
**THE ROLE OF THE NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS IN POVERTY ALLEVIATION
IN UGANDA: ACASE STUDY OF BUGIRI MUNICIPALITY LOCAL GOVERNMENT.**

1 Kugumisiriza Faridah, 2 Kalikola Jacob, 3 Dr Ariyo Gracious Kazaara

1, 2, 3 Metropolitan International University

ABSTRACT

The study focused on investigating the relationship between the role played by the non-governmental organizations and poverty alleviation in Uganda but with a bias in Bugili municipality local government. The study was guided by several research objectives and research questions. The researcher used by qualitative and quantitative methods to collect and analyze both primary and secondary data to draw collusions on the subject matter. The study is expected to be of great significance to the government authorities as it will guide the policy formulation and strategies to eliminate poverty and its impact in Bugili municipality local government. The study found out that there is a close correlation between the role played by the non-governmental organizations and poverty alleviation in Uganda. This calls for instant government and non-state intervention by both government and non-government organizations so as to eliminate the scourge. 30% completely concurred that limited funding poses the greatest difficulty, making it the greatest obstacle to the effective funding of every requirement in the subcounty. 10% agreed that political interference in their roles had put a variety of projects on hold because various participants hold varying interests. The government should facilitate fully all agencies involved in the municipality for efficient monitoring and supervision including civil society so as to harmonize their efforts and initiatives towards the division's success.

Key words: non-government organizations and poverty alleviation

Background to study

Non-governmental groups play a critical role in improving the economic and socioeconomic wellbeing of citizens around the world, particularly in third-world nations where official social service institutions have consistently shown to be wasteful and ineffectual (CIVICUS, 2016). Consequently, the role played by the civil society sector shouldn't be overlooked or undervalued as the sector is constantly used to cover the service gaps left by non-welfare states around the world.

CSOs play a crucial role in the socio-economic growth of the economy and serve as fill-ins in countries like Uganda because the government may lack sufficient funds to reach out to every individual (Rashid et al., 2023). The republic of Uganda's 1995 constitution guarantees all citizens' rights and freedoms, and article 38 enables the populace to settle down influence governmental decisions through civic associations. But among other things, the influence of the programs they run operations, their working techniques, and the evolution of the NGO sector have all persisted to produce a variety of, occasionally divergent, viewpoints and experiences (Musaibah et al., 2023). In a similar vein, the Faith Based Organisations Bill was rejected, causing dissension among the many religious groups and their leaders to cast fingers at one another as its perpetrators and engage in personal witch hunts.

Since CSOs are more accessible to the general public, they enjoy greater public confidence than other organizations, especially the ruling and opposing parties. In light of this comprehension, UNDP seeks to collaborate with the CSOs, NGOs, CBOs, and educational organizations identified through this request for applications in order to promote group civic actions that will ultimately assist in the establishment of a resilient and long-lasting peace in Uganda. The effective partners ought to have a history of carrying out comparable initiatives. The procedures of a modest grant will be used to involve the partners (Musaibah et al., 2023).

Problem Statement

Since the NRM the government's foundation in the middle of the 1980s, Uganda has benefited from a favorable atmosphere and expanded political space thanks to which the number of NGOs—local, national, and international—has exploded. This growth has occurred for a variety of explanations, but mostly to fill the shortage of services left by the expensive and unproductive government service delivery system (Pdu et al., 2023). The non-government organizations play a significant role in enhancing the general well-being of the populace in Uganda's many societies by reducing poverty, particularly among young people. However, many of these groups are now hunting focuses on of the government due to suspicions of laundering currency and funding political commentators and groups considered a threat to the NRM regime. A number of these groups, including Action Aid and CCEDU (Action Aid report, 2019), have had their financial accounts frozen due to similar related reservations. Other groups, like DGF, have had their licenses revoked. The planned 2018 NGOs' legal environment is particularly unfavorable since it violates their rights and turns them into mere instruments of the state, despite the fact that they are referred to in the 1995 Ugandan constitutional as stakeholders in the state's growth. It is against these backgrounds that the research seeks to investigate further into these matters and explore more into the contribution of the NGOs in poverty alleviation among the youths amidst the above challenges so as to remedy them (Vincent & Peter, 2023).

Research objectives

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- 1. To find out the contribution of the NGOs in poverty alleviation among the youth.*
- 2. To identify the different activities that the NGOs engage in with the youths in a bid to alleviate poverty.*

3. *To investigate the challenges that are faced by the NGOs in the execution of their mandate and devise practical remedies for them.*

Research questions

The study explored the following questions:

4. *What contribution do the NGOs have towards poverty alleviation among the youths?*
5. *What are the different activities that the NGOs engage in with the youths?*
6. *What challenges are faced by the NGOs in the execution of their mandate and what practical remedies can be used?*

Methodology

Research design

The design of the study was comparative, descriptive and explanatory so that data was collected objectively, accurately and economically.

The study population

The study population was involved officials from the a few NGOs including their umbrella organizations, government officials (both civil and political), and the local beneficiaries (YOUTHS). This is because such respondents had a stake and a wider understanding of the topic under investigation and capable of providing relevant information.

Data collection methods

These included both primary and secondary methods

Primary methods included:

Interviews

Interviews refer to a face-to-face interaction between the respondent and the researcher or interviewer. Interviews were conducted face to face or using phone calls or via zoom in case it is hard to reach the respondents to collect firsthand information. Both structured and unstructured interviews shall be used to allow probing so as to generate more information from the respondents.

Questionnaires

Both open and closed ended questionnaires were used to generate as much information as possible from the various respondents. These shall be given to the respondents physically or via their emails in case physical contact is hard.

Secondary methods

Documentary review

Comprehensive reviews were done especially of the current NGO Laws and Policies and the proposed Bills to have an in-depth understanding and analysis of the subject matter. Reports from the NGOs and donors as well as government shall also be reviewed. These were accessed via online platforms.

Data collection instruments

These included interview guides, questionnaire guides, recorders, observation guides, books and pens, focus group guides as well as documentary review guides to guide the collection of data. The choice of the instruments was guided by the nature of research and affordability of the researcher.

Sampling techniques and sample size

The researcher interview about 40 respondents who were sampled using different sampling techniques as illustrated below:

<i>Category of respondents</i>	<i>Sample size</i>	<i>Sampling techniques</i>
<i>NGO officials and government officials</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>Purposive sampling</i>
<i>Local beneficiaries/youths.</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>Cluster and stratified sampling</i>

Data analysis

Because the study was primarily qualitative and intended to examine, the data was evaluated primarily qualitatively, though statistics and figures will also be utilized to support the findings. conceptually qualitative analysis, a statistical representation of qualitative data using SPSS, was used to analyze the data in stages(Nelson et al., 2022). This approach was taken so that the responses' ideas and views could be described in full.

RESULTS

Types/forms of decentralization in Bugili municipality local government, in Uganda.

The table 1 showing the different types and forms of decentralization in Bugili municipality local government

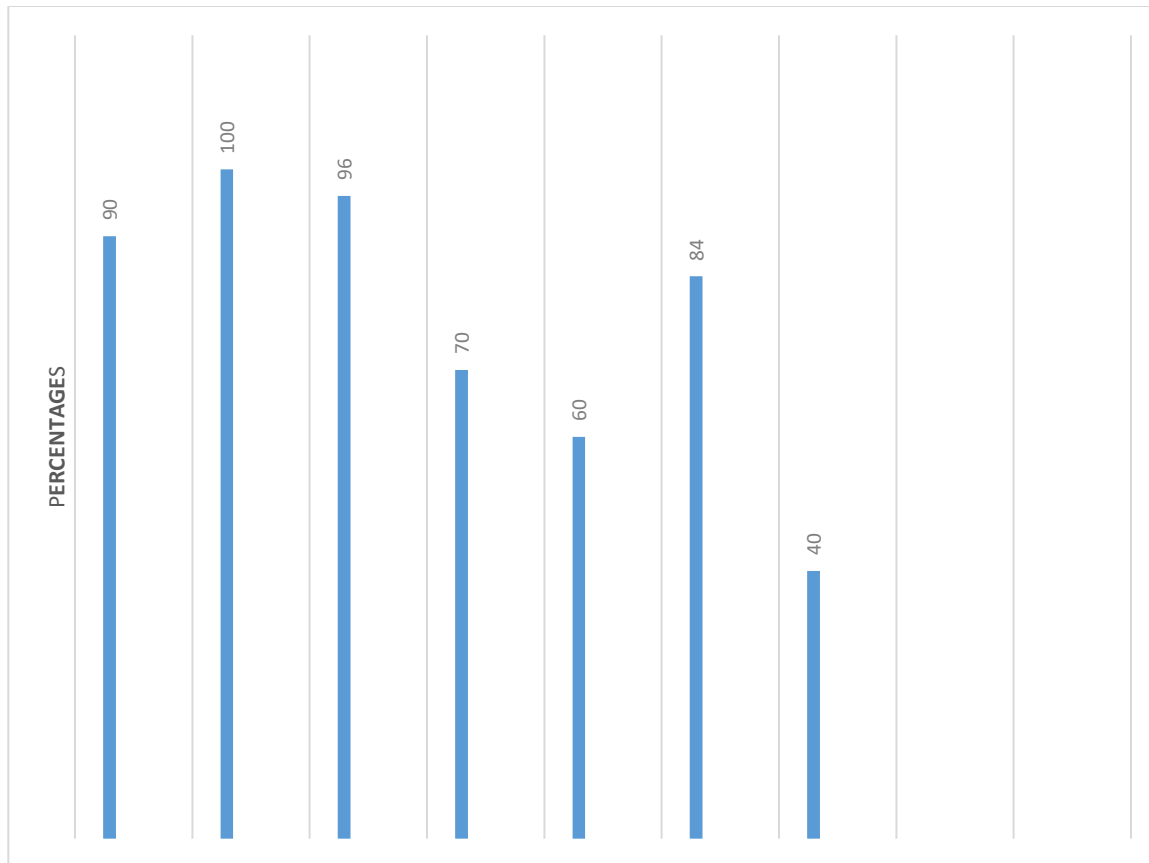
S/no	Type and forms of decentralization	Frequency	Percentage
1	Political decentralization which takes the form devolution	60	70
2	Administrative decentralization which takes the form of delegation, deconcentration and	30	25
3	Fiscal decentration which takes form of grants from central government, loan guarantees, donations and local revenue expenditures	10	05

Source: Survey

According to the aforementioned findings, the decentralization of politics, which takes the form of devolution and accounts for 60% of all centralization in the Bugili municipality municipal government, is followed by decentralization of administration, which takes the form of delegating duties, deconcentration, and privatization.

According to the aforementioned data, the central government provides grants to the local government of Bugili municipality, both unrestricted and subject to conditions. 70% of the division's whole revenue is made up of this. Conditional grants are funds granted to the district to support certain activities, whereas unrestricted grants are funds given to support any activity that the district's officials think appropriate.

Figure 1: Graph showing the responses of the respondents on whether the NGOS have contributed to poverty alleviation in Bugili municipality local government.



People's responses

Source: survey

The graph demonstrates that every participant (100%) is aware that non-governmental groups exist. To reduce poverty, nonprofit organizations collaborate closely with regional administrations. Thus, NGOs are collaborators in development. Service delivery may be positively or negatively impacted by this connection, which may be friendly or unfriendly.

90% of respondents firmly concur that there is a link between the role performed by non-profit organizations and the reduction of poverty in the Bugili municipality local government.

96% of respondents felt that service delivery is impacted if nonprofit organizations do not contribute to society in a positive way. This is so that the gaps can be filled. They are there to fill the void created by the abandoned way of providing services. By influencing service delivery and local residents' quality of living, non-governmental organizations in Bugili municipality local government are playing a very vital role in the sub county's efforts to reduce poverty, according to 70% of participants. This suggests that, generally speaking, there is a strong and direct correlation among the role played by charitable organizations and the reduction of poverty. If we are to enhance the supply of services in the subcounty, then we urgently need effective and productive established laws and regulations that strengthen and integrate this connection.

According to 30% of the participants, the government has not given these businesses much support, which has a negative impact on how well they perform in the subcounty, particularly the community-based ones.

Table 2: The factors that affect NGOs in the execution of their mandate in Bugili municipality local government.

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<i>Financial constraints</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Political interference</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Limited funds</i>	<i>05</i>	<i>30%</i>
<i>Bureaucracy</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Corruption</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>10</i>

<i>Unfavorable government policies and laws</i>	<i>02</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>State hostility</i>	<i>03</i>	<i>05</i>
<i>Inefficient capacity of the staffs</i>	<i>05</i>	<i>05</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: Primary data

From the aforementioned results, it is clear that most participants (80%) unanimously agreed that non-profit organizations in Bugili municipality local government face a lot of additional challenges as they carry out their duty.

20% of the people surveyed concurred that the sub county's efforts to combat poverty are hampered by financial constraints.

30% of respondents strongly agreed that having insufficient resources is the main challenge, making it the biggest obstacle to effectively meeting all of the sub county's needs. 10% concurred that political interference in their positions has caused several projects to be put on hold because different parties have conflicting interests. This will most certainly have a negative impact on public service delivery and make it more difficult for NGOs to achieve their goals.

The results also show that bureaucracy is a problem that hinders non-governmental groups from implementing their various projects.

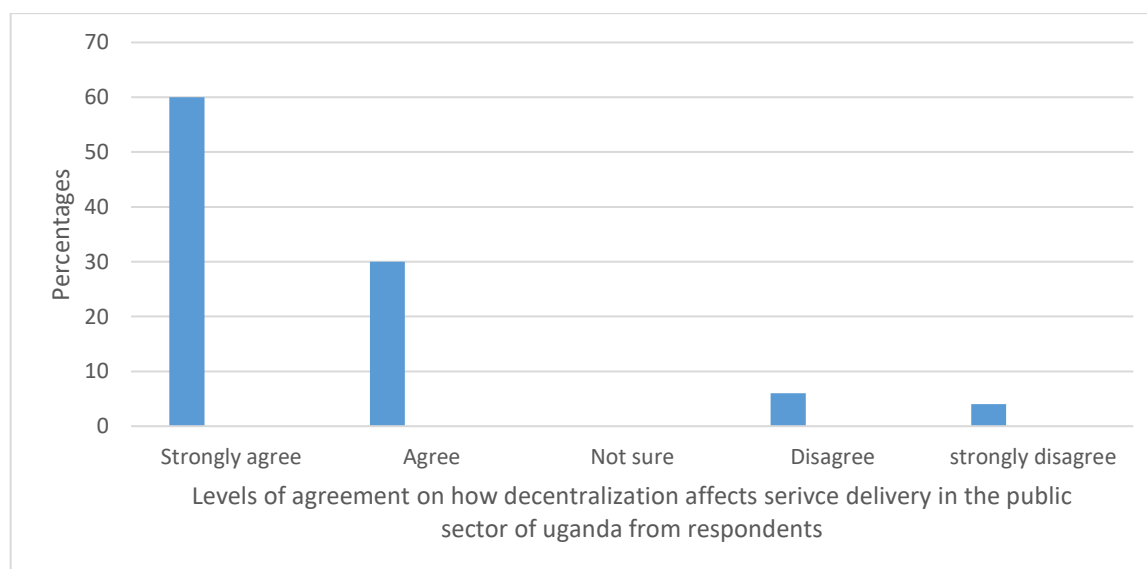
Another issue sapping the department's success is bribery. The division's service delivery is hampered by the numerous corrupt inclinations that officials indulge in.

10% of the respondents cited inadequate citizen participation as another big blow to efficient and effective service delivery in the subcounty. Some residents don't understand the role of NGOs and this affects the activities of NGOs in the subcounty.

Lack of competent capacity of the staffs especially those of the community-based organizations curtails the implementation, monitoring and super visionary responsibilities of the NGOs.

The unfavorable legal environment is another challenge to the NGOs. The 2018 NGO bill restricts the non-governmental organizations to service delivery which is a very big challenge. The 2016 NGO law places them under the supervision of the NGO Bureau which interferes in their responsibilities.

Figure 2: The graph showing whether the role played by NGOs contribute to poverty alleviation or not in municipality local government.



Source: primary data

From the above table, it can be observed that the majority of the respondents strongly agreed (60%) that there is a close correlation between the role played by the non-governmental organizations and poverty alleviation in Uganda.

60% of the respondents agreed, 30% agreed, 0% not sure, 05% disagreed while and 03% strongly disagreed saying that it's just the lack of effective laws and policies to clarify on the responsibilities of the different stakeholders and determine their relationship which is the root cause of the problem of poverty and though the NGOs are present in the area, they may not change much in the community.

Table 3 showing remedies to the factors that affect NGOs in fight against poverty alleviation in Bugili municipality district local government.

Responses	Male	Femal e	Frequenc y	Percentage
Increased funding	20	20	48	40
Elimination of Political interference	2	5	02	15
Having Strong and efficient partnerships	4	4		05
Flattering and leaning of administration to	4	3		10

<i>eliminate bureaucracy</i>				
<i>Improved state and non-state relations</i>	10	6	50	10
<i>Enhanced fight against graft and engaging the all stakeholders</i>	5	4		20

Source: Primary data

The results on the table above show that a 40% percentage of responses was achieved by 20 male and 20 female respondents who believed that other elements, such as greater financing, are the most feasible cure towards strengthening the role of NGOs in poverty alleviation.

Only 2 men and 5 women agreed that the government management's intervention has an impact on the NGO's 15% role in poverty reduction. Eliminating it might thus be the most realistic solution.

Only four men and four women suggested that another way to reduce corruption and inefficiency is to form effective relationships with both state and non-state institutions. This represents just 4% of all submissions. The results shown in the table above also show that 10 men and 6 women agreed that through fostering better ties between the state and non-state actors, the sub county's the provision of services will become more productive and effective, enabling it to achieve its original objectives. This represents 10% of all responses.

The chart above also reveals that five males and four females felt that since their duties are set by the center or central agencies, a lack of autonomy with respect to division hinders their capacity of carrying out the young employment program.

In order for the subcounty to achieve its stated alleviating poverty goals, five men and four women demanded an enhanced fight against corruption. These respondents were picked out of the sample of 40 which indicates 96% of response and only 04% were not accessible. The study reveals that 60% of the respondents were males whereas only 40% of the respondents were females. This has given a fair distribution of responses according to gender indicating limited bias in the selection process.

Table 4 showing the challenges faced by NGOs in the execution of their mandate in Bugili municipality local government.

<i>Response</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
<i>Financial constraints</i>	15	20
<i>Political interference</i>	15	10
<i>Limited funds</i>	05	30%
<i>Bureaucracy</i>	3	10
<i>Corruption</i>	2	10
<i>Unfavorable government policies and laws</i>	02	10
<i>State hostility</i>	03	05
<i>Inefficient capacity of the staffs</i>	05	05
<i>Total</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: Primary data

According to the aforementioned findings, the vast majority of respondents (100%) completely concurred that the non-governmental organizations in Bugili municipality local government have a lot of additional problems as they carry out their purpose.

20% of the people surveyed concurred that the sub county's efforts to combat poverty are hampered by financial constraints.

30% completely concurred that limited funding poses the greatest difficulty, making it the greatest obstacle to the effective funding of every requirement in the subcounty. 10% agreed that political interference in their roles has put a variety of projects on hold because various participants hold varying interests. This will most certainly have a negative impact on public service delivery and make it more difficult for NGOs to achieve their goals.

The results also show that regulation is a problem that hinders non-governmental groups from implementing their various projects.

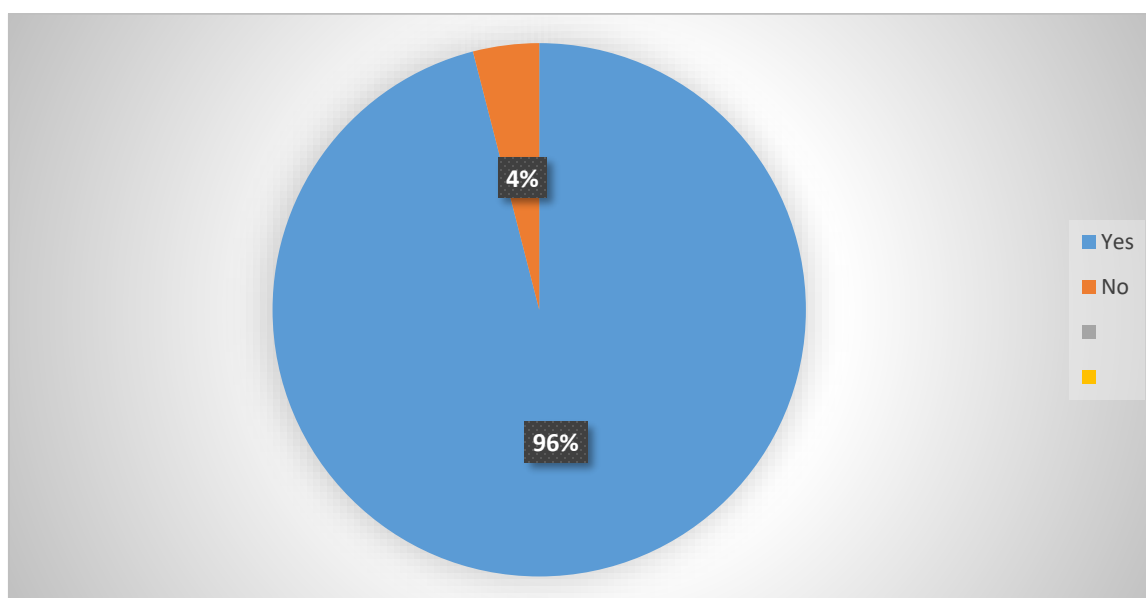
Another issue sapping the division's success is corruption. The division's service delivery is hampered by the numerous corrupt inclinations that officials indulge in.

10% of the participants mentioned a further major barrier to the successful and efficient delivery of services in the subcounty as being insufficient involvement by citizens. Some locals don't comprehend the function of NGOs, which has an impact on their operations in the subcounty.

Staff members, especially those of grassroots efforts groups, lack the necessary expertise.

The unfavorable legal environment is another challenge to the NGOs. The 2018 NGO bill restricts the non-governmental organizations to service delivery which is a very big challenge. The 2016 NGO law places them under the supervision of the NGO Bureau which interferes in their responsibilities.

Figure 3: A pie chart showing the relationship between the role played by the non-governmental organizations and poverty alleviation in Uganda but with a bias in Bugili municipality local government.



According to the results gathered from the pie chart above, 96% of the participants concur that the role played by nonprofit organizations and the reduction of impoverishment in local government are related, as participants in the Bugili municipality local government have shown. Only 4% of the people who took part were unsure. These 4% protested, stating additional reasons such as the fact that government interventions are more effective in their areas than NGOs' attempts, and that they are consequently crediting the reduction of poverty to the government's efforts rather than NGOs in their areas.

Conclusions

That decentralization of power in politics, which takes the form of decentralization in which partially autonomous governing bodies are created and political powers ceded to them, is one of the frequently occurring types of marginalization in Bugili municipality local government in Uganda. Second, there is decentralized administration, whereby local governments are granted authority over the provision of services through delegation.

Recommendations

The government should lobby for enough resources to enable the success of the NGOs since they are taken as partners in development so as to enable successful implementation of their development agenda.

The government should facilitate fully all agencies involved in the municipality for efficient monitoring and supervision including civil society so as to harmonize their efforts and initiatives towards the division's success.

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