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# The Interaction between Non-Governmental Organisations and Marginalized Communities to Build Self-Sustaining Capacity to Transfer, Absorb and use Building Technologies in Indigenous Housing.

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## **Abstract**

Different organisations outside the public and private sectors, such as non governmental organisations (NGOs), are involved in generating, introducing, and promoting capacity building and technology, particularly in marginal areas of less developed countries (Farrington and Biggs, 1990). Non-governmental organizations have become important players in the field of social development, with increased expectations shifting to NGOs as the “Magic bullet” to fix some of the on-going developmental problems of developing countries (Edwards and Fowler, 2002). NGOs use strategies such as capacity building to promote self-reliance. Capacity building is an important strategy for fostering sustainable social, political and economic development. Accordingly, grass root communities are said to be an important section of the community capable of transforming the state and society (Fisher, 1997). Hence, the reason many NGOs work with marginalised communities who have been marginalized by the either the market or deprived of social infrastructure. Previous research to date has tended to focus on NGOs activities in communities. However, little attention has been paid to how such strategies and organisation could fit with the community’s needs, especially in housing which is a major problem in developing countries. This paper proposes that many development initiatives by NGOs to build self-sustaining capacity to transfer, absorb and use building technologies in indigenous housing are hindered by inadequate interaction with the beneficiary communities. This paper gives a synthesis of literature review on the background of NGOs and capacity building as a strategy for self-reliance. The paper offers an in-depth understanding of this phenomenon, which will allow certain questions to be raised regarding the interaction with marginalised communities. This study is important because it adds to existing literature and opens up a whole new debate on NGO/ community interaction. This paper argues that capacity building ought to be incorporated with the needs and culture of the community and special attention paid to participatory process.

*Keywords: Nongovernmental organisation, capacity building, community development, technology transfer*

## Introduction

Literature on development studies has attempted to identify and address the fundamental causes of global poverty (Kremer and Miguel, 2004). The international community recognizes that reducing global poverty is one of the major development challenges of 21st century. The magnitude of global poverty caused the 1995 Social Summit in Copenhagen to agree that each member country should develop ways to reduce extreme poverty and measure progress against some agreed targets. This was followed by a proclamation of the General Assembly of the United Nations in June 2000 to reduce extreme poverty in half by 2015 (Okidegbe, 2001). These attempts to reduce poverty include attempts from development institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). However, some of the approaches from development agencies have been purported not to perform, as it should. This is mainly because the top-down strategies, which are strategies from institutions down to the communities, has been blamed for the past failures of development programmes largely due to the exclusion of the people that the development projects or programmes are designed for (Ukpong, 1993). As a result of the unsuccessful development strategies and a reaction to the top-down process of development processes, the bottom-up approach which seeks the active involvement and participation of communities in the development process was introduced (Craig, 2007, Lewis, 2001, Mequanent, 1998).

The objective of this paper is to identify the roles, responsibilities and scope of work of non-governmental organization and its stakeholders. This will illustrate how these roles and responsibilities of NGO's hinder or enable the effective interaction to build self-sustaining capacity to transfer, absorb and use building technologies in indigenous housing. Figure 1 shows the interaction between NGOs and communities in Nigeria housing project.

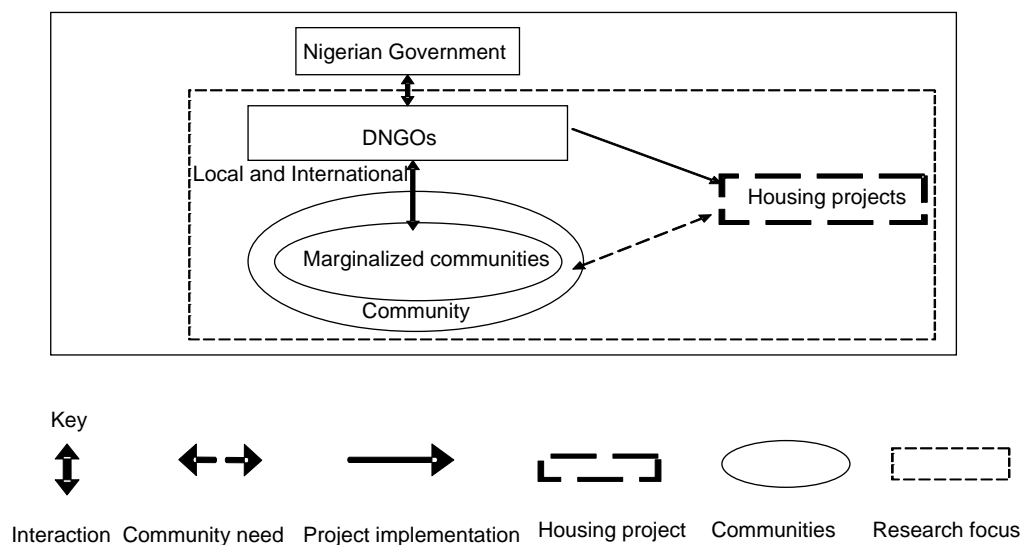


Figure 1.0: The interaction between NGOs and communities in Nigeria housing project

For the purpose of this paper, the NGOs acronym will stand for non-governmental organizations and it is construed to mean independent, non profit, developmental, voluntary organization operating at the local levels that are neither government nor business that are engaged in development and poverty reduction work at local, national and global levels around the world (Lewis, 2001). The definition of technology as adopted in this

research is the means of applying understanding of the natural world to the solution of practical problems and technology transfer as referred in this research is the “intervention” by non governmental organisations with the aim of accelerating the flow of technologies to local communities (De Coninck et al., 2007, Metz et al., 2000). The underpinning point of this definition is flow of know-how from nongovernmental organisation to local communities. Community capacity consists of human, physical, financial and social resources available to a given community that can be mobilised to meet local needs (Kelly and Caputo, 2006). Hence, Smillie’s (2001), definition of capacity building which states that capacity building is a process through which people of a given society are motivated to transform their physical, socio-economic, cultural, political, and spiritual environments for their own well being and the advancement of their society suits this paper.

This paper will limit the scope of the study to only development NGOs operating in marginalised communities in Nigeria. The term marginalised communities as intended in this paper will mean communities that are excluded or not part of the major beneficiary of state facilities either because they are seen as the minority group or for any other reasons. As NGOs activities are numerous, and they are involved in numerous projects and programs, this paper is concerned only with developmental NGOs which are NGOs involved in long term community development work especially in housing projects in marginalised communities in Nigeria. Therefore, the paper will only focus on community-based projects that deal with the construction of houses.

This paper examines NGOs efforts in development through capacity building. It does this through firstly looking at the concept of non-governmental organization and capacity building through appropriate technology transfer as this forms the underpinning foundation in understanding their involvement through community based activities.

## Background of the paper

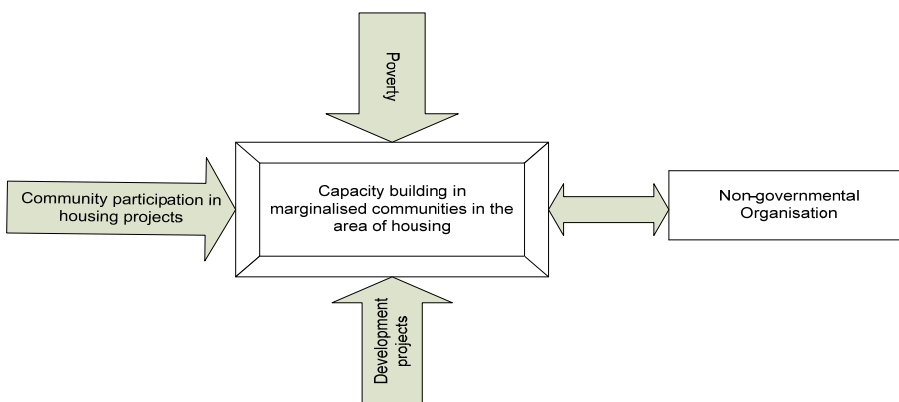


Figure 2: background of the study

Figure 2 summarises the background of the study. The study looks at the interaction of NGOs and the community in capacity building while examining issues such as poverty and the community participation in such development organisation to enable self sustenance in the long run.

Poverty reduction is one of the main objectives of organisations such as the World Bank, and other development institutions and government (Hallerod and Larsson, 2008, Hulme, 2003, Hulme and Shepherd, 2003, Unwin, 2007). The development literature is full of strategies to tackle the fundamental causes of poverty (Cheru and Bradford, 2005, Mabogunje, 2004). Seeking better development outcomes in marginalised communities has underpinned national government, development institutions such as the World Bank and department for international development DFID and many non governmental organisations (NGOS) to proffer solutions to ameliorate the situation (Okidegbe, 2001). The World population is estimated at about 6.0 billion, of which it is said that 54% (3.24 billion) live in rural areas. Of the 6.0 billion people, about 1.2 billion of them are in extreme absolute poverty (Ahmed et al., 2007, Flanagan and Winker, 2006). It is projected that by 2025, over 60% of the world population in 'absolute poverty' would live in rural areas (Okidegbe, 2001). With current development issues, such as an increase in the number of poor in the world especially in developing countries, many development scholars are of the view that developing the capacity of the poor will help in self-reliance rather than depending on external help (Kleemeier, 2000b, Ukpong, 1993). The increasing few success stories of development projects, and lack of government presence in some communities in developing countries especially in African have lead to some donors and national governments to acknowledge NGOs as a means of getting benefits more directly and cheaply to the poor (Korten, 1987).

The immense nature of the poor and marginalised especially in developing countries has lead many development analysts to go back to some development strategies and view were amendments needs to be done. Poverty is considered a crucial problem by international development organisations and agencies such as the World Bank, International monetary fund (IMF) and DNGOs. One major finding by research conducted by Hulme (2003) is that the chronic poor will be the majority of those in deep poverty by 2015 and the poor tend to live in remote rural areas (Hulme, 2003, Sunderlin et al., 2005). Consequently, the poor are more likely to be marginalised because they lack access to the physical, financial or social assets that permit them to live reasonable lives (Hulme, 2003). Many development literatures have examined the issue of marginalisation (Fisher and Sonn, 1999, Fisher, 1997, Luiz, 2006, Nel and Hill, 2008, Nygren, 2005). Marginalisation is a manifest of different factors and can manifest in different facets such as political, economical and social marginalisation (Fisher, 1997). There are different types of marginalisation ranging from economic, intellectual, socio-political and institutional to technological marginalisation (Luiz, 2006). Nel and Hill (2008) purports that marginalisation becomes more obvious where an entire region shows characteristics that cause them to be regarded as marginal, relative to the perceived mainstream.

The area in which this marginalisation manifests is in the area of housing. Housing is so important that it is said that after food, housing is the largest item in a poor family's monthly spending (UN, 1996). Accordingly, housing is important because it is said to be one of man's basic needs (Ajanlekoko., 2001). Housing shortages and poor housing conditions are said to be life threatening and lack of housing or substandard housing are responsible for 10 million deaths worldwide every year (UN, 1996). Homelessness is a problem in developed as well as in developing countries but conditions are said to be worst in developing countries (UN, 1996). The threat of mass homelessness is greatest in some regions because that is where population is growing fastest. It is predicted that by 2015, the 10 largest cities in the world will be in Asia, Latin America and Africa according to the UN Habitat report (UN, 1996).

Accordingly, over the last few years, there has been a proliferation of studies focusing on some development strategies especially in developing countries to deal with the immense issues of housing facing the communities in such countries (Hallerod and Larsson, 2008, Jennings, 2008, Kumar et al., 2007, Mitlin et al., 2007, Nel and Hill, 2008, Werker and Ahmed, 2008). Some development literature have highlighted about the unsustainable nature of some of the development policies purported by development institutions and organisation (Brocklesby and Fisher, 2003, Cooper, 2005, Easterly, 2007, Kremer and Miguel, 2004). Some of these policies, such as increasing capital/ financial resources, are said to be unsustainable because it is not aimed at identifying and tackling the root cause of the problem. With the growing argument that international capital transfers is not necessarily a prerequisite for productive investment in the receiving country (Easterly, 2003, Easterly, 2007, Korten, 1987). There are arguments by authors and development players that rather than transferring financial resources without adequate policies, there is the need to develop both human and institutional capacity in order for communities to utilise resources available to them for sustainable livelihood and reduce dependent on government, charity or international organisations (Korten, 1987, Wubneh, 2003a). This encourages the people to mobilise and manage their resources for their own (Korten, 1987). A remarkable point noted by Chambers (1994b) is that poor people are creative and capable and should do much of their own planning and that outsiders should have roles as conveyors, catalysts and facilitators and finally, the weak and the marginalised can and should be empowered. But a lack of capacity has been cited as a major factor that hinders the implementation of development project (Wubneh, 2003b). Meanwhile, capacity building and technology transfer continue to be key elements in sustainable development (Diamond, 2004, Mitlin, 2001, Mitlin and Satterthwaite, 1996, United Nations, 2005). Apart from initiatives of overseas development assistance directed towards poverty reduction, development organisations have adopted other strategies for development intervention such intervention includes technology transfer and capacity building among others like sustainable livelihood and community development approaches (Brocklesby and Fisher, 2003, Edwards, 1999, Edwards, 2000, Edwards and Fowler, 2002, Fisher, 1998, Fowler, 1992).

One important organisation in development literature that is actively engaged in capacity building is NGO (Sanyal, 2006). There is a general consensus in literature that NGOs are involved and active in development efforts especially in poor countries (Edwards and Fowler, 2002, Koch et al., 2009, Lewis, 2001, Mitlin et al., 2007, Werker and Ahmed, 2008). They work with development agencies including bilateral and multilateral organisations (Werker and Ahmed, 2008). NGOs remain focused in providing goods and services in poor countries and adopting strategies of doing away with learned helplessness where the beneficiary communities become dependent on outside help instead of becoming self sustained (Werker and Ahmed, 2008). However, NGOs are not without criticisms (Tvedt, 1998). The orthodox paradigm that NGOs are an alternative to development and participatory in nature, has also been contested and called into question over the years (Lewis, 2001, Mitlin et al., 2007). NGOs appear to have the same problems of bureaucracy as the state and are criticized for not reaching the poorest people as they have been claimed (Edwards and Hulme, 1996). There are criticisms that NGOs are no more cost effective than the government sector or other sectors (Edwards and Hulme, 1996). NGOs are accused of co-optation of confirming with donors goals, ideology and values (Kowalewski, 2004).

For this reason, literature emphasising NGOs as mechanisms for capacity building and technology transfer raises a range of questions: how is it being done; why is this occurring; and what are the implications of this? What happens after the development project or programme is over and how do the beneficiary communities sustain such programmes? There are different NGOs with different objectives. Some are interested in immediate short-term relief and welfare, some in long-term community development projects, while others are into lobbying and advocacy (Atack, 1999, Edwards and Fowler, 2002, Hilhorst, 2003, Marcussen, 1996). The NGOs of interest to

this research are the developmental NGOs (DNGOs), which are non-governmental organisations committed to long-term social response as well as comprehensive and sustainable initiatives (Lewis, 2001).

With this background in mind, the following section investigates existing literature On NGOs.

### **NGOs and their activities**

This section will focus on why the research is examining non-governmental organisation and arguments for and against non-governmental organisations.

There are two main purposes for this section, first is to set the scene to understand and examine the rationale for NGO presence and activities in developing countries in terms of their impact on development. Secondly to set a foundation on how their activities relate to the development strategies of both capacity building and technology transfer.

### **The concept of NGOs**

*Table 1.0: Definitions of NGOs*

Source (reference)	Definition of NGOs
Lewis, D. (2001)	Independent sector, private voluntary organisations and non-state actors.
Edwards, M. and Fowler, A. (2002)	Third party, serving non-profit based, legally constituted non-state organisations, directly or indirectly reliant on the system of international aid
Atack, I. (1999)	NGOs are non-profit as well as Non-governmental
Eric Werker and Faisal Z. Ahmed (2008)	NGOs as private organizations “characterized primarily by humanitarian or cooperative, rather than commercial, objectives. NGOs pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development” in developing countries. Nongovernmental organizations are one group of players who are active in the efforts of international development and increasing the welfare of poor people in poor countries
Lambell, R., et al. (2008)	Non-government organizations (NGOs) are organizational actors that do not belong to either the government sector or the for-profit/ market sector. Being non-state and non-market, they are often referred to as constituting the ‘third’ sector and are the organizational representatives of ‘civil society’.
Fisher, J. (1998)	The term also has numerous culturally specific meanings. In Western Europe, it generally means non-profit organisations that are active internationally. In the countries of Europe and the former Soviet Union, it tends to mean all charitable and



	non-profit organisations. In the Third World, the term NGO generally refers to organisations involved in development
Charnovitz, S. (1997)	NGOs as groups of individuals organised for numerous reasons that engage human imagination and aspiration. They can be set up to advocate a particular cause, such as human rights, or to carry out programs on the ground, such as disaster relief. They can have memberships ranging from local to global.

It is essential to explore the concept of non-governmental organisations (NGOs). It is also crucial to examine what NGOs do and this can be understood from the exploration of their definition and features. Although varied by different authors, conceptual explorations have leaned to description rather than the definition. The term NGO has been attributed to include independent sector, private voluntary organisations and non-state actors (Lewis, 2001). As shown in Table 1.0, authors have taken care to point to the fact that NGOs activities are diverse and heterogeneous. This is one of the reasons why authors have taken care not to generalise the definition to fit all the different organisations that make up this organisation into one box (Atack, 1999, Edwards and Fowler, 2002, Lewis, 2001). Some NGOs can be large and some can be small. Others can be formal or informal, externally funded or driven by volunteers, charitable or radical or empowerment based (Lewis, 2001). Some authors describe NGOs as private and non governmental (Lewis, 2001). Others purport that the definition stems from the characteristic of NGO is that they are voluntary in nature and that this has a role to play in NGO legitimacy (Lewis, 2001).

Authors such as Lewis (2001; see table 1.0), purports NGOs to be an embodiment of large bureaucratic organisation with some engaged in long-term community development work while others provide short-term emergency relief. According to Fowler (2002), NGOs are third party, serving non-profit based, legally constituted non-state organisations, directly or indirectly reliant on the system of international aid. As Edwards and Hulme (1992) puts it, the term NGOs encompasses an enormous diversity of institutions.

NGOs are based in most countries and there are different terminologies for each type. Northern NGOs (NNGOs) are NGOs based in a developed country that operate internationally, International NGOs (INGOs) or are NGOs based in three or more countries; Southern NGOs are NGOs in the third world countries or developing countries, and many other kinds of non-profit organizations throughout the world (Farrington and Biggs, 1990, Lewis, 2001). The term also has numerous culturally specific meanings. In Western Europe, it generally means non-profit organisations that are active internationally. In the countries of Europe and the former Soviet Union, it tends to mean all charitable and non-profit organisations. In the Third World, the term NGO generally refers to organisations involved in development (Fisher, 1998). NGOs have different significance to players of the political spectrum (Lewis, 2001). Having found a base to understand the concept of NGOs, the following paragraphs will examine their activities in the communities they work in.

## **NGOs operational activities**

*Table 2: NGOs activities*

No	Authors	NGOs operational activities
1	Lewis (2001), Edwards and Hulme (1992), Fisher (1997)	Service delivery and provision including welfare services to those who cannot be reached through markets
2	Fisher, 1997, Edwards and Hulme 1992	Community self-help initiatives and development projects
3	Weiss and Gordenker (1996), Willetts, P. (2002)	Fund raising
4	Edwards and Hulme (1995)	Vehicles of democratisation which include protecting human rights and opening avenues for communication and participation in development projects
5	Fisher, 1997, Edwards and Hulme 1992	Implementing development projects, facilitating democratisations, lobbying and networking

This section of the literature examines the roles NGOs play in development, what they do, and why they have grown in number. As shown in table 2, scholars such as Lewis (2001), Edwards and Hulme (1992), Fisher (1997) have emphasized the benefits NGOs bring to the poor communities they serve such as the delivery of new or improved services and attempts to alleviate poverty in some sections of the communities which are in need. Ironically, it is almost apparent that some authors like Tvedt (2006) have criticised NGOs as a deterrent to development in developing countries.

The growth in the numbers and scope of NGOs around the world has been widely published by NGO researchers (Lewis, 2001, Tvedt, 2006, Edwards and Hulme, 1992, Fisher, 1997). In replicating the words of authors such as Fisher (1997) and Domeisen (2006), they attribute the evidence of the growth of NGOs to include the increased numbers of officially registered associations, the number of NGOs represented at international conferences, the increased amount of development funding channelled through NGOs, the attention paid to collaboration with NGOs by the World Bank and other international agencies, the highly published successes of lobbying efforts of NGO coalitions. NGOs are active in a vast variety of activities from community self-help initiatives, welfare services to political pressure groups. As NGOs have grown in numbers, so have their activities increased especially in fund raising (Willetts, 2002). As African governments have demonstrated limited capacity to raise the living standards in general and provide essential services, NGOs have taken advantage of this gap to provide basic services to the poor. As shown in figure 2, literatures have provided some insight on the services NGOs provide services such as relief and welfare services, implementing development projects, facilitating democratisations, lobbying and networking (Fisher, 1997, Edwards and Hulme 1992).

NGOs have been purported to have comparative advantage over government, donor agencies and private firms (Bratton, 1989, Marcussen, 1996, Edwards and Hulme, 1992). NGO activities include the delivery of new or improved services to communities which are in need, raise awareness to issues neglected by those in authority, provide emergency assistance, engage in enlightenment programmes, and different community development projects and programmes among others (Edwards and Hulme, 1996, Fisher, 1997, Lewis, 2001).

There are numerous arguments in development and NGO literature as to why NGOs are in a better position than government agencies to elicit people's participation and buttress grassroots level initiatives (Koenraad, 1987, Atack, 1999, Bebbington, 1995), yet the expertise and manpower required for effective self help promotion, especially in the economic field, are still underestimated.

### **NGO major roles**

There are two main roles NGO plays: the service role and educational role (Lewis, 2001). The delivery of services plays an important role to NGO budgets and their basis for support from a wide range of donors. Such services include technical advice, resources for relief, development and other purposes. Operational NGOs are said to be numerous and have the easiest fundraising task (Weiss and Gordenker, 1996). Most NGOs provide some services either to individuals, their members, other organisations or other sectors.

Educational and advocacy NGOs seek primarily to influence citizens educate populations and mobilise public opinion about the requirement for fundamental change in the global order. This may be likened to the logic of forming new policies, better decisions to help reinforce various norms promoted by intergovernmental organisations through public education campaigns (Lewis, 2001). The logic is to get responses to problems that require government commitment to combat (Weiss and Gordenker, 1996).

### **Importance of NGOs**

*Table 3: Importance of NGOs*

No	Authors	Importance of NGOs
1	Edwards and Hulme, (1992), Scarborough, (2000)	Economic (This includes funding causes that will be economically beneficial to the communities or those who benefit from NGO activities)
2	Gray and Bebbington, (2006)  Funk, (2006)  Craig (2007)	Political (NGOs are more cost effective than their government or public organisation counterparts in reaching the poor communities)  NGOs have made contributions to development programmes and development agencies support NGOs as agents of political, economic and social change  Empowering civil society by linking local initiative back into national and structural change
3	Unerman and O'dwyer, 2006	Social (This includes delivering services to the poor and needy)
4	Gemmill and Bamidele-Izu, 2002	Environmentally (they have identified and addressed fundamental causes of global environmental problems,
5	Kowalewski, (2004)	Legally (Networking with other experts such as meteorologists, physicians, biologists, economists, and other professionals make it

		easier and more reliable to put some agendas such as global warming into the treaty table).
6	Lewis, D. (2001)	Organisational (building capacity and training with other organisations)

NGOs are increasingly moving into areas of service provision that the state is lacking in providing as shown in table 3. Government still play its part but sometimes subcontract the provision of these services to NGOs (Unerman and O'dwyer, 2006). Like many literatures have purported NGOs fill in the gaps where the government counterpart have reduced funding of certain activities for the welfare of its citizen (Edwards and Hulme, 1992, Gemmill and Bamidele-Izu, 2002, Scarbrough, 2000). NGOs are involved in a wide variety of activities and their importance is demonstrated in table 3. There are NGOs involved in development projects; others are involved in delivering aid in “emergency” situations, such as famine relief, earthquake rescue services and medical aid while others are involved in provision of goods and services to the poor and needy (Unerman and O'dwyer, 2006). These provisions could be to developing or even developed countries and can be in local regions or big countries.

NGOs are said to be important because they are more cost effective than their government or public organisation counterparts (Gray and Bebbington, 2006). There is the lack of trust and belief in developing country and even donor countries towards government and NGOs seems to be the better alternative because they can deliver and reach the very poor (Gray and Bebbington, 2006).

During the period when the development discourse was at its peak, Non governmental organizations (NGOs) came to be seen as one of the “important players/ actors” in this development discourse (Korten, 1987, Mitlin et al., 2007). NGOs have gained success and popularity due to some of the successful outcomes of development projects they have embarked on and on the other hand, the failure of overseas development assistance and other developmental organizations to identify and address fundamental causes of global poverty (Wubneh, 2003a), including failed projects and programs in developing countries, have given NGOs an upper hand and are some of the reasons NGOs are lauded as they are linked to what Lewis (2001: 18) termed “people centered development”. “People centered” development is attributed to NGOs because of the role they play in empowering civil society by linking local initiative back into national and structural change as illustrated in figure 2 (Craig, 2007).

NGOs are recognised as being vital to the successful realisation of development policies and projects (Edwards and Hulme, 1996, Mitlin, 1998). The significant factor being that NGOs are found every where in the world from developed countries to developing countries. The indicator of this can be seen in development and NGO literature on the growth of NGOs (Edwards and Fowler, 2002, Fisher, 1997, Lewis, 2001). The growth in the numbers and scope of NGOs around the world has been widely published by NGO literature (Edwards and Hulme, 1992, Fisher, 1997, Lewis, 2001, Tvedt, 1998). Subsequently, their roles, activities and impacts have been lauded (Atack, 1999, Bebbington and Riddell, 1995, Fisher, 1997, Hilhorst, 2003, Lewis, 2001) as well as criticized (Tvedt, 1998). The large presence of NGOs is an indication of the support they receive from donors to the local communities they work with (Atack, 1999, Bebbington, 1995, Bebbington and Riddell, 1995, Edwards, 1992, Fisher, 1997). Three main reasons appear consistent in NGO literature as to the reasons for the proliferation of NGOs all over the world.

NGOs have made some contributions to development programmes and development agencies support NGOs as agents of political, economic and social change (Funk, 2006). They have raised awareness, monitor compliance with treaties, and help shape policies (Kowalewski, 2004). NGOs are viewed by many donor agencies as more efficient and cost-effective service providers than their government counterparts, giving better value for money and in reaching the poor (Edwards and Hulme, 1996). This assumption is justified by funds channelled from multi-lateral donors such as World Bank, and the United Nations and Bi-lateral donors such as the UK department for international development (DFID). Bilateral assistance channelled through NGOs to the third world countries has seen an increase over the years. It is reported that the European Union has over £80 million which is available to southern NGOs, in 1993, official development assistance (ODA) to Canadian NGOs reached 70 percent while in 1994, Swedish NGOs received 85 percent of their funding from official sources (Hudock, 1999). As will later be seen in the literature on the impacts of NGOs, NGOs have contributed immensely to World issues. They have demonstrated against injustice as in the case of movement against sweatshops, environmental damage, and human rights abuses (Kowalewski, 2004).

The most important aspect of NGOs is networking which allows experts to share empirical and normative concerns which they do through reports, conferences, journal papers, and media appearances (Kowalewski, 2004). According to Kowalewski, (2004) one such networking event brought together meteorologists, physicians, biologists, economists, and other professionals to put the issue of global warming into the treaty table (see table 3). Apart from global warming issues, they are playing more active role in the regional and national economy and are increasingly working on trade projects (Domeisen, 2006).

Development associations and NGOs date back to several decades before colonisation in many parts of Africa (Okafor, 2005). These NGOs were predominantly centred on social and welfare services, particularly within health and education and were often church or missionary based (Michael, 2004). Colonial era provided NGO with formal state recognition, mainly because of the services provided by the missionaries. NGOs became more visible mostly during the post-independent era. Post- independent Nigeria was one of military intervention, coups, civil war and Military governance (Osaghae, 1998). There have been eight military coups in the country in supposedly attempt to "correct" the ills of the nation (Awe, 1999). The military rule failed to direct the country through political, economic and social path for growth (Awe, 1999). In the years following independence, instead of the state to provide arena for economic growth and innovation, political struggle became what many politician wanted to grab as a means to enrichment (Osaghae, 1998).

NGOs have been known for many successes but nevertheless they have been criticised and do have their own drawbacks including been reputed to having the same problems of bureaucracy that the state are accused of. There is also the case of not reaching the poor people as they claim they do (Edwards and Hulme, 1996). The popular participatory approach that they have been reputed to have been criticised by authors such as Zaidi, (1999). There are criticisms that NGOs are not more cost effective than the government sector or other sectors (Edwards and Hulme, 1996). There has been criticisms of NGOs as fostering neo-liberalism (Funk, 2006), NGOs are accused of cooptation of confirming with donors goals, ideology and values (Kowalewski, 2004). This is further evidenced due to the fact that donors such as the World Bank, the UN, major donor states and the most influential NGOs have introduced and implemented most dominant development strategies and thinking on the global arena (Tvedt, 2006). There are criticisms that NGOs are funded by western governments and transnational institutions to promote western imperial agendas and interests (Funk, 2006, Tvedt, 2006). While many bilateral, multilateral and international development agencies have lauded the presence of NGOs, some national

government for example, Cuba and Zimbabwe see them as agents of destabilization (Kowalewski, 2004). The criticism of NGOs according to Tvedt (2006) is that they do exist because of funding and without the funding many southern NGOs will collapse. He also criticised the misconception that NGOs exist because of state failure but the truth being that NGOs have been financed by donor states. Aspects of NGOs roles, activities and existence criticised include the fact that NGO sector has grown too corporate and professionalised, NGO legitimacy, lack accountability and as was previously the normative discourse that aid that is given to governments achieves little has also changed over the years to that of state involvement in development process (Lewis and Opoku-Mensah, 2006).

### Popularity and Growth of Developmental NGOs

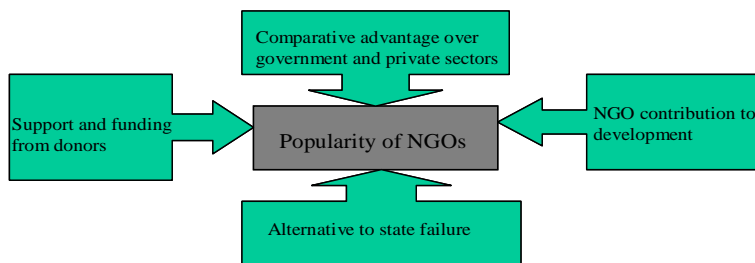


Figure 2: Popularity of NGOs

There are three main reasons that appear consistent in NGO literature as to the reasons for the proliferation of NGOs all over the world. The growth in the numbers and scope of NGOs around the world has been widely published by NGO researchers (Lewis, 2001, Tvedt, 2006, Edwards and Hulme, 1992, Fisher, 1997). Authors such as Fisher (1997) and Domeisen (2006), attribute the evidence of the growth of NGOs to include the increased numbers of officially registered associations, the number of NGOs represented at international conferences, the increased amount of development funding channelled through NGOs, the attention paid to collaboration with NGOs by the World Bank and other international agencies, the highly published successes of lobbying efforts of NGO coalitions. As NGOs have grown in numbers so have their activities increased. More than 2,150 NGOs have consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council, and 1,550 are associated with the UN Department of Public Information (Human development 2002 UNDP report). It has been estimated that there are at least 20,000 in Thailand (Dr. Vichit-Vadakan., 2001).

The first common argument provided for the rise of NGOs is that they are an alternative to state failure (Fisher 1997, Lewis 2001). NGOs are in a better position than government agencies to elicit people’s participation and strengthen grassroots level initiatives (Koenraad, 1987, Atack, 1999, Bebbington, 1995). Concurring with the above ideology, Hilhorst (2003) asserts that NGOs are important to neoliberal policies because they can provide services that states are no longer able to deliver. This was enhanced in the era of government roll back during the structural adjustment policy introduced by World Bank (Gary, 1996).

The second reason prominent in NGO literature is the fact that NGOs have comparative advantage over other sectors (Lewis, 2003). Authors such as Fisher (1997) and Atack (1999) provide reasons why NGOs have comparative advantage to their government counterparts. Accordingly, NGOs are not burdened with large bureaucracies, they are relatively flexible and open to innovation, more effective and faster at implementing development efforts, and able to identify and respond to grass roots needs.

The third reason for NGO growth and popularity lies in the amount of funding available and channelled through bi-lateral, multi-lateral, government and other development institution. It is noted that NGOs are second only to bilateral governmental donors in terms of assistance. They are believed to represent the second largest source of development and relief assistance. This is said to be largely as a result of the increasing volume of official funding that is being channelled through NGOs to developing countries (Weiss and Gordenker, 1996). In the last 20 years there has been a rapid growth of financial transfers by and through NGOs from the developed to developing countries. Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) estimated this flow at \$8.3 billion in 1992 (Weiss and Gordenker, 1996). In 1994 it is stated that over 10% of public development aid (\$8 billion) was channelled through NGOs. About 25% of US assistance is channelled through NGOs (Weiss and Gordenker, 1996).

Lewis (2001) explains the reason for NGOs popularity in development. The author emphasizes four main reasons. The first reason was what he termed the theoretical 'impasse' within developmental thinking. This, he ascertains, is as a result of an alternative idea sought in place of macro theories of both mainstreams "modernization and radical "dependency" which was said to have lost its appeal. The second reason, he said, was due to the perception of the poor performance of government in the fight against poverty. The third reason he attributed to the way NGOs have contributed to development. As traditional economic and political concerns of development have shifted in the 1990s to include debates about the importance of environment, gender and social development, a growing number of NGO presence and policy 'voice' has become apparent.

### **NGO and its legitimacy in marginalised communities**

From the above functions of NGOs, the next question that needs answering is where they get their legitimacy from and who gives them the authorisation to act? This section will start with defining what legitimacy is and identifies the different sources of legitimacy. Normally, legitimacy is a term applied to the state but according to Atack (1999) the term can also be relevant to organizations or political actors within civil society, such as development NGOs. Definition of the term will help streamline NGO legitimacy from other organisational legitimacy.

Slim (2002) defined legitimacy as the particular status with which an organisation is imbued and perceived at any given time that enables it to operate with the general consent of peoples, governments, companies and non-state groups around the world' NGO or human rights group's legitimacy is both derived and generated. It is derived from morality and law (Slim, 2002).

According to Korton (1990) NGOs derive their legitimacy on what he called "social legitimacy" because NGOs main existence is to serve the needs of other persons who are not themselves members of their organization.

Atack (1999) purports that there are four criteria of development NGO legitimacy. These are representativeness and distinctive values (formal-procedural), and effectiveness and empowerment (substantive-purposive).

In connection with the state, two different types of legitimacy criteria can be provided: formal-procedural and substantive-purposive. Formal-procedural criteria apply to the principles according to which the state operates, while substantive-purposive criteria concern the results it is able to achieve. The function of state authority is to define and provide procedures by which the widest range of goods can be pursued, while preserving social order (Atack, 1999). Substantive-purposive criteria tend to be concerned with the pursuit of common or shared goods, or the actual results of state authority beyond its formal conformity to established or accepted procedures or laws. Like states, NGOs claim to promote public or common goods or values, such as development. Unlike states, however, NGOs are private and autonomous in form rather than public and definable in terms of popular consent or sovereignty (Atack, 1999, Slim, 2002).

### Sources of NGO legitimacy

Slim (2002) identified several sources of NGO legitimacy which can be seen below:

- Moral and Legal Sources: NGOs gain legitimacy simply from claiming their legality within international law and by they're being law-abiding. An NGO or human rights group's wider legitimacy is morally derived.
- Tangible: An organisation's most tangible form of legitimacy probably comes in the form of direct support from the people it seeks to help, its members, its supporters and its admirers. Fisher (1997) further purports that Their acceptance as legitimate NGOs depends on their connections to or usefulness for local constituencies. Also, an organisation's legitimacy is also generated from its knowledge and its relationships with the communities that benefit from their projects. This legitimacy is also generated by good performance. Hence as NGO's performance and effectiveness gets noticed, they earn their legitimacy through the outcomes of their projects.

### NGO Impact

Table 4: NGO Impacts

Authors	Impact
Kowalewski, 2004, Edwards, M.and Hulme, D. (1995)	Political (compliance with world treaty, policy agenda and official aid)
Edwards, M.and Hulme, D. (1995)	Social (popular participation, flexibility and innovation)
Edwards, M.and Hulme, D. (1995)	Economic (cost-effective, sustainability)



NGOs have been purported to have made political, social and economic impact but according to Edwards and Hulme (1995), such impacts are based on small samples and often restricted to agencies working in a particular sector (Edwards and Hulme, 1995). Table 4 illustrates the different areas where NGOs have made impacts. The orthodox paradigm in development literature is that NGOs are an alternative to development (Mitlin et al., 2007, Tvedt, 1998). However, this and other views such as the participatory nature of NGOs has been contested and called to question over the years. Relevant literature in many developments and NGO literature counter old orthodox belief that NGOs are the answer to alternative development (Funk, 2006, Mitlin et al., 2007, Tvedt, 2006, Zaidi, 1999). NGOs have been reputed to having the same problems of bureaucracy that the state are accused of and they are criticised that they do not reach the poor people as they have claimed to (Edwards and Hulme, 1996). Many development and NGO scholars counter old normative belief that they are the answer to alternative development (Funk, 2006, Mitlin et al., 2007, Tvedt, 2006, Zaidi, 1999). NGOs have been reputed to having the same problems of bureaucracy that the state are accused of and they are criticised that they do not reach the poor people as they have been claimed to (Edwards and Hulme, 1996). It has also been argued that NGOs are not as participatory as was the norm (Zaidi, 1999). There are criticisms that NGOs are not more cost effective than the government sector or other sectors (Edwards and Hulme, 1996). There has been criticisms of NGOs as fostering neo-liberalism (Funk, 2006), NGOs are accused of cooptation of confirming with donors goals, ideology and values (Kowalewski, 2004). This is further evidenced due to the fact that donors such as the World Bank, the UN, major donor states and the most influential NGOs have introduced and implemented most dominant development strategies and thinking on the global arena (Tvedt, 2006). There are criticisms that NGOs are funded by western governments and transnational institutions to promote western imperial agendas and interests (Funk, 2006, Tvedt, 2006). While many bilateral, multilateral and international development agencies have lauded the presence of NGOs, some national government for example, Cuba and Zimbabwe see them as agents of destabilization (Kowalewski, 2004). The criticism of NGOs according to Tvedt (2006) is that they do exist because of funding and without the funding many southern NGOs will collapse. He also criticised the misconception that NGOs exist because of state failure but the truth being that NGOs have been financed by donor states. Aspects of NGOs roles, activities and existence criticised include the fact that NGO sector has grown too corporate and professionalised, NGO legitimacy, lack accountability and as was previously the normative discourse that aid that is given to governments achieves little has also changed over the years to that of state involvement in development process (Lewis and Opoku-Mensah, 2006).

On the other end, in as much as their numerous criticisms, NGOs exist and have increased over the years especially in developing countries (Edwards and Hulme, 1996). NGOs have made some contributions to development programmes and development agencies support NGOs as agents of political, economic and social change (Funk, 2006). They have raised awareness, monitor compliance with treaties, and help shape policies as shown in table 4 (Kowalewski, 2004). NGOs are viewed by many donor agencies as more efficient and cost-effective service providers than their government counterparts, giving better value for money and in reaching the poor (Edwards and Hulme, 1996). This assumption is justified by funds channelled from multi-lateral donors such as World Bank, and the United Nations and Bi-lateral donors such as the UK department for international development (DFID). Bilateral assistance channelled through NGOs to the third world countries has seen an increase over the years. It is reported that the European Union has over £80 million which is available to southern NGOs, in 1993, official development assistance (ODA) to Canadian NGOs reached 70 percent while in 1994, Swedish NGOs received 85 percent of their funding from official sources (Hudock, 1999).

The most important aspect of NGOs are their networking which allows experts to share empirical and normative concerns which they do through reports, conferences, journal papers, and media appearances (Kowalewski, 2004). According to Kowalewski, (2004) one of such networking brought together meteorologists, physicians,

biologists, economists, and other professionals to put the issue of global warming into the treaty table. Apart from global warming issues, they are playing more active role in the regional and national economy and are increasingly working on trade projects (Domeisen, 2006).

The development discourse purports and shows the important roles NGOs play in development but at the same time their good will maybe a burden to development (Fisher, 1997). The point being made by Fisher (1997) is that what may seem as a help to one person may be harmful for the other person. The impact of NGOs in Nigeria can be assessed in two ways; by examining the positive and negative impacts.

Positively, NGOs have affected and touched the lives of many in different parts of the world (Edwards and Hulme, 1996). In Nigeria, NGOs have helped people with disabilities by bringing awareness to their plights, they have provided home to orphans and the displaced and helped bring awareness on HIV/AIDS and other harmful practices like female genital mutilation (Poku, & Whiteside, 2004). NGOs like the Orangi pilot projects, BRAC have provided some services more cost effectively than government (Edwards and Hulme, 1996).

The research will assess the negative impact from economic and political perspectives. NGOs can be biased and use development activities to promote their own goals. Burnell (1991) asserts that NGOs sometimes use the development projects as a channel for the interest of NGOs rather than the interest of the people. The issue of 'learned helplessness' arises from NGOs behaviours in the manner of implementing projects without adequate capacity building or training (Ukpong, 1993). The mentality of the indigenous people become that of dependency on external help rather than being self reliant (Michener, 1998). There are arguments that aid affects the economy of the recipient country by affecting the overall economic development of the country (Easterly, 2003, Easterly, 2007). According to Kindleberger and Herrick (1977), economic development includes improvements in material welfare, especially for persons with the lowest incomes, so when NGOs intentionally or unintentional rush to the aid of those dying of hunger, they are helping them to live for a while but are not actually tackling the fundamental problem.

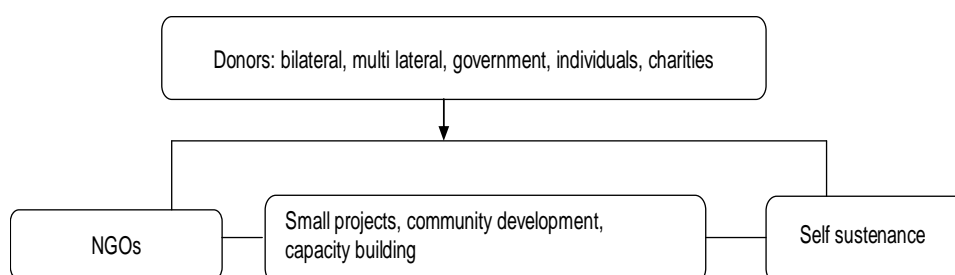
Unplanned or poorly devised development project could add to already existing problem, take for instance poorly planned projects (Khwaja, 2007). This can be seen in the case of the Kamberis in Nigeria (Aradeon, 1981). A project was implemented to duplicate the traditional house of the Kamberis and in the process of upgrading the materials and methods of construction created a bigger problem for this set of indigenes. There was problem with the spaces, which was out of scale with this new design. Therefore, what used to be a single-family structure became compounds for several families. The community could not cope with the new way of life and the project ended up not being successful because of the poorly planned project (Aradeon, 1981). This totally became a new and unpleasant phenomenon (Prussin, 1974). Another example of unplanned or poorly devised development project was mentioned in Ukpong (1993) where a building project was implemented without consulting the community and at the end the community could not understand the reason for such a project and deserted the recreational building erected for the community.

It is also pertinent that the issues of accountability, co-optation, dependency and ownership be looked at to understand NGOs effects, impact and development in Africa. These features affect NGOs functionality for example, when NGOs move closer to big donors they become partners in the drive for the ideologies and policies of their donors (Ebrahim, 2003, Kilby, 2006, Slim, 2002, Unerman and O'dwyer, 2006). Instead of focusing on development, they get over bureaucratized, over professionalized and money focused (Igoe and

Kelsall, 2005). Southern NGOs especially in Africa remain dependent on Northern donors whose funding; policies and procedures are rooted in development processes that may not be acceptable in beneficiary communities (Lewis, 2001). Furthermore, NGOs start working for donors and trustees rather than for beneficiaries (Werker and Ahmed, 2008). This is called co-optation, as NGOs become implementers of donors' policies and lose their voice and vision (Edwards, 2000).

According to Hulme and Edwards (1997), co-optation is unlikely to contribute to progressive change. They argue that if NGOs move too close to donors there is the danger and threat they will help external interests in spreading or carrying out their ideas about development which may be detrimental to beneficiary communities. According to Hulme and Edwards (1997), co-optation starts with accepting Aid monies, then progresses to adopting donor techniques which may likely lead to NGO abandonment of their original vision.

### **NGOs in community development projects**



*Figure 3: NGOs in community development projects*

Figure 3 gives a summary of NGOs in community development projects. However, it is important to start with the definition of terms in order to understand how NGOs work in communities. The term community is scrutinised in order to understand the boundaries that make up a community and its development. The term “community” has been defined in several ways. Kelly and Caputo (2006) defined community as a group of people with face-to-face contact, a sense of belonging together and common interests and values. This establishes that there is the aspect of personal contact and a feeling of belonging for a common and agreed purpose. Community development can be defined as a broad based change for the benefit of all community members (Kelly and Caputo, 2006). It includes building the capacity of the communities which involves skills, and a knowledge base (Craig, 2007). As defined by the Budapest Declaration (2004), community development is a way of strengthening civil society by including their perspectives in development projects. Community development also strengthens the capacity of people through adequate interaction with both their community groups, and external organisations that work with them (Craig, 2007).

According to Craig (2007), community development is a means to an end. Community development has been brought about due to the failure of the top-bottom approach which will clearly lead to discovering appropriate

solutions for community developmental issues (Craig, 2007). The author also asserts that community development is a goal on its own; which is the development of the community. One of the many approaches for this is the issue of sustainability and capacity building. Although capacity building encompasses human, scientific, technological, organizational, institutional and resource capabilities (Craig, 2007). One of the ways to achieve empowerment through community development has been said to be the transfer of technology (Craig, 2007). The reason for this is that technology has been shown to play an important role in the growth of economies (Radosevic., 1999). It has been written that technology accounts for 90 percent or more of domestic productivity growth for most countries (Keller, Sept. 2004).

NGOs are engaged in development activities aimed at enhancing livelihood and reducing poverty through capacity building and other poverty alleviation activities in disadvantaged areas not only in Nigeria but also in other developing countries (Werker and Ahmed, 2008). They work in different communities, providing goods and services (Lewis, 2001). Community in this research is therefore scrutinised in order to understand the boundaries and extent of NGO effects and impacts. Community has been defined in several ways. Kelly and Caputo (2006) defined community as a group of people with face-to-face contact, a sense of belonging together and common interests and values. This establishes that there is the aspect of personal contact and a feeling of belonging for a common and agreed purpose. Hence to succeed in any project, the local communities need to feel that they have some kind of ownership whether in the form of drafting plans or helping out with the implementation process (Mitlin, 1998).

While NGOs have been said to play important roles in development such as implementers, catalysts and partners (Lewis, 2001), non governmental organisations are said to continually strengthen and empower civil society at organisational level, sectoral level and societal level (Lewis, 2001, Mitlin, 1998). There have been debates as to what is meant by strengthening or empowering civil society. Lewis (2001) points out that it is embedded in NGO service delivery role. This point is confirmed by Korten (1987) in his description of NGOs generation. Two important terms emanate from NGO services delivery; empowerment and participation. Here, NGOs Participation is used as a tool to get the people involved in activities that concerns them (Lewis, 2001). Therefore, NGOs are said to empower civil society through developing skills, capacity and the transfer of knowledge or technology so as the community will be sustainable when the time scale of the projects is finished (Lewis, 2001, Mitlin, 1998).

Accordingly, NGO service delivery is an important aspect mentioned in NGO literature (Edwards and Fowler, 2002, Korten, 1987, Lewis, 2001). Historical analysis of previous research on NGOs has typically focussed on the different activities of NGOs mainly focusing on NGOs as service providers (Atack, 1999, Edwards, 1999, Fisher 1997) and how they are a basic form of popular participation and empowerment (Bebbington and Farrington, 1993,). They are said to bring in their expertise to development projects and programmes and their ability to contribute to the development process has been lauded (Weiss& Gordenker, 1996, Fisher 1997, Domeisen, 2006, Bebbington, 1995, Charnovitz, 1997, Craig 2007, Devine 2006). Current literature still reiterates some of these factors in NGOs development process (Bebbington et al., 2007, Werker and Ahmed, 2008).

Thus, community based activities permeates into NGOs activities (Bebbington, 1997, Bebbington and Thiele, 1993, Edwards, 1999, Edwards and Fowler, 2002, Fisher, 1997, Fowler, 1992). Through community based activities, NGOs are said to build the capacity for the sustainability of the communities they work with (Mitlin and Satterthwaite, 1996). Linking activities of building local capability and the ability to respond to challenges

does this. This has been the case for many whose objectives and focus is on the need for sustainable development (Korten, 1987). This is also due to the emphasis placed on the need to focus on the people to mobilise and manage their own local resources in order to reduce dependency on external sources (Wubneh, 2003, Kremer and Miguel, 2004, Kaimowitz, 1993). Given their relatively close proximity to the poor, NGOs are ideally seen to be able to build capacity on the individual level, which can translate, to other levels. In terms of the capacity to innovate by NGOs, there is academic evidence that individual NGOs have been effective in some fields of service delivery (Edwards and Hulme, 1996). This is justified by the roles NGOs have played in pioneering new planning methodologies particularly participatory rural appraisal.

Furthermore, one of the factors given prominence in literature is that NGOs remain focused not only in delivering goods and services in disadvantaged areas but also in involving the communities in participation in their affairs (Werker and Ahmed, 2008). It has also become increasingly apparent that certain prerequisites such as participation of both the local communities and government institutions are necessary for the successful implementation of development programmes (Gow and Vansant, 1983, Kleemeier, 2000b, Michener, 1998, Stiglitz, 2002). An examination of recent literature on NGO capacity building through the participation and empowerment approach has not been used for explication of the concept of interactions between local communities and NGOs in rural development instead it has been used to highlight aspects of NGO discipline. The concept of participation and capacity building does play an important role in the NGO literature and has been explicably used in NGO literature (Catley and Leyland, 2001, Chambers, 1994a, Cornwall, 2003, Kleemeier, 2000b, Michener, 1998, Sheng, 1987, Stiglitz, 2002). Accordingly, community based sustainable programmes are said to be successful because citizens influence the outcomes of service delivery through their direct participation because the parties involved interact to come to a common consensus (Whitaker, 1980).

While such notions as building and strengthening local and institutional capacity became the norm of many NGOs objectives and literature (Chambers, 1994c, Eade, 1997, Edwards and Fowler, 2002) the failure to effectively sustain such outcomes from these approaches became further apparent. This is because the underpinning root cause of underdevelopment cannot be understood in isolation and therefore, highlights the need for strategies of development process to include beneficiaries of the development process (Ukpong, 1993). In the case of capacity building, NGOs have been involved in building the capacity of local communities (Bebbington, 1993b, Farrington and Biggs, 1990, Mitlin, 1998).

Community empowerment is the one term used in NGO literature to describe their roles and activities in development activities (Korten, 1987, Mitlin et al., 2007). Community empowerment has a major linkage to capacity building, knowledge/technology transfer, and sustainability (Bebbington et al., 2007, Laverack, 2005). Laverack (2005) asserts that empowerment allows individuals and groups to better organise and mobilise themselves towards social and political change. However, community empowerment is a process that is central to community development (Laverack, 2005). Among other important variables, community development promotes social inclusion. Most importantly as Laverack (2005) has stated, it is rooted in the concept of empowerment (Laverack, 2005, Powell and Geoghegan, 2006). NGOs are engaged in community based activities that range from capacity building of local communities to being self sufficient, researching developmental issues, development of affordable and low cost irrigation technology, and pilot projects for improving livelihoods while also encouraging and engaging in technical cooperation from direct interventions such as the construction of rainwater harvesting tanks on rooftops of schools to providing clean drinking water for children in communities with acute water shortage (UN, 2005).

As shown in figure 3, one of the many consensus in NGO literature is that they help improve the livelihood of the poor and other issues experienced in these communities and that considerable resources are being focussed on community development projects (Lewis, 2001). Community development can be defined as a broad based change for the benefit of all community members (Kelly and Caputo, 2006). It includes building the capacity of the communities which involves skills, and a knowledge base (Craig, 2007).

### **NGOs involvement in community development**

During the period when the development discourse was at its peak, non governmental organizations (NGOs) came to be seen as one of the “important players/ actors” in development discourse (Korten, 1987, Mitlin et al., 2007). This can clearly be seen in development literature explaining the reason for NGO popularity in comparison to other institutions of development such as the government, financial institution, and educational institution. The failure of overseas development assistance and other developmental organizations to identify and address fundamental causes of global poverty, failed projects and programs in developing countries, are some of the reasons NGOs are lauded as they are linked to what Lewis (2001: 18) termed “people centered development”. “People centered” development is attributed to NGOs because of the role they play in empowering civil society by linking local initiative back into national and structural change (Craig, 2007).

NGOs became recognised as being vital to the successful realisation of development policies and projects (Edwards and Hulme, 1996, Mitlin, 1998). The significant factor is that NGOs are found everywhere in the world from developed countries to developing countries. The indicator of this can be seen in development and NGO literature on the growth of NGOs (Edwards and Fowler, 2002, Fisher, 1997, Lewis, 2001). The growth in the numbers and scope of NGOs around the world has been widely published by NGO literature (Edwards and Hulme, 1992, Fisher, 1997, Lewis, 2001, Tvedt, 1998). Subsequently, their roles, activities and impacts have been lauded (Atack, 1999, Bebbington and Riddell, 1995, Fisher, 1997, Hilhorst, 2003, Lewis, 2001) as well as criticized (Tvedt, 1998). The large presence of NGOs is an indication of the support they receive from donors to the local communities they work with (Atack, 1999, Bebbington, 1995, Bebbington and Riddell, 1995, Edwards, 1992, Fisher, 1997). Three main reasons appear consistent in NGO literature as to the reasons for the proliferation of NGOs all over the world.

It is noted that NGOs are second only to bilateral governmental donors in terms of assistance (Donini, 1995). They are believed to represent the second largest source of development and relief assistance (Donini, 1995). This is said to be largely as the result of the increasing volume of official funding that is being channelled through NGOs to developing countries (Weiss and Gordenker, 1996). In the last 20 years there has been a rapid growth of financial transfers by and through NGOs from the developed to developing countries. Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) estimated this flow at \$8.3 billion in 1992 (Weiss and Gordenker, 1996). In 1994 it is stated that over 10% of public development aid (\$8 billion) was channelled through NGOs. About 25% of US assistance is channelled through NGOs (Weiss and Gordenker, 1996).

### **NGOs and capacity building**

After several decades of economic crises in developing countries especially in Africa (Wubneh, 2003a), the donor community shifted focus from providing aid to the government to channelling aid through another

organisation known as the Non governmental organisation (NGO). The reason being, that NGOs have comparative advantage over government, donor agencies and private firms (Bratton, 1989, Edwards and Hulme, 1992, Marcussen, 1996). Several NGO literature have mentioned their capacity to reach the poor even in remote areas; their capacity to promote local participation and to implement projects in direct collaboration with target beneficiary groups; capacity to operate on low costs; capacity to be innovative, experimental, adaptive and flexible; and capacity to strengthen local institutions/organisations; to empower marginal groups (Bebbington and Thiele, 1993, Charnovitz, 1997, Edwards and Hulme, 1995, Farrington and Biggs, 1990, Fisher, 1997, Mitlin, 1998).

Capacity building has been around for some years and accordingly has evolved as new ideologies established (Young, 2006). Capacity building approach in development involves identifying the constraints that people experience in realising their basic rights and finding appropriate vehicles through which to strengthen their ability to overcome the causes of exclusion and suffering (Eade, 1997). The concept of capacity building was associated with achieving economic stability and growth in developing countries emphasising not only on institutional building but also technology development and transfer (Harrow, 2001). Capacity building is said to strengthen communities as well as to address “social exclusion” (Diamond, 2004). In capacity building, elements such as community capacity are important (Honadle and Hannah, 1982). Community capacity does not exist in a vacuum, it consists of human, physical, financial and social resources available to a given community than can be mobilised to meet local needs (Grindle and Hilderbrand, 1995, McGuire et al., 1994). To foster community development, a community has to have the capacity to mobilise the resources required for them to identify and respond to their own needs (Diamond, 2004). The purpose of community capacity building is to foster conditions that strengthens the characteristics of communities which in future enables them to be self reliant (Kelly and Caputo, 2006).

Some authors such as Potter and Brough (2004), purported that the term capacity building has become somewhat of a cliché. To authors such as Eade (1997), capacity building is not an activity that should be undertaken in isolation. The author purports that understanding both the environment and capacities of the poor and marginalised are also crucial, as sometimes even the poor do not know they possess many capacities. This brings the aspect that capacity can be enhanced or strengthened as Smillie (2001) purported.

### **Benefits of Capacity Building**

Literature in capacity building and technology transfer has emphasized on the fact that these two elements are critical factors in achieving growth (Rivers, 2002). A central component of this evolves around the fact that capacity building and technology transfer remains a powerful mechanism to provide local communities with self sustaining capacity that are appropriate to transform and compliment existing way of life. Some of the benefit of capacity building and technology transfer include: Employment, reduced crime, empowered communities, increase in the standard of living, poverty reduction and possible the diversification of the economy.

### **Conditions for Appropriate Capacity Building**

Conditions necessary for effective capacity building include political, economic, and cultural conditions. Economic development scholars such as Adam Smith proposed that if governments confined themselves to providing national defence, maintaining order, administering justice, and educating the populace and refrained from placing restraints on commerce, both internally and internationally, economic growth would occur naturally as a consequence. Smith stressed the importance of the division of labour. That is the increase in the productive capabilities that follow when each gainfully employed individual specializes in a relatively narrow set of activities, attaining expertise and minimizing the amount of time spent shifting from one task to a quite different one (Scherer, 1999). Hence, government policies can hinder or promote effective capacity building.

Capability: this is an important condition for capacity building as skills and know how determine the success building existing community capacity (Martin and Pavitt, 1993). These capabilities are a necessity before the full, dynamic benefits from capacity building can be realized. As purported by Martin and Pavitt (1993) existing capabilities can be strengthened by seeking out and acquiring capacity from existing capabilities and may then build on these capabilities to introduce more significant technical changes.

Cultural factor: Culture plays an important role in capacity building. For capacity building to be successful, the different cultures of the beneficiary communities have to be taken into consideration. When the culture of the people are neglected, the success of the project is compromised (Aradeon, 1981). For example, Aradeon (1981) described a situation where the cultural perspectives of a community were neglected and the project became a failure. It was a housing project in rural Kamberi. The plan was to duplicate the traditional house forms of the Kamberis, in the process upgrading the materials and method of construction. Because so many elements such as the space, upgrade in technology, and capacity, the Kamberis deserted the newly built houses and went back to their indigenous houses. The new technology used in building their new houses was different from the grass roof used in their traditional houses. Their new challenge became solving problems such as repairing and replacing cracked asbestos roofing sheets, forcing them to seek professional expertise from outside their cultural surroundings (Aradeon, 1981). From the little success story of this project, it can be equally right to assert that there was little participatory process involving the communities to have a say in the planning and implementation of the project.

### **NGOs and capacity building in marginalised communities**

The importance of understanding the application of capacity building and technology transfer through non-governmental organisation is paramount to the successful implementation of development projects or policies around the world and especially in developing countries. Technologies used to construct affordable housing are utilised by NGOs such as habitat for humanities. Technology such as cement-stabilized bricks and blocks, fibre concrete roofing (FCR) tiles, cement-stabilized laterite blocks used for the construction of walls without using mortar except at the first course layer are already being utilised by the Nigerian construction firms (Olotuah, 2002). However, in the grass-root communities where they lack such construction companies, NGOs are providing homes for local communities with their participation (Choguill, 1996, Majale, 2004, Rakodi, 1989). Many Nigerian communities use building earth (Olotuah, 2002). Adobe Alliance which is another NGO that is involved in building houses in poor communities who transfers the technology of building Nubian adobe vaults and domes through workshops, lectures and small community building projects. The ancient roofing system provides a means for low income populations to build their own homes at low cost by eliminating the need for expensive sheet metal or wood, while benefiting the environment by reducing the need for industrial material and the expense of both their manufacture and their transportation. Also by not using wood they contribute to the



safeguard of forests ([www.adobealliance.org](http://www.adobealliance.org)). Another NGO, American Sudanese partnership (ASP) is involved in transferring building technologies to poor communities but they use a different strategy by transferring technology to engineers and architects in the communities rather than the community members. The general plan is to teach NGO engineers and architects that are working in poor communities, the building technique that Nader Khalili developed and intended for the poor. The long-term intent is to teach the engineers and architects in Darfur and the other poor regions to rebuild their burned houses using this technique ([www.americansudanesepartnerships.org](http://www.americansudanesepartnerships.org)).

### **NGO, Community development and participation**

The advantage the communities have in this is the participatory approach employed. Participatory approach gives locals the opportunity to be involved in projects that concerns them. It could take the form of project planning, housing design and construction (Kennedy et al., 2008). The approach enables communities to undertake building work themselves according to their preferences and requirements. An advantage of this may be seen in the strengthening of local building capacities and local requirements being placed according to community or individual wishes (Chambers, 1994a, Chambers, 1994c, Cohen and Uphoff, 1980, Shrum, 2000). Bebbington, & Farrington, (1993) have written extensively on the role of NGOs and technology transfer. Even though the scale of the technology transferred is limited by their small size and limited coverage. An example of this is the post-tsunami reconstruction project with locals involved in their own projects; consideration is given to their culture, climate, and traditional knowledge.

A considerable amount of literature has been published on community participation in development literature (Cohen and Uphoff, 1980, Kleemeier, 2000b, Kleemeier, 2000a, Michener, 1998, Ngowi and Mselle, 1998, Sheng, 1989, Stiglitz, 2002). Participation has become an important approach used in development studies. Several literatures in development studies have suggested that Participation ensures that the communities are empowered and indigenous knowledge is accommodated in development project (Shrum, 2000). Accordingly, participation implies that the development project or initiative has the backing of the communities (1995). In accordance to this, Mitlin and Thompson (Catley and Leyland, 2001, Mitlin and Thompson, 1995, Osti, 2004) suggests that participation in development is more of a strategy aimed at empowering local communities as well as reducing external support. Participatory approaches are a combination of guiding principles and sets of interactive techniques, which seek to empower communities by giving them greater control over development process while they participate in development programmes (Sheng, 1989, Stiglitz, 2002). Participation in development projects is said to be an important component for the success of development programmes in developing countries (Choguill, 1996). Community participation may be thought of as an instrument of empowerment (Sheng, 1987). Community participation, by definition to authors such as Sheng (1987), implies a bottom-up approach and support for initiatives at the grass-roots level (Chambers, 1994b).

### **History of participation**

This section starts with brief historical review of participatory approaches in rural development. One practical set of approaches, which has coalesced, evolved and spread in the early 1990s bears the label Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) (Chambers, 1994b). This has been described as a growing family of approaches and methods to enable local (rural or urban) people to express, enhance, share and analyze their knowledge of life and conditions, to plan and to act (Ngowi and Mselle, 1998).

PRA has many sources. The most direct is rapid rural appraisal (RRA) from which it has evolved. RRA itself began as a response in the late 1970s and early 1980s to the biased perceptions derived from rural development tourism (Chambers, 1994). Participatory approaches have largely been within two sectors, agriculture and rural development, and public health. Within agriculture and rural development, these approaches are associated with the term “Rapid Rural Appraisal” (RRA) and within the public health sector “Rapid Assessment Procedure” (RAP) (Chambers, 1994a, Chambers, 1994b)

### **Objective of community participation**

Community participation is said to be an instrument of empowerment (Bebbington et al., 2007, Laverack, 2005). Community empowerment has a major linkage to capacity building (Laverack, 2005). Therefore, empowerment is said to be a process rather than an activity. This process involves personal, interpersonal, or political power so that individuals can take actions to improve their life situations. The process of community empowerment involves allowing members to identify and define their own needs, increasing the skills of its members to advocate for their needs, connecting members with needed resources (material and non material), helping members negotiate complex bureaucratic and political systems, and increasing the capacity of members to be self-reliant (Fisher, 1997, Laverack, 2005).

Laverack (2005) asserts that empowerment allows individuals and groups to better organise and mobilise themselves towards social and political change. However, community empowerment is a process that is central to community development (Laverack, 2005, Powell and Geoghegan, 2006). Among other important variables, community development promotes social inclusion. Most importantly as Laverack (2005) has stated, it is rooted in the concept of empowerment (Ngowi and Mselle, 1998). Michener (1998) calls this type of participation the ‘people centered’ participation. This type of participation allows local needs to be met, empowers the community through enhancing their capacity and raising collective consciousness.

Community participation has a direct linkage to building beneficiary capacity in relation to a project (Ngowi and Mselle, 1998). Therefore, the communities benefit in terms of enhancing their capacity through the participation in development projects. Hence the main goal of participation is not only to empower the communities but also to enable communities to be self sustained through strengthening their capacities (Cornwall, 2003, Laverack, 2005).

Community participation contributes to increased project effectiveness (Ngowi and Mselle, 1998). It is believed that with the interaction of the communities and the development agencies proffer smoothness and effectiveness in development projects because of the mutual understanding. This is the type of participation Michener (1998) termed the “planner centered” benefits. This type of participation concentrates on the administrative and financial efficiency. Hence from the planners view, the more communities participate actively in project planning and implementation, the more the more they are committed to the projects success. Therefore, participation facilitates acceptance of communities to externally promoted policies and strategies (Michener, 1998).

Another objective of community participation is the costs effectiveness it proffers (Catley and Leyland, 2001). The communities sometimes contribute in terms of labour and this may come cheaper than hiring professionals. Michener (1998) purports that in terms of cost effectiveness, it is not just the use of local labour that contributes to lowering costs but also the indigenous community's knowledge can be exploited for the benefit of the projects. Financial contributions can lower the implementation costs as asserted by Michener (1998).

### **Types of community participation**

There are different classifications of community participation by different scholars (Michener, 1998). Some authors have classified the types to relate to the importance of external help and beneficiaries while others have classified participation types to include the different interests of stakeholders. Catley and Leyland, (2001) identified seven types of community participation. This is seen in table 5.

*Table 5: Types of community participation (Catley and Leyland, 2001)*

No	Type of participation	Description
1	Manipulation participation	Community participation is questionable because of the representation of the people by officials who are not elected.
2	Passive Participation	Communities participate by being told what has been decided or what has already happened.
3	Participation by consultation	External agents decide community problem and communities are consulted or answer any questions that arise.
4	Participation for material incentives	Community participate by contributing resources such as labour in return for material resources.
5	Functional participation	Community participation is seen as a means to achieve project goals. Community participation in decision-making is only after external agents make major decisions.
6	Interactive participation	People participate in joint analysis, development of action plans and strengthening local institutions
7	Self-mobilisation	Participation by using initiatives and people develop contacts with external institutions for needed resources and technical advice.

Table 5 demonstrates the various types of participation and how communities participate in each type. Each type of participation is important in development projects and can have both advantages and disadvantages in development projects. Community participation is divided into three main stages which are participation in planning, implementation and evaluation (Ngowi and Mselle, 1998).

Cohen and Uphoff (1980) go in depth to examine who participates in development projects and how the participation occurs. Table 6 illustrates their classification.

Table 6: Basics of participation (Cohen and Uphoff, 1980)

Kinds of participation	Participation in decision-making Participation in implementation Participation in benefits Participation in evaluation
Who participates	Local residents Local leaders Government personnel Foreign personnel
How is participation occurring	Basis of participation Form of participation Extent of participation Effect of participation

In reference to table 6, participation is geared towards empowering communities to improve their way of life. Furthermore, the advantage the communities have in this is the participatory approach employed. Participatory approach gives locals the opportunity to be involved in projects that concerns them. It could take the form of project planning, housing design and construction (Spaling and Vroom, 2007). The approach enables communities to undertake building work themselves according to their preferences and requirements. An advantage of this may be seen in the strengthening of local building capacities and local requirements being placed according to community or individual wishes (Kennedy et al., 2008). Bebbington, & Farrington, (1993) have written extensively on the role of NGOs and technology transfer. Even though the scale of the technology transferred is limited by their small size and limited coverage, according to Bebbington, & Farrington, (1993), some NGOs have developed institutional and methodological innovations to facilitate the spread of technologies, such as farmer-to-farmer dissemination. Further more, among the academic NGOs, alternative proposals for agricultural development has been developed by NGOs accordingly some NGOs have generated resource management technologies among other technologies (Bebbington, 1993b).

There is a general consensus in NGO literature that NGOs are involved and active in development efforts especially in poor countries (Edwards and Fowler, 2002, Lewis, 2001, Mitlin et al., 2007, Werker and Ahmed, 2008). They work with development agencies including bilateral and multilateral organisations in order to provide for disadvantage communities or individuals. NGOs remain focused in providing goods and services in

poor countries and adopting strategies of eliminating learned helplessness where the beneficiary communities become dependent on outside help instead of becoming self sustained (Werker and Ahmed, 2008). NGOs have been outsourcing more of their development delivery to NGOs. From this there is a concurrent failure to demonstrate the success of this and its effects on the beneficiary communities (Bebbington, 1997). Werker and Ahmed purport that NGOs are innovative in coming up with better ways of providing goods and services but fail to mention if such innovative ways are also used to build the capacity of the communities. NGOs are said to be project implementers, service deliverers (Mitlin et al., 2007). Therefore, participation from the communities is important for the success of their roles in community development. But there have been criticisms in project participation. Such criticisms are that projects do have a time frame and therefore cannot be permanently ongoing or without end. In addition to this, even NGOs as organisations have a life cycles (Avina, 1993). As noted by Ukponk, most funds go to projects rather than training the beneficiary communities and what happens to beneficiary communities after the conclusion of the projects remains unknown. Terminology used in NGO literature such as community participation, capacity building, and empowerment leaves the reader in the dark as to the supposed outcome of such approaches (Bebbington et al., 2007). What capacity is developed, what the community participation achieved remains unknown in literature (Lewis, 2001).

Common criticism emanating from literature is that there is an omission of the value been added to the beneficiary communities despite literature focusing NGO efforts on community development projects and sustainable communities. Also there is a grey area with little explanation of the interaction between NGOs and the beneficiary communities. But in their roles as implementers and catalysts, there have been major contribution not just in the area of capacity building and participation but also in technology transfer (Bebbington, 1993a, Koch et al., 2009).

### **Non governmental organisations as channels of technology transfer**

The process of technology transfer to developing countries is increasingly being defined as the process whereby knowledge in some form changes hands from a person or organisation who possesses it to another individual or organisation (Mohammed., 2000). Technology transfer happens through a network of individuals, between university scientists and engineers, firms R&D personnel, organisation to organisation, movement of people (Gopalakrishnan and Santoro, 2004). Increasingly, the movement of development activities through NGOs have grown in the last few years. The concept of technology transfer varies in a number of ways depending on the author's theoretical and historical approach. The definition of technology can take different forms. Some may argue that technology encompasses products, processes and managerial methods (Radosevic, 1999). The classical and neo classical theories view technology as embodied in a product or process (Mohammed, 2000). Some attribute technology to some kind of blue print or information easily available to the producer or consumer (Radosevic, 1999). For the economists, the importance of technological change is crucial to economic growth (Mohammed, 2000). The economists define technology focusing on production and design, the sociologists view technology as a design for instrumental actions that reduces the uncertainty of cause effect relationships involved in achieving a desired outcome (Bozeman, 2000). They prescribe that technology should be defined as a "particular social process of relating things, signs, and humans in order to cause controlled results, instead of only by its physical aspects and the ramifications (Rammert, 1997).

One approach looks at the concept as an overall cultural change. For the economic historian the concept maybe either too narrow or broad, some economists have made cultural approach central to their theory of development

(Stewart, 1977). Another approach views technology as relating merely to changes in artefact, another approach adds to the physical objects, labour and managerial skills (Bozeman, 2000). Others view technology not only as having physical objects but also as socio-technological; a phenomenon, which takes into account cultural, social and psychological, processes in addition (Spencer and Woroniak, 1967). From the above insinuation, technology is a process and change is an inherent attribute that is taken into account, as cultural, social and psychological processes are dynamic in nature. Because technology is a process, any technological changes trigger a series of actions (Bozeman, 2000). For a balanced situation, adjustments need to be made to re-establish an equilibrium situation. The importance of technological change in the promotion of economic growth has been duly recognised by economist. To classical economists such as Adam Smith and Milton Friedman, they view technology as a continuous process of advance (Mohammed, 2000).

In the views of authors such as Gopalakrishnan and Santoro (2004), they state technology is more explicit and codified. According to the authors, technology refers to new tools, methodologies, processes and products as such is a mechanism that is evaluated on its ability to produce desired outcomes in an economical mode. The authors further assert that technology includes production, processes and computer hardware. The authors in differentiating between technology transfer and knowledge transfer advocate that technology focuses on the “how” while technology transfer tend to be more specific and explicit and as a result, technology transfer works better with the interaction of empowered personnel as such, transfer happens through a dense network of different components which in turn create a “community of practice” (Gopalakrishnan and Santoro, 2004).

However, Miles (1995) defines technology as the means which we apply our understanding of the natural world to the solution of practical problems. It is the combination of hardware (building plants and equipment) as well as software (skills knowledge experience etc) (Miles, 1995).

With respect to technology transfer, it has been defined in many ways to include product-embodied, process-embodied or personnel-embodied (Guan J.C et al., 2006). In other words the transfer object could be process oriented, tools, know-how and skills (Masten and Hartmann, 2000). It has also been viewed differently from different schools of thoughts and also defined according to the discipline of the research or the purpose of the research one is interested in (Bozeman, 2000). The economists tend to focus on movement of variables that relate to production and design, while the sociologists tend to connect technology transfer to innovation, and the anthropologist views technology transfer within the context of cultural change and the ways in which technology affects change (Bozeman, 2000). In the same light as different schools of thoughts, some authors (Schon, 1967; Solo and Rogers, 1972), describe technology transfer as a process based on a movement of technology from one place to another which can be either from one organisation to another, or from a university to an organisation or from one country to another. The table 7 gives the definition of technology transfer by different authors.

*Table 7: Definition of technology transfer*

No	Author	Definition of technology transfer
1	Mohammed, S. (2000)	The process of technology transfer to developing countries is increasingly being defined as the process whereby knowledge in some form changes hands from a person or organisation who possesses it to

		another individual or organisation.
2	Gopalakrishnan, 2004	Technology transfer happens through a network of individuals, between university scientists and engineers, firms R&D personnel, organisation to organisation, movement of people.
3	Schon, (1967), Solo and Rogers, (1972)	Technology transfer as a process based on a movement of technology from one place to another which can be either from one organisation to another or from a university to an organisation or from one country to another.
4	Lee, S., Y. (1994)	“Intervention” by government and Non governmental organisation with the aim of accelerating the flow of technologies from developed world to developing countries.
5	Masten and Hartmann (2000)	Many important transfers to developing countries include not only machinery and equipment but also technological capabilities.
6	Klauss, R. (2000)	The transfer of technology is an intercultural process where the content of the introduced technology has to be transformed, rather than simply transferred, and must link up with the local technology, knowledge base, and social-cultural value system so that it can be made to “fit” and become institutionalized in the adoptive environment.
7.	Guan J.C, et al. (2006)	Technology transfer suggests the movement of technology from one place to another, for example, from one organization to another, from a university to an organization, or from one country to another.

As table 7 has illustrated, the process of technology transfer can be lengthy, complex, and dynamic and in reference to developing countries, technology transfer needs to achieve three main objectives which are the introduction of new techniques by means of investment of new plants, the improvement of existing techniques and the generation of new knowledge (Guan J.C et al., 2006). Therefore, indicating that capacity building is a necessity to successful technology transfer. Hence, when one talks of capacity building, there is always a linkage with the term technology transfer because there is the need to transfer basic technology as well as build local capacities. The importance of understanding the application of technology transfer through development organisation is paramount to the successful implementation of development projects or policies around the world and especially in developing countries.

### **NGOs actions and barriers to self-sustaining technology transfer**

NGOs are increasingly involved with international technology transfer. This is seen by the close working relationship between government, research and development institutions. For example, OXFAM is a non-governmental organisation and are increasingly collaborating with local businesses. Habitat for humanity is another NGO engaged in community projects that sees the people involved with the actual construction of houses. In playing their role through community based projects they are indirectly contributing to technology transfer to help poor community members build more sustainable livelihoods.

SPARC (the Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres) is an NGOs working on housing issues. Transfer of technology is done through mapping, pilot projects, and housing training. This allows the communities to build their skills (Patel and Mitlin, 2001). The communities are actually engaged in the design and construction of facilities. They also use exchange programmes to demonstrate their skills and share experiences. For example, the Orangi Pilot Project–Research and Training Institute (OPP–RTI) is an NGO working in the informal settlements of Orangi Town in Karachi, and in other cities in Pakistan.

NGOs play an important role as vehicles of technology transfer to developing countries (Farrington and Biggs, 1990). Through their community-based activities in developing countries and especially in Africa, they can impart technical and managerial skills from which local communities can benefit from. This can be seen as in the case of South America and Asia (Bebbington, 1993b, Farrington and Biggs, 1990).

Bebbington, & Farrington, (1993) have written extensively on the role of NGOs and technology transfer. Even though the scale of the technology transferred is limited by their small size and limited coverage, according to Bebbington, & Farrington, (1993), some NGOs have developed institutional and methodological innovations to facilitate the spread of technologies, such as farmer-to-farmer dissemination. Further more, among the academic NGOs, alternative proposals for agricultural development has been developed by NGOs accordingly some NGOs have generated resource management technologies among other technologies (Bebbington, 1993b).

There is a general assumption that the transfer of technology implies the transfer of machines, products and processes and it is often omitted that that the transfer of technology goes hand in hand with the transfer of skills (Boye et al., 1988). Farrington (1990) to this effect asserts that the successful use of the participatory approach by NGOs to identify problems faced by local communities help in introducing acceptable technology. He also states that NGOs have played an important role in developing new technologies and methods through this participatory approach suitable to the needs of the local communities. This conforms to the fact that technology can be transferred without transferring the appropriate skills and in the case of Nigeria the Ajaokuta steel industry is a good example.

Technologies used to construct affordable housing are utilised by NGOs such as Habitat for humanities. Technology such as cement-stabilized bricks and blocks, fibre concrete roofing (FCR) tiles, cement-stabilized laterite blocks used for the construction of walls without using mortar except at the first course layer are already being utilised by the Nigerian construction firms (Olotuah, 2002). However, in the grass-root communities where they lack such construction companies, NGOs are providing homes for local communities with their participation (Choguill, 1996, Majale, 2004, Rakodi, 1989). Many Nigerian communities use building earth (Olotuah, 2002). Adobe Alliance which is another NGO that is involved in building houses in poor communities who transfers the technology of building Nubian adobe vaults and domes through workshops, lectures and small community building projects. The ancient roofing system provides a means for low income populations to build their own homes at low cost by eliminating the need for expensive sheet metal or wood, while benefiting the environment by reducing the need for industrial material and the expense of both their manufacture and their transportation. Also by not using wood they contribute to the safeguard of forests ([www.adobealliance.org](http://www.adobealliance.org)). Another NGO, ASP is involved in transferring building technologies to poor communities but they use a different strategy by transferring technology to engineers and architects in the communities rather than the community members. The general plan is to teach NGO engineers and architects that are working in poor



communities, the building technique that Nader Khalili developed and intended for the poor. The long-term intent is to teach the engineers and architects in Darfur and the other poor regions to rebuild their burned houses using this technique ([www.americansudanesepartnerships.org](http://www.americansudanesepartnerships.org)).

Capacity building is a central feature of development assistance as have been purported in different development literature (Vries, 1967). Since the transfer of technology is not only transferring the hardware on its own but also transferring the know-how, there are challenges involved in the transfer of technology especially in developing countries.

- Financial challenge: technology transfer does cost a lot of money. Technology transfer is expensive; hence the need to have adequate funds to enhance the transfer. Technology transfer costs are the costs of transmitting and absorbing all the relevant knowledge (Teece, 2003). Since most non-governmental organisations depend on funding from external sources, sometimes to get adequate finance for technology transfer may seem difficult.
- Human resources: challenges include the well being of the active age group. HIV/Aids, abject poverty, or capacity to absorb technology can hamper technology transfer.
- Policy: technology transfer can be hampered by policy as national policy not encouraging the importance of technology may not provide an effective and efficient environment to promote technology transfer.
- Capability: Absorptive capacity needs to be taken into consideration when assessing transferring technology to developing countries. The initial educational background and other trainings acquired are necessary to take into consideration for the success of technology transfer and absorption. As noted by (Akubue, 2002), absorptive capacity is an essential means of fostering sustainable socio economic development
- Social barrier: a very fundamental problem that can be faced transferring technology is the cultural problem. It is pertinent to define culture in order to comprehend the argument that cultural barrier is an important factor in technology transfer in developing countries. Culture as defined by Britannica concise encyclopaedia is the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behaviour that is both a result of and integral to the human capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations. This definition captures the essence of culture itself, which incorporates human knowledge, belief and behaviour consisting of different aspects of socialisation. Kedia & Bhagat, (1988) argued that process embodied and person embodied technologies are more difficult to transfer because of the role cultural factor plays in such transfers (Kedia and Bhagat, 1988).
- Infrastructure: Lack of electricity, transportation and other important facilities are some of the problems inhibiting capacity building and technology transfer in developing countries. Hence, the difficulty in completing projects effectively and efficiently.

It is well known that there is no single dominant culture in Africa (Enakrire and Onyenania, 2007). For example, in Nigeria, there are more than 30 states and in each state there are different local communities with their varying way of life. Therefore, technology that can be successfully transferred in the Eastern region may not be appropriate or successful in the Northern region. Also, technology transfer will differ in the way women absorb or accept it than men because of cultural factor.

As some of the literature has purported, any development strategy without the involvement of the communities will not be successful. Development projects require the participation of the communities in order to achieve the objective needed. Participatory methods is said to be the underlying element ensuring that communities are actively involved in all levels of decision making (Brohman, 1996).

## **Conclusion**

This study examined the unique role of the NGOs in community development through participation and capacity building. It highlighted NGOs service provisioning and identified their underlying success and failure by looking at their impact on development while identifying that not all attributes of NGOs service provisioning are captured by quality, equity and efficiency criteria, the same criteria used against government provisioning of goods and services. Often NGOs have the same shortcomings as their state and private counterparts as seen in the study. Community development, Capacity building, and technology transfer, are all concepts used to describe NGO activities in development literature and have been reviewed in this paper. The literature review examined what NGOs are, the roles of NGOs, what they do, their growth and their impact. The literature allows research questions to be derived from the gaps in existing literature. Research problems are found in literature defining some of the important theories of community development and participation which constitute the actual environment for NGOs and their working relationship with their beneficiaries. Such problems lead to questions within the actual possible complexities of the interaction between NGOs as organisation and the communities that actually benefit from NGO's activities. There is the recognition from literature the complexities of effective capacity building through appropriate technology transfer. These complexities arise in areas which include community values, and system of beliefs which may hinder any NGO activities if such complexities are not well dealt with. Whilst there is a gap in literature recognising that NGOs community development activities and the interaction with communities they work with may constitute a problematic component, ignoring their dynamics in development projects will be a barrier to the success of future development projects and capacity building. Identifying the barriers and complexities of capacity building through appropriate technology transfer is part of the challenge that must be dealt with by an external organisation. Adjustments and adaptations need to be made to the building technology that needs to be transferred to fit into the recipient community's culture and environment. This can be achieved by engaging and involving the indigenous community to participate in every stage of the development project.

One of the more significant findings to emerge from this study is the recognition that community relationship with NGOs in building capacity through appropriate technology transfer is important and this sets the foundation to explore this issue. This is evident in community housing projects initiated by NGOs such as Habitat for humanities and Fuller housing where they engage the communities to be part of the housing project and have a say in the project.

The paper concludes that a number of problems such as the effective relationship of both parties need to be addressed before any capacity building can be satisfactorily intertwined into successful community development. An implication of this is the need to further investigate the nature of effective interaction between NGOs and marginalised communities and its impact on the outcomes of housing projects in marginalised communities. This paper will serve as the basis for future studies and further work needs to be done to establish the outcomes of capacity building in community housing projects.

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