



## THE NGO-LED FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE AND BENEFICIARIES' PARTICIPATION IN BO DISTRICT, SIERRA LEONE

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### ABSTRACT

An Effective NGO-Management structure provides a basis for successful management of its organization; familiarizes its target constituents with the activities of the NGO; help in better understanding the organizational structure of the NGO, and also assists in distributing responsibilities among the team members within the NGO organization. This paper reports study that investigated the influence of NGO-Management Structure on the beneficiaries' participation in food self-security programmes in Bo District. The study was conducted in Bo District, Southern Province of Sierra Leone. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the District. Propulsive random sampling technique was adapted to select the farmers and extension workers. A questionnaire comprising semi structured and structured questions was employed to collect data from 100 (85 farmers and 15 NGO Executive Officers) community members selected from the 15 Chiefdoms. The findings of the research revealed that the organizational structure has two main levels– executive members and beneficiaries (non-executive members). Members who held positions were employees of the organizations and earn salaries. They act as facilitators to encourage participation at grassroots level. All the executive members interviewed (100%) attended management meetings as well as general meeting with beneficiaries. The main issues discussed by executive members were prioritization of development oriented works (20.0%) and attainment of food self-sufficiency (13.0%), improvement of health conditions; monitoring and evaluation of programmes activities (6%). It was concluded that NGOs inadequately and ineffectively facilitate beneficiaries' participation in food security programmes in Bo District. It was recommended that linkages be functional and top- to- bottom and bottom-top information flow exist, and non-bureaucratic tendencies that affect implementation of decisions and activities be removed. Also, NGO management environment should be conducive to permit beneficiaries' participation in NGO-led food self-security.

**KEY WORDS:** Management Structure, Beneficiaries, Influencing, Participation, NGO-led Programmes.

### INTRODUCTION

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have increasingly been recognized today as vital development partners in aid delivery. This recognition is grounded on the fact that they have been able to position themselves before the donor community as credible institutions that seek the interest of vulnerable people in their quest to gain a voice in the social, political, and economic discourse of a nation. NGOs are pronounced in local, national and international scenes where they are engage in activities as diverse as grassroots mobilization, community empowerment, micro-finance, humanitarian relief, and emergency assistance. During the 1980s, the number of NGOs across the globe grew significantly marking a new dimension in international development cooperation. The growth in the number of NGOs was a direct response to the negative impacts of certain government policies or issues that have not receive wide governmental attention. In Africa for instance, the growth in the number of NGOs was to mitigate the social impacts of the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) that was been implemented by governments. It was believe that as advocates for the vulnerable in society, they were better placed to address the social impact of SAP that was adopted by countries in Africa. NGOs as facilitators in the field of development act as providers of basic services to vulnerable individuals

and communities in response to inadequacies in the public delivery of such services. In this vain, they invariably complement the roles of governments and the collective efforts of individuals towards human development. In an attempt by NGOs to complement the activities of governments in basic service delivery, they come in the form of charities, foundations, associations, nonprofit corporations, and voluntary organizations. However, NGOs' activities do not meet acclaim from all corners of academia. Many academics criticize the activities and 'mushroom growth' of NGOs. Turner and Hulme (1997) call NGOs a 'Janus-like' organization; Temple (1997) sees NGOs as a continuation of the missionary tradition and as handmaidens of capitalist change; Vivian and Maseko (1994) point out that evidence on NGO performance is scanty. Other critics note the role of NGOs as resource brokers rather than change agents (McGregor, 1989; Hashemi, 1989); as palliatives to real structural change (Arellano-Lopez and Petras, 1994); as producing too much overlapping of vested interests among donors, NGOs and states to allow sound analysis of issues (Ahmad, 1991); not producing long term effectiveness of projects (Aref, 2010; de Waal and Omaar, 1993); financial corruption and drifting from NGOs' original mission (Hellinger *et al.*, 1988). Riddell and Robinson (1995) also express concerns about the lack of independent information on how NGOs

work in practice and the reasons for their rapid growth. This underlies a concern that the management and/or promoters of NGOs are using this organizational form similar sentiments have been expressed at other quarters. For instance, during international debates, such as the one promoted by the United Nations (2007), it has been alarming that NGO's reputation is falling along with the society trust on their work capability. There is a growing critique regarding the managerial competence of NGOs and it is increasing the claim to evidence their expertise on providing significant impacts. In fact, some researchers have argued that people should participate in different stages: for example, sometimes for informing or consulting, sometimes for more empowering, depending on the characteristics of the development program (Bishop & Davis, 2002; Parker & Serrano, 2000). They have also argued that participation should be different for different stages of development activities, such as for selecting, budgeting, monitoring or evaluating stages of a development program. In contrast, some researchers have claimed people should participate from the start to the end of the development processes (Brett, 2003; Momen *et al.*, 2005). They have also argued that, through this continuous participation, people obtain power to control the development activities and make decisions according to their choice, which consequently makes development outcomes work in their favour (Hossain & Begum, 2005; Shand & Arnberg, 1996). When people participate only in the selection or initial stage, the quality of the work may not be ensured by the authority. Similarly, when people participate only in the evaluation stage, project selection may not happen according to the people's choice. So, though a good quality of development may be ensured through participatory evaluation, the development may not be used by the people if they are not satisfied with the project initially selected by the authority unilaterally. This suggests that only continuous involvement of people with local development programs can ensure favorable outcomes. However, for a long time, people have been seen as recipients of local development, particularly in developing countries, so involving people directly with development programs needs a substantial change in all related actors and systems (ESCAP, 2008). Because of this failure to engage people in development programs, poverty in rural Sierra Leone is not being alleviated at the expected pace (Islam, 2007). Researchers have found the existence of many barriers to effective people's participation in local government affairs. They argue that most of these barriers are created by government bureaucrats and politicians (Siddiqui, 2005; Zafarullah & Khan, 2005). Unfortunately, none of the research studies have revealed precisely how these localized bureaucratic and political arrangements create barriers to participation. In Sierra Leone, many NGOs are engaged in development works. In Bo District alone, a total of 25 NGOs are involved in food self-security programmes in the District. From informed evaluation, it is learned that there is increase in farmer participation in NGO-led food security programmes implemented. However, there is no formal study on the influence of the management structure on participation of the beneficiaries of NGO-led food security programmes. In addition, many people have studied NGOs or worked within them and know that, there is,

much discussions and debates about the various types of roles that NGOs play in development, but relatively little attention generally had been given to the ways in which these roles can be managed. The thrust of this study therefore, is to investigate the influence of NGO-management structure on the participation of the beneficiaries in NGO-led food security programmes in Bo District. In a modest way, it is hoped that this study would cast some new light on the subject of NGO- Management structure and beneficiaries' participation. It is further hoped that this research would also be the first detailed study to identify relationships between NGO-management structure and beneficiaries' effective participation in development programs in rural Sierra Leone. This particular study focused on the influence of management structure on the participation of beneficiaries in NGO-led food security programmes. The following research questions guided the research:

1. What is the NGO –Management structure in Bo District composed of?
2. What main issues are discussed during Management meetings of NGOs?
3. What do beneficiaries mainly suggest to management during general meetings with NGO-management?
4. Who are the main participants in key decision-makings and implementation at Management levels?
5. To what extent is the involvement of beneficiaries in decision-making in NGO-led food security programmes?

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

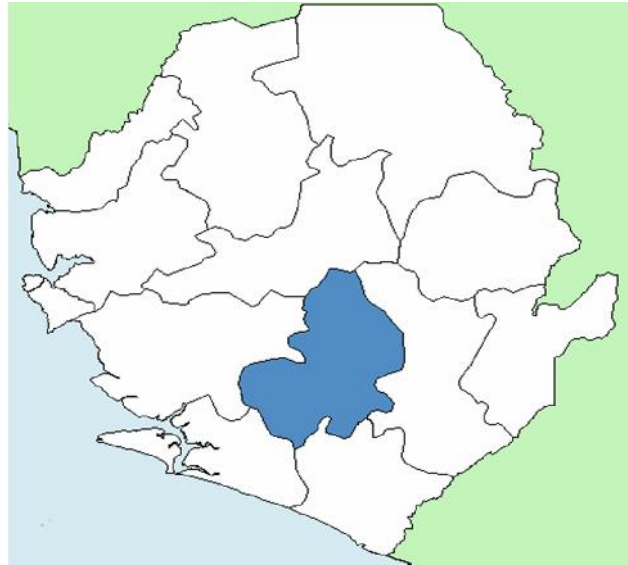
A descriptive cross-sectional research design was employed in the study with an aim of describing the influence of NGO-management structure on beneficiaries' participation in NGO-led food security programmes in Bo District in Southern Sierra Leone. This design was deemed useful in this situation because the researchers had no control over the respondents and because all the data were to be collected at one point in time. According to Borg and Gall (1989) the basic feature of the cross-sectional survey is that the information is collected at one-point-in time (although the actual time required to complete the survey may be one day to a month or more). Survey research is best suited to determine the behaviors, expectations, perceptions, and interest of respondents.

### Study Area

The study was conducted in Bo District (See Figure 1) in the Southern Region of Sierra Leone. Bo District is 152 miles south of Freetown located 8° 00' N110°40'W. It has a total area of land area of 5,473.6 km<sup>2</sup> (2,113.4 sq mi)) with population of 463,668 (SSL, 2004). Bo District is bounded to the North by Tonkolili District, North-Northeast by Kenema District, to the South by Pujehun District, to the Southwest by Bonthe District, and to the West and West-north by Moyamba District. The entire district comprises of fifteen (15) chiefdoms: Badja, Bagbew, Bagbo, Baoma, Bumpeh Ngao, Gbo, Jaiama Bongbor, Kakua, Komboya, Lugbu, Niawalenga, Selenga, Tikonko, Valunia, and Wunde chiefdoms. Trading, gold and diamond mining are major economic activities for the district; as well as agricultural production of rice growing, and tree crops such as coffee, cacao and oil palm. There

are many primary and secondary schools, health centres and hospitals in Bo District, with many roads linking Bo District with other parts of the country. Muslims and Christians mutually live across the district tolerating one another's belief. The population of the district constitutes

several ethnics and cultural groups such as Mende, Temne, Limba, Loko, Fullah, Susu, Kono, Creole, Mandingo, Shebro, Kissy and Yaronka. Mende, however, form the bulk of the population.



**FIGURE 1:** Map of Sierra Leone Showing Study Area

### **Study Population**

The target population of the study consists of all farmers and NGO implementing Food Security Programmes in Bo District.

### **Sample size and Sampling Technique**

The sample frame of the study was a list of farmers participating in NGO-led food security programmes in the Bo District. The sample consisted of 85 farmers and 15 NGO field workers. The sampling procedure was a combination of purposive, stratified and simple random sampling techniques. The sampling aimed at selecting eligible persons with equal probability. Sample was selected from all 15 chiefdoms in Bo District. The first step in the multi-stage sampling technique was a purposive selection of the District out of the four districts in the south. This District was selected based on several reasons. The selection of this region was made on two grounds. First, the region is typically an agricultural area where the local farmers have long been in contact with agricultural extension and research personnel. Secondly, the area contains large number of NGOs that have been implementing food self-security and rural development programmes over the past decades. In view of these considerations, the region provides excellent field laboratory to study the effectiveness of NGO-led food security programmes in one of the rural areas of Sierra Leone. The Individual farmers and NGO Field workers were selected using simple random sampling technique. All the names provided by MAFFS, Extension Officers, and NGOs were numbered serially. Names of respondents that were numbered with odd numbers were selected. Where the name of a person selected is unavoidably absent or dead, the next odd numbered name is automatically chosen to replace that person. This continued until the required number farmers (beneficiaries) in the district were obtained. Lastly, two extension workers were

selected from each of the chiefdoms giving a total of 30 extension workers and ten other NGO Executive Officers were purposively selected from NGO-Management.

### **Instrument for Data Collection**

A structured questionnaire consisting of both open and close-ended questions was administered to sampled farmers through the use of face to face personal interviews. The questionnaire consisted of four sections based on the purpose and objectives of the study. Section **A** sought information on NGO-Management structure; Section **B** Collected data on data on issues discussed in management meetings. Interview and discussions were conducted with the farmers and NGO executive officers in order to find out their own opinion about issues discussed in NGO management meetings. Section **C** solicited for information on beneficiaries making suggestions at general meetings with NGO-management. Section **D** solicited information on participation in key decision-making at management level, while Section **E** gathered information on the extent of involvement of respondents in decision-making while participating in NGO-led food security programmes in Bo District. Section C was categorized using three point Likert-like scales: Not involved =1, Partially Involved =2, Fully Involved =3. The instrument for data collection was subjected to pre-test in Bonthe District, which was not part of the sample, while validity and reliability tests were carried out. Validity test included face validity and content validity.

### **Face validity**

In validating the instrument, face and construct methods were used. Ten items were constructed; these were presented to a panel of four experts. The panel included extension Education Officers, Agricultural Economists, and experts from other related fields. The face validity of the instrument was measured by the experts who

confirmed that the questionnaire contained items that would solicit the intended response on the influence of NGO-Management Structure on beneficiaries' participation in food self-security programmes. Also, the experts reviewed the items of clarity and ensured all that could confuse respondents and research assistants were removed. The construct validity was ensured by correlating the score of test administration of the instrument with that of another one with high level of construct using Pearson Product Movement Correlation. A correlation of the test scores of the two instruments on the 20 farmers gave a correlation coefficient of 0.77. This was significant at  $p < 0.05$ . This indicated that the instrument clearly measures appropriately the same construct measured with other instrument. Only beneficiaries (farmers) who would not constitute part of the final study were used in this construct.

#### **Reliability of the instrument**

To determine the internal consistency of the instrument, a single test was given at a single setting. The odd numbers in the test came from one alternate of the test and even numbers from the other alternate form. Two scores were obtained from each test; one set from the old, and the other from the even numbered items. Using Pearson Correlation, the two sets of scores provided a measure of reliability of each half of the test. Spearman- Brown Formula was then used to get the reliability of length of the test. The internal consistency was 0.81 at (0.05) level of significance.

#### **Data Collection**

The data for this study was collected between 10th and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015. Both primary and secondary data were collected. Secondary data were information from the literature, official documents, library materials, internet, and textbooks. Primary data was solicited through administration of questionnaire, direct observation, focus group discussion, and key informant interviews. Prior to the fieldwork, researchers made several visits to the study area to: i) acquaint themselves with the farmers and the situation on the ground. ii) To have an informed consent of the NGO-beneficiary- farmers and also inform the community people about the purpose of the study. Before the start of the field exercise, three research assistants, who were very familiar with the culture of the study area and who well understands and speak the language of the farmers, were trained on how to administer the questionnaire. Each research assistant was given a field notebook, pencil, pen, and eraser. They were also instructed to write down any information and observation made that will be very essential for the accuracy of the study. Forty questionnaires were entrusted to each of the research assistants. These were coded and assistant researchers were asked to write the name of the community, and the respondents on each questionnaire. Interviews lasted between 35-40 minutes. In addition to interviews, direct observations were made during the administration questionnaires. Focus group discussions too were held with key stakeholders including local leaders, extension officers, marketers, transporters, youth leaders, and women leaders. Two focus group discussions and key informant interviews were held in three communities to collect qualitative information for the study and to verify responses from questionnaires. The authors supervised

assistant researchers and collected all completed questionnaire very day. At the end of the data collection, all the questionnaires were put together and checked for uncompleted or not properly completed forms. During data collection, informed verbal consent was directly asked from respondents before interview.

#### **Data Analysis**

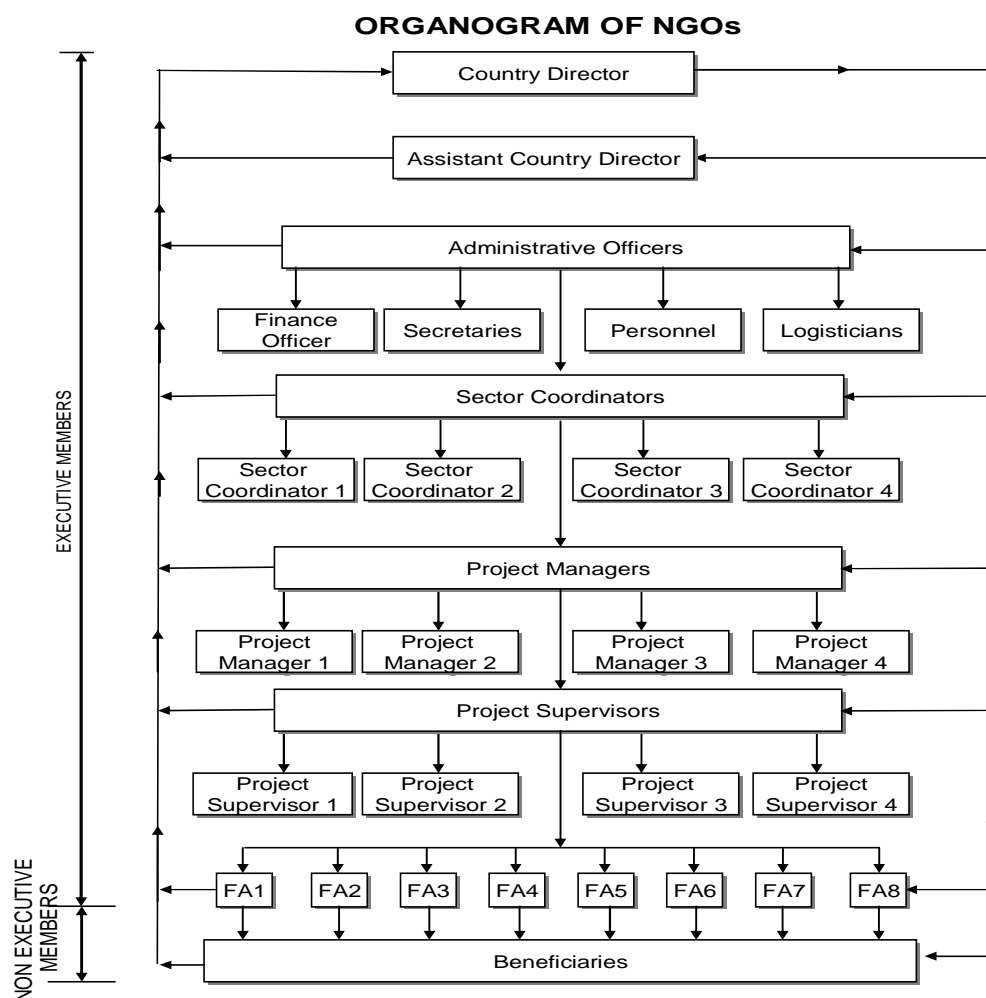
All data collected from the study area as in the questionnaire, focus group discussion, in-depth interviews and observation reports, were verified, coded and then analyzed. Quantitative data was processed, coded and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program version 20. The results were presented by the use of descriptive statistics namely frequencies and percentages frequencies. Qualitative data were transcribed and subsequently theme and sub-themes derived. The themes and sub-themes were then presented as they emerged.

## **RESULTS**

### **NGO Management structure**

The organizational structure has two main levels—executive members and beneficiaries (non-executive members). The first level, which is the executive members, is sub-divided into seven levels. These are country director at the top, followed by assistant country director. The third level is the administrative body consisting of personnel officer, clerks, and logistic officers. This is immediately followed by the sector coordinators. The fifth level is the project managers which, also is followed by project supervisors. The seventh level is the field agents. Members who held these positions are employees of the organizations and earn salaries. They act as facilitators to encourage participation at grassroots levels. The executive members identify needs and problems of the beneficiaries, organize workshop to sensitize the beneficiaries for local resource commitment, and serve as a link between beneficiaries and donor agencies.

According to Earl *et al.* (2000), organizations that have a high degree of participation are more likely to be seen as effective by the intended recipients of programmes. The participation of the beneficiaries can only be effective if management environment is conducive and permits it. Management and general meetings were the most important flora for decision-making, coordination of activities and communication of information between executive members and beneficiaries. Several characteristics of management may be used as indicators of the ability of NGOs to practice participation. For this study, the characteristics selected to assess participation include: i) meeting attendance; ii) making suggestions; iii) decision- making and implementation; and iv) communication channels. One of the variables we can use to measure participation is meeting attendance. During meetings, management is able to know the views of the participants (Clienteles) and they in turn will know the plan of action (for the future) of the organization. Commitment of individuals to programmes activities can be established through meeting attendance. People who lack interested in programmes activities hardly attend meetings concerning them.



**FIGURE 1:** Organogram of the NGOs

## 2a.Meeting Attendance and Issues discussed in management meetings

The Table 1 indicates issues mostly discussed in management meetings. The table showed that all the executive members interviewed (100%) reported attending management meetings as well as general meeting with beneficiaries. When further asked about those members who are actually and most frequently attending general meetings, all (100%) field agents and project supervisors agreed they do. However, when the frequency of meeting was investigated, it proved that meetings are only held when the needs arise, and usually once a month.

Only executive members attend management meetings. At management meetings, issues usually discussed ranged from human rights and good governance to prioritization of development-oriented works. The data revealed that the main issues discussed by the executive members were prioritization of development oriented works (20.0%) and

attainment of food self-sufficiency (13.0%). These were followed by improvement of health conditions; monitoring and evaluation of programmes activities; food processing and preservations, ways of improving the illiteracy status of beneficiaries; development of training packages for youths and farmers, and HIV/AIDS and its effect on agriculture. Each scored 10%. The least issue discussed is human rights and good governance (6.7%).

General meetings are attended by both executive members (usually the Project Supervisors and Field Agents) and the beneficiaries. Such meetings are only held if the field agent deems it fit. In order to prevent poor attendance, general meetings are usually scheduled on Fridays, when farmers do not go to their farms because of the Muslims' 2.0 O'clock prayers. These meetings are therefore held in the morning hours to give the farmers ample time to attend prayers in their mosques on these days.

**TABLE 2a: Distribution of Respondents by Issues Discussed in Management Meetings**

Issues discussed	Executive Members	
	No	%
Prioritization of development-oriented works	6	20.0
Attainment of food- self sufficiency	4	3.3
Improvement of health condition	3	10.0
Monitoring and evaluation of project activities	3	10.0
Food processing and preservation techniques	3	10.0
Improvement of illiteracy status	3	10.0
Development of training packages for youths and farmers	3	10.0
HIV/AIDS and its effects on agricultural activities	2	6.7
Human rights and good governance		
Total	30	100.0

### 2b. Issues Discussed at General Meetings.

Issues discussed at general meeting are shown in Table 2b. The table revealed that the issues discussed ranged from timeliness of farm works to family planning. The dominant issues discussed were timeliness of farm works (15.0%) and commitment to project works (12.0%). Next, is management of resources (11.0%), improvement of farming systems and cooperation of beneficiaries with

NGOs workers, each scoring 10%. This was followed by construction of roads and bridges (8.0%), conflict management and resolution (6.0%), child and women's rights (5.0%) and gender awareness (4.0%). The least discussed issue is family planning (3.0%). The overall picture is that issues discussed were mostly matters relating to social welfare, community development and attaining food security.

**TABLE 2b: Issues Discussed at General Meetings.**

Issues Discussed	Mentions	
	No.	%
Timeliness of farm works	16	16.0
Planning and budgeting farming activities	15	15.0
Commitment to project works	12	12.0
Management of resources	11	11.0
Improvement of farming systems	10	10.0
Co-operation of beneficiaries with NGOs workers	10	10.0
Construction of roads and bridges	8	8.0
Conflict management and resolution	6	6.0
Child and women's rights	5	5.0
Gender awareness	4	4.0
Family planning	3	3.0
Total	100	100.0

**TABLE 3: Suggestions made at Meetings**

Suggestions	Mentions	
	No	%
Timely and adequate supply of inputs	14	14.0
Processing and preservation techniques	13	13.0
Training on management of farm products	12	12.0
Improvement in farming systems	11	11.0
Construction of stores and dry floors	10	10.0
Gender equalities	8	8.0
Income generation	7	7.0
Increasing productivities	6	6.0
Formation of working groups	5	5.0
Commitment to works	4	4.0
Formation of village development committees	4	4.0
Operational approaches	3	3.0
Marketing strategies	3	3.0
Total	100	100.0

### 3. Making Suggestions at General Meetings

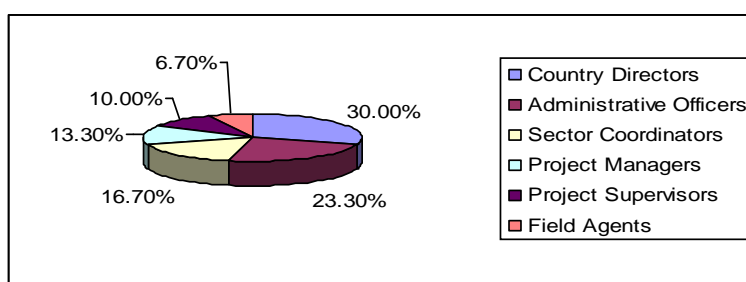
Table 3 indicated suggestions made during general meeting of NGO-led food security programme participants. One of the indicators for measuring participation in decision-making is making suggestions at

meetings and how these suggestions are considered. The table revealed that over three-fourths (78.0%) reported making suggestions but indicated that their suggestions are mostly not taken into consideration. The rest (22.0%) reported not making suggestions. The dominant suggestion

proportion-wise, was timely and adequate supply of inputs (14.0%). The suggestion of food processing and preservation techniques was second (13.0%), followed by training on management of farm products (12.0%), improvement of farming system (11.0%), and construction of stores and dry floors (10.0%). Gender equalities (8.0%), income generation (7.0%) and increasing productivities (6.0%) are other suggestions made in general meetings. These are followed by formation of working groups (5.0%). Commitment to works (4.0%) and formation of village development committees scored 4 %s each, while operational approaches (3.0%) and marketing strategies (3.0%) are the least suggestion made during meetings. From the suggestions, the major concerns are timely and adequate supply of inputs, food processing and preservation techniques, training in management of farm products after harvest, improving the farming system, and construction of stores and dry floors.

#### 4 Decision-Making and Implementation

The results of participation in key decision taking by executive members are shown in Figure 2. The Figure revealed that the country directors are responsible for taking 30 % of key decisions on behalf of the NGOs. The Administrative Officers are responsible for taking 23 % of key decisions, while sector coordinators took 16.7 % of some key decisions in relation to certain programmes activities. The project managers took 13.3 % of some key decisions, while project supervisors took only 10.0 % of such decisions. Field agents took only 6.7 % of key decisions partaking to the running of the organizations programmes activities. With respect to, who takes the decision and for who has an important bearing on the nature of involvements of clientele in the activities of any programme. The participation of decision-making was measured by ways of reaching decisions at management and general meetings in relations to implementation. The results revealed that decisions are taken by executive members, while beneficiaries did not participate in the taking of key decisions.



**FIGURE 4:** Pie Chart Showing Participation in Key Decision by Sample Executive Members

**TABLE 5:** Distribution of Respondents by Extent of Involvement

	Extent of Involvement					
	Not Involved		Partially Involved		Fully Involved	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Food Security Programmes						
Construction of roads and bridges	60	60.0	30	30.0	10	10.0
Construction of water wells and installation of Pumps	45	45.0	40	40.0	15	15.0
Swamp development/ rehabilitation	13	18.0	70	70.0	17	17.0
Creation of seed banks	65	65.0	21	21.0	14	14.0
Empowerment of women groups	30	30.0	40	40.0	30	30.0
Construction of toilets	25	25.0	41	41.0	34	34.0
Supply agricultural tools and other inputs	65	65.0	5	5.0	30	30.0
Livestock restocking	55	55.0	25	25.0	20	20.0
Justice for all and good governance	70	70.0	14	14.0	16	16.0
Construction of dry floors and stores	30	30.0	45	45.0	25	25.0
Training of youths and farmers	56	56.0	30	30.0	20	20.0
Construction of schools and health centre	41	41.0	45	45.0	15	15.0
Income generation and micro-credits	25	25.0	65	65.0	10	10.0
Marketing and communication technology	35	35.0	55	55.0	10	10.0
Promotion of adult literacy education	59	59.0	23	23.0	18	18.0
Pests and disease management	25	25.0	38	38.0	63	63.0
Construction of food procession plants	69	69.0	25	25.0	6	6.0
Child and human rights	70	70.0	25	25.0	5	5.0
Training on post harvest losses	64	64.0	24	24.0	12	12.0
Training on food processing and preservation	35	35.0	49	49.0	16	16.0
Construction of fish ponds	29	29.0	48	48.0	23	23.0
Training in post harvest management and budgeting	70	70.0	18	18.0	12	12.0
Promoting health and hygiene	14	14.0	68	68.0	28	28.0
Promoting family planning	40	40.0	29	29.0	31	31.0



### 5 Extent of beneficiaries' Involvement in Decision-Making

The extent to which beneficiaries were involved in decision-making in the NGO-led food security programmes was assessed and the results are indicated in Table 5. The data showed that over three-fifths of respondents (63.0%) interviewed were fully involved in decision-making in pests and disease management. More than one-third (34.0%) were fully involved in decision-making in all other food security programmes in the study area. Large proportions of the sample respondents were also partially involved in decision-making concerning development and rehabilitation of swamps (70.0%), promotion of health and hygiene (68.0%) and income generation and micro-credit finance (65.0%). Less than half (49.0%) of the sample were partially involved in decision-making concerning the rest of the other food security programmes. Majority of those interviewed claimed not involved in decision-making in justice and good governance(70.0%); child and human rights (70.0%); construction of food processing plants (69.0%); supplies of agricultural tools and equipments (69.0%); and creation of seed banks (65.0%); construction of roads and bridges (60.0%); training on post harvest losses (64.0%); promotion of adult and literacy education (59.0%); training youths and farmers (56.0%); and restocking livestock's (55.0%). Above two-fifths (45.0%) of the sample claimed that they are not involved in decision making concerning the NGO-led food security programmes.

### DISCUSSION

According to Nedham, et al (1995), client participation in development programmes can only be effective if the institutional and management environment encourages the involvement of the recipients in the various aspects of their administrative activities. They further revealed several characteristics of the organization to practice participation. Three such attributes include: structural arrangement, participation in the decision-making processes, and perception of the executive members about the beneficiaries members participation. Diouf (2002) also found out that rural organizations involved in agricultural development and that food security programmes are themselves social systems with predetermined structures and processes. Similarly, their targets can be considered as a system. The interaction of these two sub-systems in the development efforts presupposed the existences of linkage structures that facilitate the exchange of ideas and information through dialogue. Where such linkages are poor, the top-bottom approach often results, thereby denying the recipient the opportunity to participate in decision-making. The findings obtained in this study are in agreement with findings of Nedham, et al (1995) and Diouf (2002). The NGOs studied performed the same tasks and have roughly the same legal structure and status. The organizational structures of the NGOs shows the management or the administrative levels of linkage structures consisting of country directors, administrative officers, sector coordinators, project managers, project supervisors, and field agents. The beneficiaries are at the bottom of the ladder. In theory, structures have been put in place for active and effective participation of clientele.

The executive members in their functioning as facilitators of the popular participation sensitised the clientele for local resource commitment, and as a link between donors and the beneficiaries of the NGOs. Another important role of executive members was said to be organizing and participation in management meetings. These are the linkages that facilitate the exchange of ideas and information through dialogue on paper. Clientele involvement in development and food security programmes can be best understood by measuring the following aspect: meeting attendance, decision-making, implementation, communication channels, and nature of involvement of clientele. According to Sandiford (1991), one of the best ways clientele get involved in development programmes was through attendance and participation at meetings. The findings of this study buttressed this view. Most of the beneficiaries attended meetings either management or general or both. Absence from these meetings, as reported could only be due to ill health, and absent of clientele from the community. Regular meetings, decision of programme welfare, planning and implementations of NGO-led food security programmes are said to enhance participation of the beneficiaries. This point is in general agreement with proponents of popular participation that sound decision-making depends on reliable collective ideas and information that are needed to reach the decision. But what are also important are suggestions made at these meetings, whether they are considered and implemented. Beneficiaries reported that their suggestions are most times ignored. Though the executive members implement most decisions reached among them, the field agents complained that final decisions came from above. Meetings are the most effective fora where clientele contribute ideas and information for decision-making. Braithwaite (1996) observed that participation happens when people contribute towards the solution of problems affecting their organizations and their jobs. Participatory development is seen from the point of United Nations Volunteers (UNV) and their domestic development services (UNDP, 1991) as an upward movement of society, necessitating grassroots people's involvement in making decisions on matters affecting their well-being, implementing programmes related to these decisions, sharing the benefits of these programmes, and evaluating them. Participatory development aims at initiating and maintaining a process with which communities responsibly organize and manage their own development, know how to utilize the available local resources, set up an institution which controls development activities, and ensures accountability to the entire community. Brody (1984) and Alex (2002) also observed that, the pattern of decision-making with respect to, who takes the decision for whom, has an important bearing on the nature of the involvement of the clientele in the activities of the programmes.

### CONCLUSION

The research findings clearly point at the inadequacies of NGOs to effectively facilitate beneficiaries' participation in NGO-lead food security programmes. It also brings out the ineffectiveness of the programmes. These include organizational and managerial factors and inability of the executive members to involve beneficiaries in decision-



making, leading to low participation in NGO-led food security programmes.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Organizational structures of the NGOs did not encourage participation of the clients in decision-making and various aspects of their programmes. The study revealed that linkages exist between different levels of the organization on paper, but not in practice. Information flows from top to bottom and decisions are made at the top - the executive levels. The running of the NGOs is bureaucratic which affects the implementation of decisions and activities. For NGOs to function well, linkages must be functional. It is therefore recommended that top to bottom and bottom to top information flow must exist, and non-bureaucratic tendencies that affect the implementation of decisions and activities must be removed. Participation of beneficiaries of NGOs could only be effective if the management environment is conducive and permit it. Sample respondents mentioned that management and general meetings were most important for decision-making, coordination of activities and communications of information between executive and beneficiaries to participate in taking key decisions, to consider their suggestion on major concerns, and the pattern of decision-making with respect to who makes decision for who, has an important bearing on the involvement of clientele in the activities.

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