOC, as any organisation that is not founded by an international treaty [6,7]. No matter how the term NGO is conceived or applied, be it locally, nationally or internationally, its definition always connotes welfare, services or empowerment and development. No wonder, NGOs serve as intermediate organisations dealing with issues that concern development [8]. In Nigeria, as in

other nations of the world, individuals are interested in having a better or at least, a more humane life, which borders on life-sustenance, self- esteem and freedom, and it means that government is charged with the responsibility of providing these basic needs (nay. sustainable development) to the people through various economic, political and social activities. This is true because as we can remember, one of the driving forces which sustained the quest for independence by many colonised peoples (including Nigeria) was the belief that development would necessarily follow independence. Ironically, sustainable development has not been realised in Nigeria since independence. [9], in line with this truism concurs that "many problems could not be solved within a nation." This is why the role of the NGOs involved in third world relief and development work is receiving increasing attention in recent years, to such an extent that the 1980's has been termed the decade of the NGOs [10,11]. This increasing attention reflects the current opinion that the NGO is in some way better at relief and development work than official bilateral and multilateral aid agencies. Two factors are responsible for this view. The first is a general

dissatisfaction with official aid policies which has prompted both government and public alike to view NGOs as alternative development channels [12]. The second is the paradigm shift in development thinking which stresses the active participation of local people in development process, an approach, traditionally characteristics of the NGOs. More so, international treaties and international organisations such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO), were perceived as being too centered on the interests of capitalist enterprises. The NGO therefore, has developed to emphasize humanitarian issues, developmental aid and sustainable development [13].

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Since no research is done in vain, this work is initiated in order to raise a critique on the relationship between the NGO community and sustainable development in Nigeria. By so doing, we are going deeper to examine the whole concept of sustainable development. We shall then examine the relationship between the NGO and sustainable development in Nigeria. This shall enable us investigate what roles the NGO has been playing in enhancing sustainable development in the country and what roles it has not played to raise doubts about being a veritable instrument for enhancing sustainable development in Nigeria. In the course of this

In this work, we are arguing that there is no doubt that much good has been done in Nigeria through the NGO, often in situations of extreme need, (and can still be done) but that the NGO has increasingly come under heavy criticism because the economic interest of its (NGO) members which usually hamper its effective functioning as an agent of sustainable development coupled with its over-dependence on external resources and control, culminate to making us not to see the NGO as a veritable instrument for enhancing sustainable development in Nigeria why is the situation like this in Nigeria?

investigation, we are going to examine what constitutes the impediments to the effective functioning of the NGO in Nigeria. In the end, we seek to achieve a completion of this study through the data we present, that is, to establish the fact (with the help of dependency theory) that the NGOs in Nigeria are not veritable instruments of sustainable development because of the dependency condition (and other factors) in which they find themselves. We shall then make recommendations on what the NGOs need to do to be adjudged as a vehicle for the enhancement of sustainable development in Nigeria.

#### Data Presentation and Analysis

Here, we present and analyse the data we collected. For easy comprehension, we are dividing the section into four: Background to the challenge of Sustainable development in Nigeria;

International History of the NGO community; NGO's role in the development of Nigeria; the testing of hypotheses.

#### Background to the Challenge of Sustainable Development in Nigeria

Before 1960, Nigeria was a British Colony. She got her independence from Britain in 1960. Few years after the attainment of this independence, debates and discussions were rife and lively about the problems of national development, and great hopes were raised on the possibility of the country becoming developed within a short while. In her national development plans, Nigeria recognised certain key elements

of sustainable development such as ecological integrity and sustainability. equity and distributive justice at all levels, socially relevant economic productivity and technological development, popular participation and collective autonomy, as well as, prevalence institutionalisation of human and democratic rights [4]. Proceeding from these elements, it is obvious that Nigeria's development history does not

totally lack recognition of these. Although implementation might have failed, evidence abound that a recognition of this direction can be found in the five national objectives of Nigeria as for example declared in the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Development Plan (NDP), 1970-1974. According to the above authors, these objectives are to establish Nigeria as a united, strong and self-reliant nation: a great find dynamic economy; a just and egalitarian society; a land full of bright and full opportunities; a free and democratic society for all. Indeed, the vast scale and rapid growth of the Nigerian economy within the past fifty years need to be saluted as a major achievement. According to [3], industries have expanded, there are express highways, flyovers, wide and concrete bridges, school and hospital expansion, *et cetera*. Rapid economic growth has also increased the pace of population growth from 55 - 59 million in 1963 [4] to about 140 million today. By and large, a substantial amount of progress has been achieved in many directions but statistics can be deceptive. They are just material progress. The

*If we were to take present income levels and correct for inflation, there can be no denying that the average citizen is today worse off than he was ten years ago... Judging from (the increasing decay of our villages, town.<sup>1</sup>; and cities, there is really no evidence to believe that the quality of life of the people in these places have improved.*

This classical and incisive revelation aptly summarises the state of affairs of a nation (Nigeria) which is said to be developing by leaps and bounds, which has outlined several development plans, has abundant resources, and has recorded impressive figures of achievement in the economic sector. But the welfare of the citizens and the material development of the nation seem to be moving in opposite directions.

#### NGO'S ROLES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NIGERIA

NCOS are relatively- new in Africa and their development is still low when compared with the development of similar organisations in the more developed countries. Nonetheless, they have been growing rapidly in number,

question is, how far has the lot of the common man been benefited? The failure of so many development projects and strategies and the consequent critique or rejection of the very idea of development by many in recent times according to [5], "can be

"attributed largely to lopsided and anti-cultural understanding of development. Many African countries themselves with their elites got lost in the euphoria of modernisation." Therefore, one fact which has been tested to be true, is that most development models (be it political, economical, technological and social) conceived in the western nations and transported to African nations by imposition or otherwise have failed to address the problem of development in most of these nations (including Nigeria). Such models work in the developed Northern Industrialised and Western nations but when applied to Nigeria, failed because they considered in isolation, an idea that was in itself integral, development of the people and things. [4], reveals that:

Thus, as the national objectives of Nigeria enunciated somewhere above still remain valid; their realisation from the point of view of the key elements of sustainable development, also outlined above, constitutes the core of our contemporary development challenge which in essence, if met, will open the door to the transformation of Nigeria.

indicating, according to [6]. the need for effective alternatives for social development in the entire continent. In Nigeria, the proliferation of NGOs (local and international) has led to a situation in which there were no longer a few

branches of international NGOs such as Rotary International, Lions International, The Boys Scout, The Girls Guide, *et al* dominating the arena. Rather, so many NGOs (local and international) have been established since the 1980s and 1990s (referred to as the decades of the NGOs) to provide vanguard and innovative functions; service provider function, advocacy function; value guardian function, as well as, development function, to mention but a few. NGOs in Nigeria have supported a wide range of activities in such areas as health, education, household, food security and nutrition, women's development, child welfare, environment. HIV/AIDS, income generation, human rights, *et cetera*. Evidence abound that the NGOs are increasingly becoming more significant in Nigeria's development process as they have become more recognised by a wide variety of interested institutions, such as the inter-governmental and multilateral organisations themselves, the members of the UN family, the three tiers of governments in Nigeria and their agencies, and other groups.

Today, NGOs in Nigeria can boast of so many achievements in the aforementioned areas of development. For example, the Carter Centre, (INGO) which has its headquarters in Atlanta Georgia in the USA and operates in 68 countries of the world including Nigeria, has confirmed in 2009 (through its office at Independence Layout, Enugu), that it has through its Global 2000 project, eradicated guinea worm disease from Nigeria. This is a laudable achievement because this disease was a scourge that ravaged the lives of a great numbers of poor rural dwellers in Nigeria before now. The three tiers of governments of Nigeria could not solve the problem until Carter Centre collaborated with them.

Statistically, according to the centre, in 1999, there were up to 3,950 reported cases of Guinea worm in the South East Zone. In 2000, the numbers reduced to 3,927. In 2001, they reduced further to 2,536 and in 2002, to 397. In 2009, Guinea worm disease has become a thing of the past in the South 'East Nigeria. We

recognise this wonderful achievement because it pragmatically proves that NGOs are geared toward development in Nigeria. In another area of development [8], have asserted that increasing numbers of highly specialised Micro finance institutions, MFI, outside the government system have found effective solutions to addressing the needs of the poor and have focused particularly on women as socially most legitimate avenue for sustainable development in the future. Although reality can prove their claim to be overstated, the example of successful partnership between Lift Above Poverty Organisation, LAPO, Benin City and Growing Business Foundation, GBF (all, Local NGOs) is worth commending. Godwin Ehigiamusoe [7], extolled LAPO's achievements as: engaging in the services of providing credit facilities to its members for the purpose of financing their business ventures and capacity building; servicing four rural dwellers out of every five members and 99% of its members are women. With a loan portfolio of &50 million and membership strength of 10,000, LAPO has generally promoted self-employment in some income generating activities through micro-credit to members only; promoted the virtue of thrift among members, and encouraged leadership and gender sensitisation. In the same vein, Small Project Fund, SPF, an arm of CIDJAP (a local NGO in Enugu), has also claimed that out of 251 co-operatives, organisations and persons applied for assistance within January to December 2000, 84 persons were given loans. Individual loan beneficiaries received loans ranging between 1410,000 and 1450,000 depending on the level of enterprise engaged in. In all, about N400,000.000 was disbursed. Between 1989 - 2000, SPF disbursed about N26,000.000 to over 500 loan beneficiaries with a good repayment track record. In all its projects, SPF has been funded primarily by donor agencies internationally and locally [8].

More so, many NGOs have worked collaboratively with other international agencies like United Kingdom's Department For International

Development, DFID, United States Agency for International Development, USAID, German Leprosy Relief Association, GLRA, *et cetera*, for the sake of bringing sustainable development to Nigeria. For example, PATHS (i.e. Partnership for Transforming Health Systems) is a programme of collaboration with Nigerian partners to develop partnership for transforming health systems in Nigeria. It is funded by DFID, and in its phase one of operation (Known as PATHs 1), 2002 - 2008, operated in some states of the federation, namely: Enugu, Ekiti, Kano, Kaduna, Jigawa, *et al.*

Through the instrumentality of many NGOs and CBOs (Community Based Organisations) such as WACOL, WARO, CREASU, GHARF, A-CODE, CIRDDOC, YOUTH, YORDEL Africa, VOIRDEF, NAWOJ, WINET, AWSO, GHON *et cetera*, PATHs 1 achieved a lot within six years. "PATHS has done so much that it is difficult to list all..." This is the assessment of DR Chukwunwike (in PATHS Final *Progress Report*. 2002 - 2008: iii). Evidence has shown, according to him, that PATHS has supported the implementation of the District Health System which has done so much towards integrating our previously pigmented services and revitalising our primary health care services. It has supported the development and implementation of the under pinning systems necessary to and, working in partnership with the Health Commodities Procurement Project (HCPP), has brought

#### TESTING OF THE HYPOTHESES

HYPOTHESIS ONE: The economic interest of members of the NGO community usually hampers the role of the NGOs as agents of sustainable development in Nigeria.

EVALUATION: Over the past three decades, we have witnessed the proliferation of NGOs in Nigeria and there is no doubt that NGOs have done some good work in the country but we are here saying that, notwithstanding these good work, the economic interest of members of NGOs usually hamper their role as agents of sustainable development in Nigeria. Evidence abounds according to [10] that with the availability of funds in

much needed drugs and equipment to our facilities. It has trained well over 2,000 health care workers in Enugu State alone, both clinical and non - clinical, in an effort to help improve the quality of care provided. It has supported the pioneering of ground breaking practices in Public Private Partnership, PPP, by enabling government to work hand in hand with faith based sectors.

Another NGO, the Tulsi Chanrai Foundation which focuses on essential community needs like restoring of eye sight, provision of access to primary health care and provision of safe drinking water to the less privileged communities, has been performing, according to Sola Ogunipe in [3], "12,000 sight restoring surgeries every year, since 1992." In collaboration with General Hospitals in Birnin Kebbi, Calabar, Owerri and Yola, the foundation with the assistance of some sponsors (like GINO manufacturing company) has provided these surgeries free of charge to the less privileged patients. Although, the litany of NGOs' achievements in Nigeria is endless, the position of the NGO as a veritable development mechanism is still contentious as the challenge of sustainable development in the country is still waiting to be addressed properly. We then ask, why is sustainable development difficult to achieve in Nigeria taking into cognisance the foregoing achievements recorded by both the government and non - government institutions?

the private sector, NGOs multiplied, not always for the purest of motives, however. When ministers and civil servants were no longer able to easily get their 10% (or more) kickback on government projects, they started their private NGOs to be where the money flew. For many intellectuals who found themselves unemployed or in a hard spot, to start an NGO became a way to make a living.

Today, people have learnt how this new industry (i.e. the NGO) works because they have learnt exactly which project is most likely to stir the interest of a sponsor (s), what the donors want to hear

and how to make money flow. This kind of development, always attracts corruption. These corruption tendencies and actions by NGO members therefore mean that they are making business with people's poverty. Instead of directing the money (attracted from donors) to enhance sustainable development, the money gobbles up with the high cost of running of the offices, organising workshops and seminars at exorbitant rates, *et cetera*. For example, it is now common to see many NGOs starting off their operations with three essential items: an exotic office, some computer gadgets and at least, a jeep or any other expensive or respectable car/cars. Our experience during the time of data gathering shows that most of these NGOs offices are situated in costly cum high brow areas (like G.R.A., New Haven. Independence Layout, to say the least, in the case of Enugu State). Their staff is well remunerated more than their peers in most government paid jobs and their offices well furnished with state-of-the-art equipment. Evidence of their high wages can be seen in the latest brand of cars and jeeps they litter around their office premises. How has this benefited the poor masses? This implies that the comfort of the members of the NGOs matters more than the role they are meant to play. It is not entirely the fault of members of the NGOs. It is a result of the unjust socio-economic relationship which prioritises the accumulation of wealth by any means possible inherent in the Nigerian capitalist, system. So, as the case may be, most NGO members are battling to shrug off some of the impacts of underdevelopment which most Nigerians live in. More so, the sense of greed and corruption also makes some members to direct some of the relief materials meant to serve the interest of the poor to their homes. For example, Agboola in [7], reports that UNICEF "have expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that most of the relief materials meant for persons displaced by flood in some local government areas of Plateau State have been diverted to unknown places."

According to report, UNICEF field officer, Mr. Jallo who leads other officials to the victims in Pilgani and Yashi camps (all in Langtang LGA) and Gbonga camp in Kanke LGA, because of this dissatisfaction, decides to hand over the remaining items directly to the traditional heads (of the areas instead of the NGOs) to ensure that the items are safe by the time the officials return another day. Even though some of the NGOs and government officials accused tried to explain what happened.. Mr. Jallo insisted that "whatever is brought to the camps must remain and should not be moved to people's houses." This, therefore, confirms the claim by [9], that whereas in Spain, the government uses the Red cross for successful educational campaigns about disabilities, just as social services are provided by NGOs in Bangladesh partly because of lack of government resources and partly to evoke people-participation, and in the Netherlands, most social services are provided by voluntary agencies that get almost their funding from the government, in Nigeria, some NGOs receive grants-in-aid, or subvention from state or federal government for various services but when it comes to a definite policy of who receives what and for what services, Nigerians excel in the art of muddling through.

To clarify the word "muddle" [9] says it means, "to put things in the wrong order or mix them up." By this clarification and the examples above, it is now obvious that the economic interest of the members of the NGO community usually hampers the role of the NGOs as agents of sustainable development in Nigeria. This is so because most times the members of NGOs end up being agents of selves' development. Confirming this claim, Anyanwu in [8] reports that Mrs. Ifejika (ANSACA project manager, Idemili North, Anambra State) in extolling the virtues of the founder of an NGO, YOUTH AWARENESS, Kaduna, Mrs. Hope Nwandu who paid school fees for 50 orphans in Oraukwn town, commended her "for taking seriously the issue of orphans and widows as well as ensuring that what is provided by the donor agencies are given

to those they are meant for...because there are those who were called like her and given money and they took the money to their private businesses and homes."

On the other hand, the condition of over-dependence on external resources for development in Nigeria and most other developing countries makes it that, as [5] puts it, Southern NGOs (SNGOs) "are usually 90% dependent on foreign aid..." This state of dependency therefore makes it that virtually all donors' funding are projectised so that NGOs utilising funds tend to expand in project activities, particularly those favoured by donors. Today, there are so many health sector-related NGOs here and there in Nigeria because attention is more on the sector. Accepting these donations and aids further require that SNGOs account to donors or Northern NGOs (NNGOs) or the domestic government, sometimes, the three. Thus, the juxtaposition of realistic and surreal situations in this kind of relationship is that he who pays the piper usually dictates the tune of the pipe. So, while some members of the SNGOs are busy satisfying their economic interest through the aforementioned ways, the donors or NNGOs are busy consolidating their imperialistic strategy. This, the donors and sponsors achieve through imposing their bureaucratic culture on NGOs for fear of abuse of the donated funds but in the end, too much energy and funds go into administration, and no longer to fund the projects for which the NGO started was. The underlying illusion, according to Shonecke (2003:28), "is that the length and language of reports are proportional to the amount and quality of work done on the ground."

**HYPOTHESIS TWO:** NGOs are not veritable instruments for enhancing sustainable development in Nigeria.

**EVALUATION:** From the evaluation of the first hypothesis, we have come to agree that NGOs are not veritable instruments for enhancing sustainable development in Nigeria. It is not only because of the economic interest of their members which usually hamper their effective functioning but because of other impediments.

According to [10], NGOs are "merely avenues to share public funds." In the words of Shonecke (2003:28), "NGOs have increasingly come under fire and some maintain that, with the best of intentions, they at times do more harm than good." For example, in the case where the NGO participates in the illicit behaviour of diverting relief materials meant for victims of flood disaster in Plateau State, the NGO has done more than good to people which confirms our claim that NGO is not a veritable instrument for enhancing sustainable development in Nigeria. Today, NGOs' activities have not been able to reach more people as anticipated, instead, a handful of opportune staff and contractors have got financial opportunity through their activities in the NGOs. NGOs' activities have not promoted sustainable development through the people participation in development projects in the communities.

The NGO community is not a veritable tool for enhancing sustainable development in Nigeria because even as a Vanguard instrument, it has failed largely to realise its responsibilities and challenges, by not being above board and beyond reproach. Instead of discharging their roles effectively, fearlessly and honestly, most NGOs have become captive to political point-scoring for example, within the NGO community in Nigeria, it is very difficult to identify any SNGO as solely concerned with battling corruption (one of the root causes of the challenge of sustainable development. The reason for this political point-scoring is because of the NGOs' web-like relationships: That between NGOs themselves and between them and their sponsors and donors. The state however, is the largest and most assertive actor in the SNGO environment and so seeks to control their (NGOs) activities through a variety of mechanisms such as: Registration, monitoring, co-ordination, co-optation, suspension and ultimately, dissolution. According to [6], very little is known about the relationship between the SNGO and the state, although this is a crucial issue in explaining the role,

performance and potential contributions of SNGOs. It is a complex relationship as there are pressures for both co-operation and conflict. In Nigeria, SNGOs require state approval to be able to operate and can gain access to technical assistance, and sometimes funds, by maintaining an amicable relationship. However, close involvement with the state creates dependence that threatens to reduce the range of strategic options available to a particular NGO in Nigeria, most obviously in terms of objecting to state activities, and makes co-operation more likely. However, the Nigerian state policies toward SNGOs and NNGOs are increasingly being conditioned by aid donors.

This is not surprising because many scholars like Toyo, Nwankwo and Akani [9], refer to the Nigerian state as an instrument of corruption which is subservient and dependent on the global capitalist system for survival. So, instead of being the agent for solving the problem of development in Nigeria, the state is part of the problem. From the foregoing picture painted about the Nigerian state, it is therefore necessary that an understanding of the relationship between the NGO community and the phenomenon of sustainable development in Nigeria has to be situated within the character of the Nigerian state. This position is based on the following observations: That because Nigeria is a dependent country, the state has failed to create a favourable institutional and political environment for the effective functioning of the NGOs. That based on this condition, the initiation, design and operation of the process of development in Nigeria are not usually done for the benefit of the Nigerian people.

That there remains an inherent contradiction between the NGOs operating at the periphery with their control being from the center, since the lack of participatory decision-making makes dependency on the external agencies almost inevitable. That the local NGOs are often open to influence and control by local elites who usually make

decisions in their own interests under the cover of a participatory organisational structure. That even where rural participatory programmes have involved the NGOs, like the Badeku Rural Development Scheme, the Isoya Rural Development Scheme and the Group Farm Scheme that are most prominent in Northern Nigeria [11], participation seems to be tacked onto existing styles of operation as predetermined by the external agencies. No wonder, Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria, [10], reports that Nigeria still accounts for 80% of world polio infection not minding the heavy media awareness and funding. This figure is mainly derived from Northern Nigeria where the Islamic culture has contributed to the belief in the rumour that polio vaccines contain substances that can give HIV/AIDS. The result is that many parents never released their children and wards for vaccinations. Under this astonishing revelation, the Sultan of Sokoto now leads other Northern traditional rulers to campaign for compliance. The question therefore is what are the NGOs doing as to allow their supposed awareness role to be played by the traditional rulers who are nevertheless, agents of the Nigerian state? With these observations, we therefore state that NGOs are not veritable instruments for enhancing sustainable development in Nigeria not because of lack of purpose considering their achievements as shown earlier in this section but because they are under the influence and control of the Nigerian state whose subservience and dependence on the world capitalist system have made both the NGO and other institutions of development in the country weak.



NAME AND TYPE OF NGO	DATE OF FOUNDATION	SCOPE OF OPERATION	AREA OF FOCUS	NETWORK OF AFFILIATION	REGISTRATION AND DATE	SOURCE OF FUNDING
Nigeria	1992	National	Development	No	Federal	*Fund raising
Network of NGOs				affiliation	Ministry of Health 1992	through the <sup>5</sup> Board of Trustees
(NNGO) is a network NGO						*Fund raising from the General public/private sector. *USAID *ODA 'British Council *UNFPA "Federal Ministries
Planned Parent - Hood	1964	National	National Population	* Internal! On al Planned For	Corporate Affairs · Commission Abuja, 1967	*IPPF Bother Donor Agencies
Federation of Nigeria is a branch of internal voluntary organisation			activities	Parenthood Federation  (Ippfl. *The enabling Environment forum		(USAID, Population concern Ford foundation. etc)
AFRICARE is An international NGO	1971	National	Health	*NNGO *NANGO	Corporate Affairs Commission Abuja,	*Federal, State and Local Governments *Fees and Other charges. *USAID *Carnegie Foundation (USA)

					1992	* World Aids Foundation (France) *AIDSCAP (USA) *Donation by mail *Church Donation
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From the above table, an example of the involvement of the Government of Nigeria and its agency, Corporate Affairs Commission, in the activities of an NGO,

with the collaboration of more than one multilateral, bilateral and unilateral donor, implies that the NGO is heavily under their control.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In this section, we are going to raise a critique of the facts and figures already put down in the preceding sections. There is no doubt, as we can deduce from the achievements of the NGO community in Nigeria, that much good has been done through NGOs, often in situations of extreme need but the challenge of sustainable development is still the major developmental problem of the nation state waiting to be tackled successfully. This omnipresent challenge is the reason for the increased role given to the NGO when it was believed that the state has failed to provide sustainable development to the people but surprisingly, this problem is still present in Nigeria. The evidence is not far-fetched because a lasting development has not been achieved in the country since its history as a nation - state. What we have today in Nigeria are conditions of deprivation, low self esteem and dependency. If the word, "Sustainable" according to [8] means "involving the use of national natural products and energy in a way that does not harm the environment or something that continues or be continued for a long time," then, we can say that there is no sustainable development in Nigeria. [4] confirms that, the average Nigerian citizen "is worse off than ten years ago.... Judging from the increasing decay of our villages, towns and cities, there is really no evidence to believe that the quality of life of has improved."

health - care, participatory democracy, corrupt-free environment, peaceful atmosphere, and even, hope. This mountain of problems has eroded an average Nigerian's self-reliance, self-sustenance and self-esteem (the key ingredients of sustained development). This also, does imply that with weak and dependent institutions, the effort to get Nigeria on the patli to sustainable development has not yielded commensurate result as the case of the NGO and other development institutions in Nigeria has shown. Why is the situation so?

In section three, we had tried to justify that both the NGO and the international donor agencies have somehow tried to help Nigeria achieve some development strides. We enunciated some international agencies, and organisations that have helped the NGOs in Nigeria to achieve some of their set - out goals. Some of them are: USAID, DFID, Ford Foundation, UNICEF, MacArthur Foundation, *et al.* Also, we exposed that all the NGOs except one in the table are registered with Nigeria's Corporate Affairs Commission, which brings them under the control of the Federal Government. Outside the table, the DFID and other agencies arc also included as development partners in Nigeria.

In other sources of information, like [8], [10], *PATHS Togetherness Health* [9], *et cetera*, evidence of collaboration between the development partners are stated. For example, *Togetherness Health* reveals that: The *PATHS* programme was operational in Enugu State from 2002 to

As this work is trying to prove, governments have been unable to give majority of Nigerians food, accommodation, employment, good

2008 and during that period worked with four Health Commissioners and six Permanent Secretaries. It was housed within the state Health Board premises which did much to promote a harmonious and cohesive working relationship with government structures. Whilst PATHS worked predominantly with the state Ministry of Health, it also worked in partnership with a number of other government ministries; including local government . economic planning and finance and the local government services commission. In addition, the programme worked with a number of faith - based hospitals; a large scale selection of NGOs and CBOs: arid its partner DFID programmes and the Health commodities Procurement project. This reveals the heavy involvement of the tiers of governments and their departments as well as, international donors in national development projects in Nigeria.

For instance, [11], reveals that it works at federal and state levels and with civil society and the private sector to improve the effectiveness of Nigeria's own expenditure on poverty reduction, to improve the environment for non - oil growth, and to make a direct impact on the Millennium Development Goals, MDGs. To achieve this, DFID has spent €100M, in 2008/2009; €80M in 2006/2007. €35M In 2003/2004 respectively, and will spend €120m in 2009/2010. DFID further reveals that it is the largest bilateral donor to Nigeria and third largest over all, after World Bank and European Union.

On the other hand, USAID through its Global Partnership [10], claims that the U.S. Government aid plus the rising amount given by American citizens and companies, make U.S. the first of all countries in the amount of aid provided to countries in need. For example, to help local indigenous NGOs, Networks and collaborating organisations become more efficient and effective in the delivery of development services, USAID is supporting increased access to quality family planning and reproduction health services in Nigeria. Its maternal and child health efforts focus on routine

immunisation, polio eradication, birth preparedness, and maternity services. In response to the more than 300, 000 Nigerian children who needlessly die from malaria each year, the U.S. according to [2], "is increasing access to proven preventive and curative interventions - insecticide - treated bed nets, net re - treatment kits, and malaria treatment for children and pregnant women." In education, USAID programmes support equitable access to quality basic education through teacher training infrastructure improvement, focusing on public schools, as well as Islamiyyah schools, which provide both secular and religious education. More so, the USAID programmes are accelerating the uptake of proven agricultural production, processing and marketing technologies and stimulating jobs creation through agric- business, in order to improve the enabling environment for agriculture and micro-finance.

Statistically, USAID has in 2007, increased its annual budget for its democratic response programme in Nigeria from \$212 billion for year 2007. This is a result from the USAID/Nigeria comprehensive five -year sustainable development strategy (2004 - 2009) for its on-going programme in Nigeria. In 2008, reveals Ofikhenua in [8], "the European Union (EU) has offered Nigeria a grant of 840 million euro for infrastructural development." The speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon, Bankole, because of this grant, therefore said that, "the House, would soon inaugurate a committee to monitor the activities of the NGO and when inaugurated, the committee, would be saddled with the responsibility of tracking funds from donor agencies with a view to ensuring that such funds achieve the desired outcome."

Like father, like son. We say this here because no need revealing more donations to Nigeria directly or even, to the NGO. The point is that while the nation - state enjoys tracking funds from donors just as the NGO is heavily dependent on the tracked fund or the ones directly given to it. and is under the control of the Nigerian government and

donors, conversely, these funds have not been well utilised for the genuine development of Nigeria. No wonder the officials of UNICEF, as revealed in section three, expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that most of the relief materials meant for persons displaced by flood in some local government areas of Plateau State in 2007 have been diverted to unknown places by NGO and government personnel entrusted with the materials. So, instead of working for the purpose the NGO was initially conceived as agent of sustainable development in Nigeria, the economic interest of the members of NGOs usually hamper their roles.

At this juncture, [7], concludes that this foregoing anomaly means that the development agent in Nigeria are "making business with people's poverty." Factual instances abound that both the government of Nigeria and most NGOs are more interested in the donations, grants and aids they are tracking because they can go on muddling through somehow. They are not genuinely interested in the enhancement of sustainable development in the country. Take for example, where, notwithstanding the above statistics which showed some of the amounts Nigeria has received from donor agencies, the wife of the Kwara State Government is still appealing to the international development partners to increase their assistance to Nigeria to enable the nation build a robust health system. According to the [9], Mrs. Saraki implicates that "a lot still needed to be done in access to healthcare, in education, working in the grassroots, in training of health workers and getting our partners involved in what is actually important to us as a people." This, really, implies that the challenge of sustainable development in Nigeria still poses a lot of challenges to all the development partners, especially, the NGOs which were supposed to be the

purveyor of sustainable development in the country.

The implication of this situation is that Nigeria's development priorities are not well arranged and directed. Imagine where a country which depends heavily on foreign resources for development spends over N790 billion on fuelling generators alone yearly [9], where as, infant and maternal mortality in the country remains one of the highest in Africa [11], the country still accounts for 80% of World polio infection [7]. The question is, where then, went the whole funds tracked from donors? Corruption in the public sectors has also infected the NGOs so that the NGOs have played more to satisfy themselves and the interest of their sponsors than the interest of the masses in Nigeria, and this is a serious impediment to the effective functioning of NGOs as sustainable agents in Nigeria. In the above countries, NGOs have helped in sustaining development projects and issues; utilising their funds judiciously for the purpose they were meant. In Nigeria, some NGOs receive grants - in - aid. or subvention from different levels of governments and other donor agencies for various services, but when it comes to a definite policy of who receives what and for what services, Nigerians excel in the art of muddling through. So it is agreeable that the dependency structure in Nigeria is responsible for the underdevelopment of the people of the country, a situation which has contributed in making the economic interest of members of the NGOs (SNGOs and NNGOs) to be more paramount to them than that of the people and because of this, the NGOs' role as agents of sustainable development in Nigeria is usually hampered. This is to say that the NGOs in Nigeria are not veritable instruments for enhancing sustainable development in the country because they are heavily under the control of Nigeria and some other imperialists.

#### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The NGO and *Challenge of Sustainable Development in Nigeria: A Critique*. In doing this, we seek to make some recommendations based on the evidence we had provided which showed that

Nigeria's path to sustainable development has been a chequered one due to her over-dependence on the world capitalist structure and Lhe endemic corruption in the country, that the NGO community in

Nigeria has the potentials to contribute more meaningfully to the achievement of sustainable development in the country if

the enabling environment is provided by the nation-state.

#### SUMMARY

The incisive revelation from the dependency theory we applied to this critical study is that Nigeria's over-dependence on foreign resources for development has made the institutions in the country weak, and so, subservient to neo-colonial interests and manipulations. Tracing this condition down memory lane, we discovered that co-opting Nigeria into the world capitalist system by the British colonial administrations, created unequal relationships (social, political, economical, cultural) between the colonising and colonised peoples of the nation. So, while the colonising power became dominating in all spheres of our national development, people of Nigeria were forced to depend on the weak structures created by Britain and other capitalist bourgeoisie (local, national and international), who jointly run Nigeria as a business empire. In the preceding sections, we showed with statistics, for empirical evidence, how over-dependent the Nigerian state and the NGOs are to foreign resources and implicated that sustainable development in Nigeria has been difficult to achieve because of the character of the development state. The character of the development state of Nigeria is class-oriented, subservient to imperial control as well as over-bearing. This character inherited from the British colonial state of Nigeria is inevitable because according to [7], "...the nature of the young post-colonial economies lends to necessitate the prop of the state. The ship of young post-colonial states must be piloted to maturity; otherwise they will never attain economic take-off." This modernist approach therefore determined largely the path to development towed by the post-colonial government in Nigeria. Regrettably, this emphasis on rapid economic growth has failed to pave the way for sustainable development in the country because the socio-economic and political success have failed to see development as integral, i.e., achievement

of basic human needs, particularly those related to collective and individual well-being of the citizens. Conversely, the rapid economic growth has also increased social dislocation, moral decay, and environmental degradation in the country. The trickle-down-effect of this anomaly is that the nation is today in crisis: crisis of poverty, unemployment, living in squalor, youth restiveness, industrial strikes, kidnap cases and armed robbery, et *cetera*.

In Nigeria, there is no doubt that a lot of achievements have been made through the NGO community indicating that it has the potentials to enhance sustainable development but the over-dependence on the external resources for development projects have really made both of them (nation state and the NGO) to be subservient to the foreign donors and other agents of imperialism. The point here is that, Nigeria is not the only country in the third world under the influence of imperialism but the fact remains that as long as the Nigerian capitalist remains a class ally of the bourgeoisies of the capitalist world, [2], says "He is a pawn in the immense network of international monopoly finance capital." So, like father, like son. The NGO, like the Nigerian state (represented by the leadership), has failed to achieve the goals for which it was conceived as a better development channel to the poor. Rather, it has serviced the interest of Nigeria's collaborative agents of imperialism. So, we ask, where then, lies the hope of the poor when all the development agents in Nigeria are making business with people's poverty, leaving the challenge of sustainable development to continue to rear its ugly head higher and higher in the country? No wonder, the two hypotheses we proposed when evaluated were justified. The justification is found in the confirmation that because of this over-dependence on external resources, the donor agencies and sponsors retain

ultimate control, with the mode of operation being characterised as enlightened top-down rather than meaningful control from the grassroots. Most NNGOs activities can still be classified more in the relief and welfare and development groups, and many organisations have not undertaken changes in operation suggested as necessary for empowerment approach. Probably, the high level of poverty-related problem like hunger, maternal and infant mortality, HIV/AIDS, Guinea worm disease, *et al*, in the country have stimulated a shift in the opposite direction, i.e., "from functional back to passive participation," according to [7], with a stress on meeting immediate needs. AVE are then left with a serious contradiction between rhetoric and reality. Internal and external constraints which make it that while too much

In conclusion, our choice of topic is so far justified because of the evidence that although the Nigerian government, the NGO community and other foreign development partners have so far tried in issues pertaining to national development in the country, there is still an urgent need for the path to sustainable development to be paved so that Nigeria can realise her lofty ambition of being one of the 20 largest economies in the world by the year 2020. We are of the view that Nigeria has the potentials, just as the NGO has, to achieve this dream through the data we presented and analysed qualitatively, and as we tested the earlier proposed hypotheses which conformed to our objective and purpose of study. Evidence on ground really proved that the achievement of sustainable development in Nigeria still remains the major developmental challenge to the development agents in the country. This is so because as we tried to prove, the Nigerian state's activism in the economy in particular and national development in general has recently come under serious attacks of many like Yahaya and Akani who assert that state interventionism is the cause of the failure of the development state. So if

dependency on the side of the SNGOs eat away their organisational autonomy, within the NNGOs and other donor agencies, there is a strong preference for a project approach to development within which empowerment does not easily fit. Neatly packaged projects which can produce quick results are the most effective way of raising funds, and suites the bureaucratic structures of many sponsors and donors. This makes open-ended funding of development process through local NGOs risky to be adopted. The implication is that the empowerments of the poor to challenge the factors which govern their lives still remain rhetoric more than reality. This means that sustainable development is yet to be achieved in Nigeria which proves that the NGOs in Nigeria are not veritable instruments for enhancing sustainable development in the country.

#### CONCLUSION

the NGO community has not succeeded in helping Nigeria to achieve sustainable development, it is not only because of the economic interest of NGO members, it is because the state has not developed independent cum strong institutions and networks that would have created the enabling environment. Sustainable development as the reviewed works showed, is a durable, self-sustaining, reliable and integral development which must cater for the whole human person and encompass people of the nation as people-driven and people-centered. It is not mainly dependent on external resources. So, the manipulation of the Nigerian state by agents and collaborators of imperialism as exemplified in a situation where one NGO (for instance) is sponsored both by the Nigerian governments and more than two or three other multilateral, bilateral, as well as, unilateral agents of development is worrisome. This is worrisome because the relationship between the NGOs and sustainable development in Nigeria is to enhance the achievement of sustainable development and this the NGO has not achieved. It is therefore factual that the NGOs are not veritable instruments for enhancing

sustainable development in Nigeria because of the economic interest of their members whose selfish and /or group interests are pursued to the neglect of the people-centred and people -driven interests. However, in spite of the myriad of limitations we had in the course of data collection and analysis, especially the hiding of tangible information by NGO personnel, we have succeeded, at least, in proving that there exists a relationship between the NGO community and the phenomenon of sustainable development

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

Notwithstanding their achievements and shortcomings, the NGOs have enormous potentials to help Nigeria achieve sustainable development if the enabling environment is created. So, for the NGO community to succeed in realising its full potentials, first of all, it has to reduce its over-dependence on external resources so that the structure of its activities, staff composition and accountability can be under its control. By so doing, it can grow organically. The step is necessary because according to International Council of Voluntary Agencies [2] the dependence of African NGOs on foreign assistance correlates negatively with policy influence, casting diplomacy aside, the corruption of NGOs is the political game. As closer collaboration is a step towards ultimate co-optation so, the NGO in Nigeria should develop programmes and projects that can make it self-reliant, self-sustaining and viable. More so, since the state is unwilling to create an enabling environment for the NGO to succeed because of the profit-making interest of the dominant capitalist class which represents the imperialist interest, the NGO should try to develop and execute projects in areas where the state has failed woefully. Areas such as: poverty-reduction, youth/women empowerment, human-rights advocacy (particularly the freedom of speech), primary health care, environmental degradation, *et cetera*. Focusing on these areas shall trickle-down some other good results such as employment generation, leadership skill acquisition, micro-credit financing, reduction in infant and maternal

in Nigeria. We have also tried to prove that there are factors that are militating against the effective functioning of the NGOs in Nigeria. The chief factor is Nigeria's dependent state. All this implies is that, in reality, there is still this challenge of sustainable development in Nigeria in spite of the proliferation of NGOs in the country. The question now is, what is it that can be done to make the NGO a sincere purveyor of sustainable development in Nigeria?

mortality, cheap and affordable accommodation, *et at.*, that is how the poor can be empowered to challenge the factors which govern their lives. The NGO can achieve these by reducing the amount of money wasted in buying costly cars, office equipment, certain bureaucracies, outrageous salaries of staff, high cost of consultancy services, and even, high cost of securing offices. Frugally, the amounts saved through these management adjustments can help the NGO achieve certain good results without over-depending on donations from agents of imperialism. How possible is this, considering that in Nigeria, the unequal distribution and control of resources by a few, is the socio-economic source of a relation of dependence and absolute poverty, a factor that makes the economic interest of members of NGOs more important to them than the interest of building capacities for enhancing sustainable development in Nigeria? [3], advocates the contraction of state activism in national development. This is true because the state has failed to provide an enabling environment for the NGO to succeed, just as she has failed to address the crises of national development. But then, how possible is this? [6]. helps us answer the question. It suggests that development agencies should be subjected to the same rules of governance as other actors. Their dealings should be transparent and they should account for their activities to government, parliament, civil society and the intended beneficiaries in Nigeria as in other developing and transitional countries. If

the voices of the poor are to be heard in this process, the development of truly democratic systems is a priority, including political alliances and civil society groups which advocate on behalf of poor people and which can hold both governments and development agencies to account. In turn, donors make themselves accountable through regular publication of statements of their development policy- reports on programme implementation and a willingness to be questioned by democratic parliament and civil society. These recommendations are useful but how possible are they to be achieved in Nigeria? Even the DFID (as an agent of imperialism) may have known that this is rhetoric. It is rhetoric because examples have shown that in Kenya and Zimbabwe, according to [3], SNGOs that have pressed the case for change have been suspended or threatened by those who hold political

power. So, how can the NGO community overcome these impediments imposed on it by imperialist forces bearing in mind that the ruling class according to [8], possess the major instruments of economic production and distribution, and the means of establishing its dominance politically? [8] in line with some other dependency scholars therefore, have recommended that real development must result "from a people's frontal attack on the oppression, poverty, and exploitation that are meted out to them by the dominant classes and their system." So, if the NGO wants to be a sincere purveyor of sustainable development in Nigeria, it has to re-channel its interest to building the channels that make growth trickle down to the poor, i.e., to create the redistributive systems that actually benefit the poor, directly.

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